



Roles of Women in Manufacturing: What I Learned

Over 20 women were featured in the Roles of Women in Manufacturing series, which started in the January 2023 issue.

I have been honored to learn about the journeys of over 20 women in the roles of machinist, engineer, human resources, education, quality, owner, marketing, shipping/receiving, management, IT and quality. I learned about many common themes with regard to career paths, advancement and advice.



Career Path

Sixty percent of the women interviewed did not pursue a job in manufacturing at the start of their careers.

Most started without any manufacturing experience and those with experience either found precision machining through a trade school or college degree. Regardless of their start, all of the women interviewed have advanced or are poised to advance in their precision machining companies.

Culture and Mentorship Are the Secret Sauce

When describing their journeys to their current positions, every woman I spoke with mentioned one or two mentors and a company culture which encourages advancement. A common thread amongst the women was an appreciation for the opportunity to learn, and the encouragement they received to pursue new skills and gratitude for advancement paths.

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

The sentiment was unanimous. Every woman interviewed encouraged other women to go for it, ignore the old gender rules and don't be afraid to try something different. Additionally, they hope women will take advantage of any learning opportunities and ask questions.

These women are proud of their career choice. They are proud of their journey. They are grateful to those who helped or are helping them along the way and encourage others to follow their path. To these incredible women, I say, "Thank you for being an inspiration." **P**

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