

Roles of Women in Manufacturing Series

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Marketing Manufacturing: Debra Beevers and Courtney Ortner

Two women share their journeys to manufacturing and marketing, and give advice to anyone seeking a career in manufacturing.



Marketers are responsible for the corporate brand, public relations, marketing campaigns and all the channels and events it takes to get the message to the customer. Debra Beevers is the marketing director for Concast Metal Products Co. in Wakeman, Ohio. Courtney Ortner is the director of marketing for the A+ Automation Team at Absolute Machine Tools in Lorain, Ohio. Both women share their journey to manufacturing.



Debra Beevers



Courtney Ortner

Debra Beevers' Journey


Debra started her business career at a local hospital and also in real estate. When she entered manufacturing in 1989, she didn't have any industry experience. After 20 years in metals, she started with Concast Metals in 2009. Concast is a company that encourages engagement, continuous improvement, product development and customer service. Debra has found this company culture makes her job very enjoyable and rewarding. She also values new experiences and acquiring new skills, and is known for saying, "you add new tools to your tool belt with every experience."

Courtney Ortner's Journey

Courtney worked in sales and marketing for Procter & Gamble. She turned down an offer to relocate to stay with her then-fiancee, Steve Ortner, owner of Absolute Machine Tools and, 31 years later, she is still at Absolute. She served as the director of marketing for the CNC side, but later realized the future demands for cobots and formed the A+ Automation Team. She is proud of creating the team and says she feels like a superhero when they help manufacturers solve employment and throughput issues.

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

According to Debra, "It has been a great experience working in this industry. When I started 34 years ago, I was often the only woman in the room within an industry heavily dominated by men. That trend has changed through the years. Women have a lot to offer and their contributions to the manufacturing industry are being recognized and rewarded. Energized by these facts and understanding how important networking can be to their careers, I highly encourage women at all levels to get involved in PMPA and other organizations like CBSCA and AWMI."

Courtney encourages women to "Go for it, ladies! Manufacturing any product not only takes skills but also thorough and smart thinking. Women are creative and excellent thinkers, organizers, planners and possess a natural drive to get things done. American manufacturing needs people like this, and so women are already prequalified to be successful in the manufacturing industry." 

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