

Roles of Women in Manufacturing Series

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Manufacturing Management: Laura Carter and Britany Dittmer

Laura and Britany share their manufacturing journeys to management and give advice to anyone seeking a career in manufacturing.



Laura Carter is a machining supervisor at Clippard Instrument Laboratory in Cincinnati, Ohio. Britany Dittmer is the plant manager for Alco Manufacturing in Elyria, Ohio. Both women share their journey to management in manufacturing.

Laura Carter's Journey

Laura started as a waitress as a teenager. She then worked in customer service for a silk screening company, where she found herself curious about the movement on the distribution side of manufacturing. She spent a couple of years working in production at a chemical manufacturing company (where she

met her husband), and then worked in packaging at a greeting card company for 10 years. When the greeting card company closed, she found a home at Clippard Instrument Laboratory.

She started as an operator at Clippard and after a couple of years, another woman encouraged Laura to apply for the setup position in Department 250. Laura worked in Dept. 250 for a year learning the parts and equipment and from there she started setting up machines. The training was in-house as she learned from others. She found that she really loved setting up machines. After a few years, it was noted that the operators were coming to her for help and she was

promoted to a lead position. From the lead position she was promoted to assistant supervisor and is now the proud supervisor of Department 250 Secondary, Preliminary and First Run.

Laura has been at Clippard for 22 years and still enjoys the variety, likes organizing, problem-solving and helping others. She also values her workplace. She says "It's a great place to work. Clippard truly invests in the future of their workers."

Britany Dittmer's Journey

Britany began her manufacturing career without any experience. She started working at Alco Manufacturing in inspection. She moved from inspection to a production coordinator position, then to a production supervisor position then into production management. About two years ago, she was offered the plant manager position for Alco's Acme facility. One year later, she was asked to become the plant



Laura Carter (middle) with two of her reports: Lydia Casey, operator in training for setup/machinist (left) and Tiera Smiddy, lead and setup (right)

manager for Alco's CNC facility and currently manages both. Britany states, "I have only been with Alco for a little under six years and growth within the company was brought on not only by my commitment and drive, but from the confidence from my upper management and executive team."

Britany finds her position extremely rewarding. She enjoys watching the advancement of careers within Alco and has a passion for continuous improvement. She takes pride in seeing the final results from a project and exclaims "there is no feeling that compares."

Advice to Women (or Anyone) Seeking a Career in Manufacturing

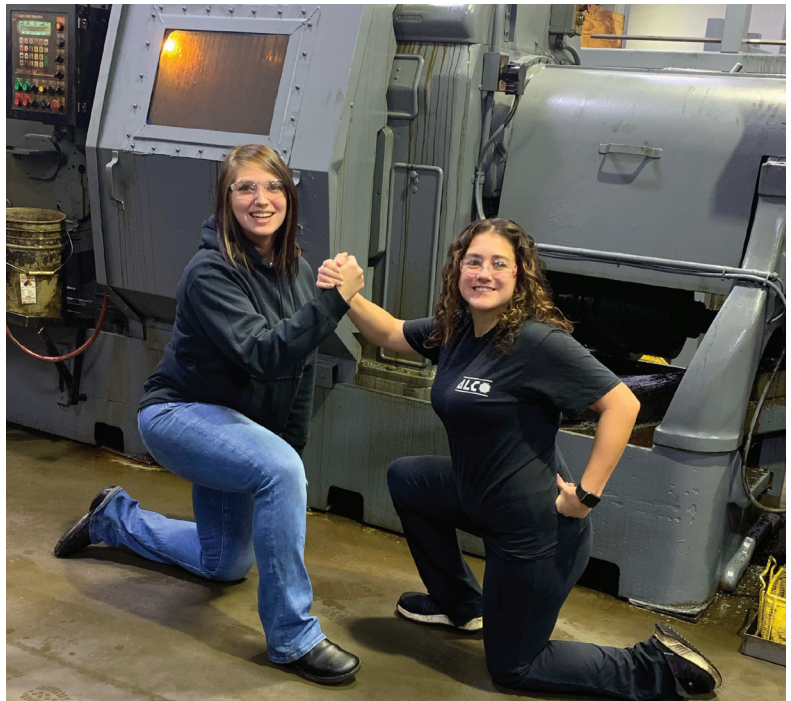
Laura's advice to those seeking a career in manufacturing is "Stick with it. Learn as much as you can. Take classes and educate yourself. Speak up and show interest because someone is observing and you'll get noticed. There may be many different avenues that you can pursue, so figure out what you are enjoy."

I have found that respect is respect regardless of your gender. It is all about how you earn it.

- Britany Dittmer

you earn it. Confidence is key and having the ability to take chances or admit when you are wrong really demonstrates your abilities. Speak up, don't be afraid to voice your ideas and concepts and continue to do so (even if some ideas get shot down.)" Britany continues, "I think what is most important to know is that there are opportunities everywhere, even when you aren't looking. Initially, I did not have a college degree and I

Britany's advice to those seeing a career in manufacturing is "Don't hold back and think outside of the box. Being in a male-dominated industry, I have found that respect is respect regardless of your gender. It is all about how



Britany Dittmer (left) and production coordinator, Erika Matus (right).

did not have industry experience BUT I had the right mind set. Times are changing, "gender roles" are being eliminated...having passion for what you do and demonstrating that is a great start." P

Carli Kistler-Miller, MBA has over 25 years of experience with operations, event/meeting planning, marketing, writing and communications. Email: cmiller@pmpa.org — Website: pmpa.org.



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