MEP National Network™

Center for Industrial Services
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

How to Use Upskilling to Future-Proof Your Manufacturing Business

The triple bottom line of upskilling is employee loyalty, increased productivity, and business growth

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INTRODUCTION

Upskilling is the process of improving a worker's current skills to empower them to make their employer's business more competitive. From technical and operational training to problem solving and continuous improvement, upskilling goes above and beyond task oriented job training.

The case for upskilling your manufacturing workforce has largely been justified by the rising costs of acquiring new talent. Finding and retaining workers continues to be the top challenge for small and medium-sized manufacturers (SMMs). According to the Society of Human Resource Management, the average cost per new hire rose to around $4,700 in 2023. This number includes the many hours spent on interviewing candidates and onboarding and training new hires. On the other hand, training existing employees costs an average of $1,111 per person, according to an Industry Training Report from *Training* magazine.

However, upskilling isn't just about reducing hiring costs — it's about building value throughout your organization. Employees gain from developing new skills, such as automation training, leading to greater job satisfaction and opportunities for career advancement. For example, upskilling a machine operator from working on one machine to overseeing a pod of several machines enhances job variety and growth potential. Your company, in turn, benefits from higher workforce productivity, streamlined processes, and an expanded set of capabilities that make it more competitive in an advanced manufacturing landscape.

This white paper will look at three key aspects of upskilling. These upskilling approaches include:

- **Developing effective leaders:** Equipping supervisors with leadership skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving to prepare them for managerial roles.
- **Training workers for Industry 4.0 technologies:** Preparing workers to operate and optimize automation and digital manufacturing systems, including robotics, programming, and additive manufacturing.
- **Using lean manufacturing and quality frameworks:** Integrating lean principles with automation to optimize production and ensure consistent quality through frameworks like ISO.

By implementing these approaches, manufacturers will create a future-proof workforce capable of adapting to technological advancements, evolving customer demands, and shifting market trends. This adaptability is crucial for maintaining a competitive edge in the dynamic manufacturing industry. The MEP National Network has the upskilling solutions for SMMs across the country.

CHAPTER 1

Upskilling Success Begins With Employee Buy-in

Upskilling will help your employees learn new skills and capabilities to make your business more competitive and position your company for future growth. It also provides your workers with new career growth opportunities, which in turn will help you retain employees and attract new talent.

Employee buy-in is key to upskilling success; employees need motivation to commit to their new training. To get employee buy-in, it's important to help them understand:

1. **Clear career pathways:** Provide employees with "career ladders" that capitalize on growth and development opportunities. This transparency enables employees to see how new training will support their career progression and personal development.
2. **Skills and compensation:** Develop a pay structure that aligns with certain skills, ensuring that employees feel that their efforts and training are valued. Competitive compensation tied to upskilling makes career advancement more appealing and incentivizes participation in training programs.

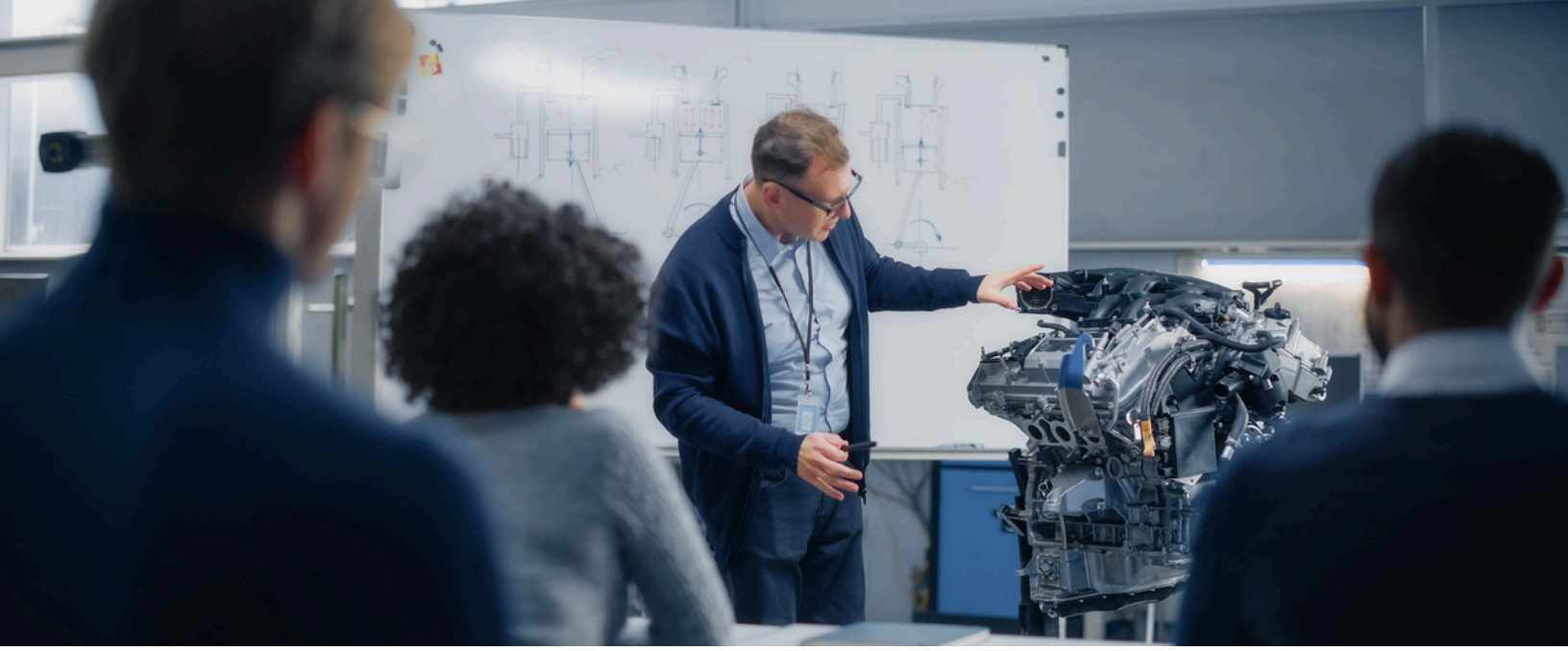
A successful upskilling strategy depends on helping workers identify the "what's in it for me" factor, so they will be engaged in the training process. This includes:

- Showing your employees how their training translates to career and financial growth.
- Providing your employees with a clear vision of possible career roadmaps.
- Communicating how these roles tie to pay increases and job security.

Upskilling for Professional Development Increases Retention

94% of surveyed employees say they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their professional development.

—LinkedIn Learning



Typically, MEP Centers use career ladder approaches to help their manufacturing clients incentivize employees to "ladder up" their skill levels to advance their careers. These upskilling training modules may include:

Foundational skills training

- **Basic manufacturing skills:** Training on fundamental manufacturing processes, equipment operation, and safety protocols.
- **Workplace readiness:** Courses on soft skills such as teamwork, communication, time management, and problem-solving.

Technical skills development

- **Intermediate machine operation:** Training on more complex machinery and production processes.
- **Process optimization:** Courses focused on Lean Manufacturing, Six Sigma basics, and continuous improvement techniques.
- **Quality control basics:** Foundational training in quality assurance and inspection methods.

Advanced technical training

- **Specialized equipment certification:** Training on programming and operating advanced machinery such as CNC equipment and robotics.
- **Industry 4.0 skills:** Education in automation, IoT integration, data analysis, additive manufacturing, and smart manufacturing technologies.

Leadership and supervisory training

- **Supervisory skills**: Training to help employees transition into supervisory roles, covering conflict resolution, delegation, and team leadership.
- **Strategic thinking and problem-solving:** Courses that foster analytical thinking, project management, and decision-making.

Effective training modules should have clear learning objectives with measurable outcomes and a structured content outline, progressing from basic to advanced concepts. Engaging teaching methods, including hands-on activities and real-world scenarios, ensure knowledge retention.

Practical exercises and assessments are essential for tracking progress and reinforcing learning, supported by resources like manuals and access to mentors. Progress tracking, certification, and follow-up activities further motivate employees and foster ongoing skills development, aligning training with business goals for operational excellence.

Understanding the "What's in It for Me" Aspect

"One of the primary issues that employers have with their workforce is not fully understanding that employees go to a company for a career path. Using a quality framework as a roadmap, leadership can define their processes and a disciplined structure of the business. This structure enables employees to be successful in the upskilling process with defined expectations and rewards."

—Doug Roberts, Senior Business Advisor at the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC), part of the MEP National Network

CHAPTER 2

Upskilling to Transform Supervisors into Company Leaders

Leadership development is one of the most requested services across the MEP National Network. This is in part because many manufacturing leaders are nearing a well-earned retirement. These leaders are integral to the success of their companies; they shape company culture, build strong team relationships, and address operational challenges that can otherwise hinder growth.

For smaller manufacturers, ensuring a smooth leadership transition is critical.

Developing the next generation of leaders within the company helps preserve the knowledge and skills that drive the business, while empowering the team to continue tackling challenges and driving innovation.

Leadership development for your manufacturing company should take many forms, depending on your specific needs and goals. It might involve upskilling a small group of frontline supervisors through targeted training in a classroom setting, helping them develop skills in areas like problem-solving, communication, and team management. Alternatively, it may involve hands-on training in different parts of the business.

For larger initiatives, leadership development could be expanded to include training across several departments or facilities, ensuring a unified approach to leadership throughout the company. Additionally, individual coaching for high-potential employees will help address personal growth areas, refine decision-making abilities, and prepare them for future leadership roles.

Your Goal: Build Leaders

The right approach to leadership development will depend on your company's size, structure, and leadership challenges. While the leadership program tactics will vary, the goal is always the same: Build leaders who drive operational excellence, improve performance, and ensure long-term success.

Commit to a Proven Program, and Carve Out Time for Development

For manufacturers, investing in leadership development for frontline supervisors is crucial for building a strong leadership pipeline. One of the most effective ways to achieve this is by partnering with an independent, experienced source. Here's why working with experts outside of your organization will provide significant advantages:

- **Expertise and objectivity:** An independent expert can provide cutting-edge training methodologies tailored to the specific needs of your supervisors, without being influenced by internal biases or politics.
- **Structured approach:** A structured, strategic approach keeps training focused on key leadership competencies, and keeps training aligned with your overall business goals. This also allows you to deliver consistent programming across different locations and departments.
- **Accountability and continuous improvement:** Independent sources can track training progress and make adjustments for improvement. Regular feedback allows for adjustments to be made to improve the effectiveness of the program over time. This data-driven approach ensures that the training investment delivers tangible results for your business.

The Power of 360-Degree Feedback for Leadership Development

Many leadership development programs begin with a 360-degree survey to provide the leadership trainee with feedback from direct reports, supervisor peers, and executive leadership.

360-degree feedback can be jarring to a frontline supervisor when it is in written form. It sometimes lacks the nuance of face-to-face communication, such as body language or tone of voice, which can lead to misinterpretation. However, when properly facilitated, 360-degree feedback helps the trainee recognize the importance of hearing from others about areas for improvement.

Here's how 360-degree feedback can benefit your leadership development efforts:

- **Increased self-awareness:** 360-degree feedback allows supervisors to see themselves from the perspective of others — whether that's their team members, peers, or higher-level supervisors. For instance, one of your key people may think he or she excels at coaching, but the rest of the cohort rates this as an area for improvement. This becomes a clear coaching area to address.

- **Targeted development areas:** Feedback often uncovers blind spots that the supervisor may not have recognized on their own. It can highlight specific behaviors that need adjustment or reinforce strengths that should be leveraged. For instance, if feedback reveals a lack of effective communication or difficulty managing conflict, these areas can be addressed with targeted training or coaching.
- **Open dialogue:** Properly facilitated 360-degree feedback sessions provide a safe space for supervisors to receive constructive criticism and learn how to use that feedback for improvement. It encourages open dialogue between supervisors and their teams, fostering a culture of transparency and continuous improvement.
- **Actionable insights:** With 360-degree feedback, supervisors can receive clear, actionable insights into their performance. Instead of relying on their own perspective, they gain a more accurate understanding of how they are perceived and where they can grow. This can serve as a powerful tool for setting development goals and tracking progress over time.

The 360-degree feedback can also grow the confidence of leadership trainees by reinforcing what they are doing well and why they were chosen for leadership development. At the same time, the company's executive team needs to ensure that feedback provided during the reviews are used as a catalyst for employees to improve specific skills.

Coaching Plays a Significant Role in Developing Leaders

When it comes to transforming supervisors into leaders, incorporating coaching will significantly improve the effectiveness of a leadership program. A neutral, experienced leadership development coach brings an outside perspective that helps trainees see beyond the day-to-day operations and think strategically about their role in the business. Here's how coaching can benefit your leadership development efforts:

- **Thinking like a general manager:** A leadership coach helps supervisors step back and think more broadly, much like a general manager. This means understanding how their role impacts other departments, resources, and overall business objectives. It encourages them to align their actions with company-wide goals, fostering a mindset of strategic leadership rather than tactical execution.
- **Balancing micro and macro views**: Supervisors often need to toggle between a "micro" focus — managing day-to-day operations in their specific area — and a "macro" focus, where they must consider how their team's work fits into the larger operations of the company. A coach helps supervisors understand when to dive into the details and when to step back to see the broader impact.
- **Goal setting and development plans:** Regular coaching sessions help supervisors identify areas they want to improve and create specific, actionable goals. The coach works with the supervisor to create a tailored development plan to measure progress over time.
- **Real-world application and feedback:** One of the greatest advantages of coaching is that it allows supervisors to apply what they are learning in real time. They can conduct "experiments" by trying out new leadership strategies, such as refining their communication or decision-making skills, while receiving ongoing feedback from their coach. This iterative learning process accelerates the development of practical leadership skills.
- **Strategic thinking and collaboration:** A coach helps supervisors think more strategically about managing their direct reports and how to collaborate with fellow supervisors and upper management. By fostering better communication, trust, and problem-solving among teams, coaches enable supervisors to drive continuous improvements in processes and performance across departments.

Empowering Supervisors to Lead Demonstrates Accountability

Through employee surveys across many manufacturing companies, MEP Centers have found a consistent trend: a lack of accountability is often seen as one of the biggest challenges within the company. This issue can affect everything from productivity to morale, and it often stems from ineffective leadership at the frontline level.

Upskilling frontline supervisors signals a commitment to accountability across your company. By equipping your supervisors with enhanced communication, decision-making, and relationship-building skills, you empower them to lead more effectively, resulting in:

- **Increased productivity and efficiency:** Well-trained supervisors can optimize workflows, identify bottlenecks, and implement improvements, leading to higher output and streamlined operations.
- **Improved quality and safety:** Supervisors play a crucial role in maintaining quality standards and promoting a safe work environment. With better leadership training, they can provide clearer guidance to their teams, monitor performance more effectively, and take proactive steps to prevent issues before they arise. This results in fewer defects, higher-quality products, and a safer work environment.
- **Boosted morale and retention:** One of the most significant outcomes of strong leadership is employee morale. Supervisors who are trained in relationship-building, conflict resolution, and other key areas foster a positive work culture where employees feel supported, valued, and engaged. This leads to higher job satisfaction, lower turnover, and a more cohesive team that is committed to the company's success.

AMS Helps Distributor Transform Their Leaders and Their Business

"There is hardly any facet of our company that Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions (AMS) hasn't touched, and their involvement with our management team and employees has helped us drive our business on a host of strategic and tactical levels."

— Blant Hurt, General Manager, SMA, Inc.

The Situation

SMA, Inc., is a distributor of agricultural-related parts that services customers across the country from its four distribution centers. The company was experiencing growing pains from a recent acquisition and recognized that many of its leaders had been promoted based on technical ability and would benefit from training on how to lead effectively.

The Solution

Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions, which is part of the MEP National Network, conducted extensive ~~leadership training with the executi~~ve and warehouse leadership teams. AMS also helped them create a strategic plan for their key initiatives to prioritize organizational energy and resources.

AMS facilitated quarterly review sessions with the executive team and helped them update it as needed. AMS also helped leaders measure employee engagement at each level of the organization.

CHAPTER 3

Upskilling Your Manufacturing Workforce for Industry 4.0 Capabilities

As manufacturing continues to evolve, the investment in new technologies is growing. According to Rockwell Automation, manufacturing investment in technology in 2024 was 30 percent higher than in 2023. As your machine operators transition from manual tasks to working with digital systems, upskilling them in digital literacy is essential.

Fortunately, adding Industry 4.0 capabilities does not have to be a complex process. Your local MEP Center can help you:

- Identify key technologies relevant to your operation, such as robotic automation and additive manufacturing.
- Create training plans with incremental steps to build technical literacy. For example, it might make sense to begin with company-wide software, such as an ERP system.
- Partner with local training organizations for hands-on learning opportunities.

This chapter outlines how foundational upskilling and training can prepare your workforce to implement Industry 4.0 technologies effectively, along with the potential benefits these technologies can bring to your business.

- **Human-machine interfaces (HMIs):** HMIs, such as touch screens or control panels, allow operators to monitor and adjust machine performance in real time, enabling them to analyze data, identify trends, and make decisions that improve efficiency and reduce downtime.
- **Collaborative robots (cobots):** With the increasing use of robotics in manufacturing, training your employees to work safely and efficiently alongside collaborative robots (cobots) is essential.
- **Additive manufacturing (3D printing):** Additive manufacturing, or 3D printing, is transforming rapid prototyping and small-batch production. Training your team to operate 3D printers, understand design for additive manufacturing, and how to troubleshoot common issues is vital for maximizing the value of this technology.

Industry 4.0 Upskilling Advantages

- **Boosts productivity and efficiency.** New technical competencies build momentum for continuous improvement.
- **Improves quality and safety.** Cobots can reduce injury-prone repetitive, manual labor while engaging and challenging workers to use technology for quality improvements.
- **Enhances innovation and competitiveness.** Manufacturers can grow their own technical capabilities so they are less dependent on technology vendors.
- **Increases job satisfaction.** New skills training, such as automation training, empowers workers to advance their careers, thereby increasing retention.

HMI Upskilling Is an Entryway to New Technologies

Think of HMI training as your entryway to robotics, automation, and other advanced manufacturing technologies. By training workers on how to use tablets and other devices to digitally monitor and control processes, you will create two-way communication between your floor and the rest of the company. The integration of tablets and HMIs into manufacturing processes enables real-time data exchange via dashboards and alerts. The connectivity allows remote control and collaborative decision-making. For example, if there is a machine stoppage, a floor-level employee enters the reason code on the tablet, and everyone works together to determine how to proceed.

HMI training may involve digital process control training to reduce process variation. For example, if you are making a screw, and your machine tolerances are within plus or minus a thousand, there are multiple ways to reduce variation. These methods may include adding sensors on your machine and/or continuous feedback loops.

Once these digital process controls are in place, the machine can self-correct if it has an issue. This frees your employees from having to walk around with a clipboard to check temperature, pressure, or flow rate. They can focus on more value-added tasks, while leadership uses the new data to make enterprise-level process improvements.

Technology Upskilling Connects Shop Floor to Business Performance

"HMI is key to connecting manufacturing floor performance back to financial metrics. Manufacturers need a direct tie from their shop floor performance to their profitability performance and financials. Then they can see how much money they're making or losing in real-time."

—Robert Scipione, Manufacturing Services Manager of the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC)

Cobot Upskilling Opens the Door to Automation and New Careers

Collaborative robot (cobot) upskilling provides your operator-level employees, supervisors, and maintenance personnel with the skills needed to safely work with cobots. As automation technologies like cobots become a fundamental part of manufacturing processes, it's important that your workforce is prepared to integrate and work alongside these advanced technologies.

Cobot training starts with teaching employees how to interact with cobots in a safe environment, emphasizing safe operating practices and the importance of maintaining a human-centric approach to automation. This means training workers to recognize potential risks, such as the importance of safeguarding areas where cobots operate, ensuring that safety protocols are followed, and learning how to troubleshoot minor issues without disrupting production.

Once employees are familiar with the safety aspects, training can shift to the technical aspects of working with cobots, such as programming and task delegation. Operators learn how to program cobots to perform specific tasks like material handling, assembly, machine tending, or packaging. This ability to directly program and adapt cobots to different tasks empowers your workforce to become more responsive to production needs.

For example, tasks that are repetitive or physically demanding — like loading and unloading parts from CNC machines — can be automated, allowing workers to focus on more complex and value-added activities, such as quality control, supervision, or process improvement. This often leads to lower turnover, as workers are relieved of the tedium of repetitive tasks, leading to greater job satisfaction and a more engaged workforce addressing production bottlenecks.

Cobots Provide Pathway to Developing, Retaining Higher Skills

As your employees gain proficiency with robotics, operators and maintenance personnel can transition into higher-level technical roles, such as robotics programming, automation system design, or maintenance. This boosts the technical capabilities of your workforce and creates a path for career advancement. Manufacturers can foster a culture of growth by offering employees the chance to develop new skills that align with the evolving demands of the industry.

Adding cobots can also help you attract new talent, particularly younger workers who are comfortable and eager to work with technology. With the right upskilling programs in place, you will position your company as an innovator, attracting workers with specialized skills and offering opportunities for career development.

Many MEP Centers in the MEP National Network offer upskilling programs for cobots and other Industry 4.0 technologies. Whether you're looking to learn how to select the right type of automation for specific tasks, maximize your return on investment, or prepare your staff to work alongside automation, your local MEP Center can provide the training and support you need to successfully integrate cobots into your manufacturing processes.

Important Questions to Ask Before Cobot Integration

- Which tasks are the most tedious and time-consuming for our operators?
- Could we automate these tasks and elevate our operators to more quality control and oversight roles?
- What if we could automate additional repetitive-motion tasks further down the production line?
- Most importantly, is there a task or job that we are constantly hiring for, that no one wants to do? Could this job be automated?
- Which design considerations do we need to keep in mind before we invest in new automation technology?

MMTC Helps Upskill CNC Machine Operators to Cobot Programmers

"The implementation of the cobot has been a huge success for Coventry Industries. We had our first 'lights out' run of the cobot, which added an additional 14 hours of production to the day."

— Mike Coventry, President, Coventry Industries

The Situation

Coventry Industries is a small company in Michigan that focuses on fabricating, metal forming, custom machining, manufacturing feasibility, and engineering. They were looking for a way to machine an optic plate, which represented a growth opportunity but was not part of their core operations.

The Solution

Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC), which is part of the MEP National Network, worked with Coventry to determine that they would benefit from implementing a cobot for machine tending. This would allow Coventry to do "lights-out" computer numerical control (CNC) manufacturing for their optic plates. MMTC developed a two-phase project to mentor Coventry and support the cobot implementation.

Three of Coventry's CNC operators learned how to program the cobot and set it up to run different parts, which created the capability for the cobot to run day and night. Within a few days, the cobot was put into production, which has led to a 300 percent increase in production for optic plates.

3D Printing Upskilling and Training Essentials

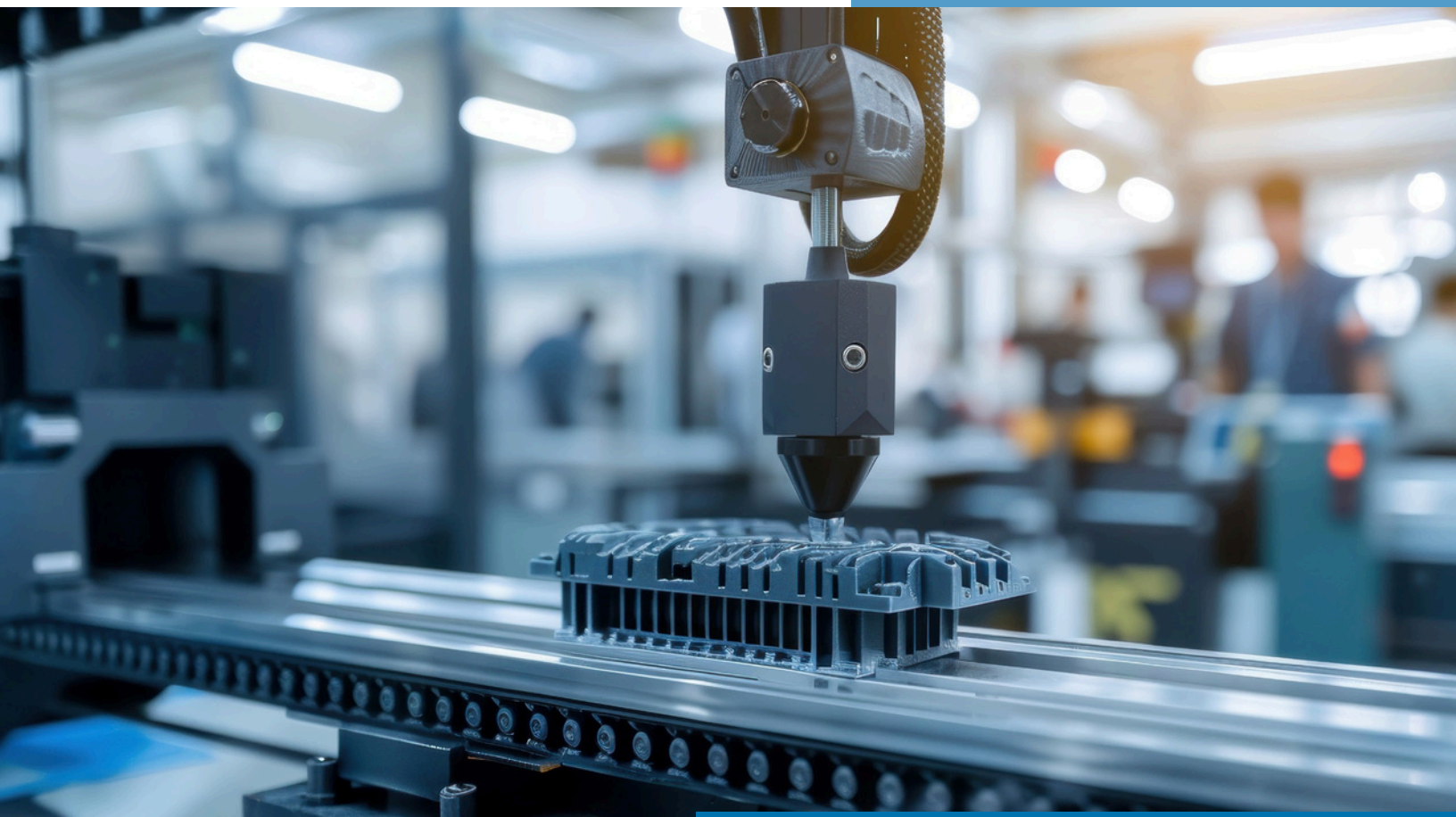
Additive manufacturing, also referred to as 3D printing, can give SMMs a competitive edge by enabling faster prototyping and more flexible production capabilities. To fully leverage 3D printing technology, upskilling in additive manufacturing is essential. Proper training ensures that your team can operate 3D printing equipment effectively, troubleshoot issues, and optimize the technology to improve production efficiency.

Fortunately, there are multiple types of 3D printing training available through the MEP National Network. This type of upskilling may involve the fundamentals of using a fused deposition modeling (FDM) printer, such as how to prevent issues like bed adhesion or "spaghetti monsters" (when an object detaches from the print bed in mid-printing).

Other hands-on training covers key FDM printer functions and quality control troubleshooting. Participants learn how to diagnose and improve the quality of 3D prints and how to use existing 3D models. Most importantly, training shows manufacturers how to calculate the costs involved to generate ROI for 3D printing and the basics for quoting 3D printing costs.

Questions to Answer Before Investing in 3D Printing

- What specific problem or opportunity am I trying to address?
- Do I have the technical expertise and resources to support 3D printing integration?
- What is the expected ROI and how will 3D printing fit into my overall production strategy?



CHAPTER 4

Using a Quality Framework for Upskilling to Grow Business Potential

Upskilling around a proven quality framework, such as ISO or ERP implementation training, will help you fulfill a need for a specific business opportunity or position your company to expand its capabilities and attract new customers. These frameworks provide tools for evaluating and improving operational processes, ensuring that your business is prepared for growth opportunities. For example, you may have an opportunity to fill a supply chain gap in a growing regional ecosystem, but it will require ISO certification or a Quality Management System (QMS) for you to get that new business. Or your business may be required by a new or existing customer to implement an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

ERP implementations and ISO certification are essential business management tools that should involve stakeholders at every level of your company. This is why local MEP Centers help SMMs add ISO, QMS, and ERP capabilities to their businesses, including upskilling their workforce to master them.

The ISO Methodology as a Framework for Upskilling

ISO certification, particularly ISO 9001 for Quality Management Systems, is highly valued by your customers because it creates a resilient and consistent production process. ISO certification can help you adopt advanced manufacturing technology and secure supply chain partnerships. ISO certifications require active involvement at all levels of your company to help define your best practices for production process improvements.

These benefits go beyond certification. Using ISO as a quality framework for upskilling, you empower your employees with the discipline and confidence to help them become engaged stakeholders in your company, with defined expectations and rewards. As a result, this type of training is helping SMMs better define business infrastructure, processes, resource planning, and individual employee responsibilities.

ISO Upskilling for New ERP Implementation

An ERP system integrates business functions, from production planning to financial reporting, into a centralized platform to help businesses get visibility into and manage all their departments in one place. It helps manufacturers align everyone around common processes and procedures.

However, implementing a new ERP system requires training. Employees need to:

- Understand current operational processes.
- Modify existing workflows in order to leverage the benefits of the system.
- Customize software to support existing production or inventory management needs.

To overcome these challenges, local MEP Centers help manufacturers use the ISO quality framework to prepare their operators and supervisors for ERP implementation. For example, they use "pain point" exercises, such as sessions on non-conforming materials, which could cause assemblies not to work at different stations down the line. Through these exercises, each person becomes aware of why their task is critical to their internal customer down the line.

This type of upskilling prepares employees for specific ERP training and implementation. It also shows them how the new system can simplify their work, alleviating some concerns about adopting the new technology. By helping employees understand the value of the ERP system, you create a smoother transition and ensure a higher rate of adoption, ultimately improving overall operational efficiency.

MMEC Helps Manufacturer Upskill Workforce for Market Growth

"The Center [MMEC] has given us the confidence to pursue the development of our business. We utilize the Center as a consultant in helping with input and direction."

—Todd Such, President, Such Group International

The Situation

Such Group International (SGI), a Montana processing and packaging company, needed help to train their staff on inventory management through a new ERP to support new customer requirements. They also needed to improve overall business systems in order to pursue new business opportunities.

The Solution

SGI reached out to their local MEP Center, the **Montana Manufacturing Extension Center** (MMEC), to help them implement an ISO 9001:2015 quality management system. The new QMS served as SGI's upskilling framework to help them move their workforce toward full ERP implementation. Nearly the entire company participated in more than 100 hours of training. This involved:

- Implementing a training and performance management system for positions to support the operational changes.
- Building a foundational understanding of Lean manufacturing, ISO implementation, and ERP use.
- Creating documentation of an ISO-compliant quality management system as they trained numerous individuals for ERP implementation.

Thanks to the help from their local MEP Center, SGI now has **a documented business infrastructure** with training best practices, which is helping the company to substantially improve employee recruitment and retention. SGI also has an ISO 9001-compliant system — allowing them to bid on products and projects requiring ISO 9001 certifications. Over time, this will open the door to opportunities for new customers and markets.

CHAPTER 5
The MEP National Network is the Upskilling Solution

The MEP National Network Is Here to Help

Your local MEP Center, through the MEP National Network, provides training programs and upskilling opportunities like the ones presented in this white paper to help you grow your business. Plus, the Network is continually providing new workforce development resources for businesses like yours, including programs to enhance technical skills, foster innovation, and promote best practices in manufacturing.

MEP Workforce Resources and Services

The MEP National Network offers resources and services that address every stage of the employee lifecycle, including recruiting and hiring, skills training and upskilling, and supervisor training and leadership development.

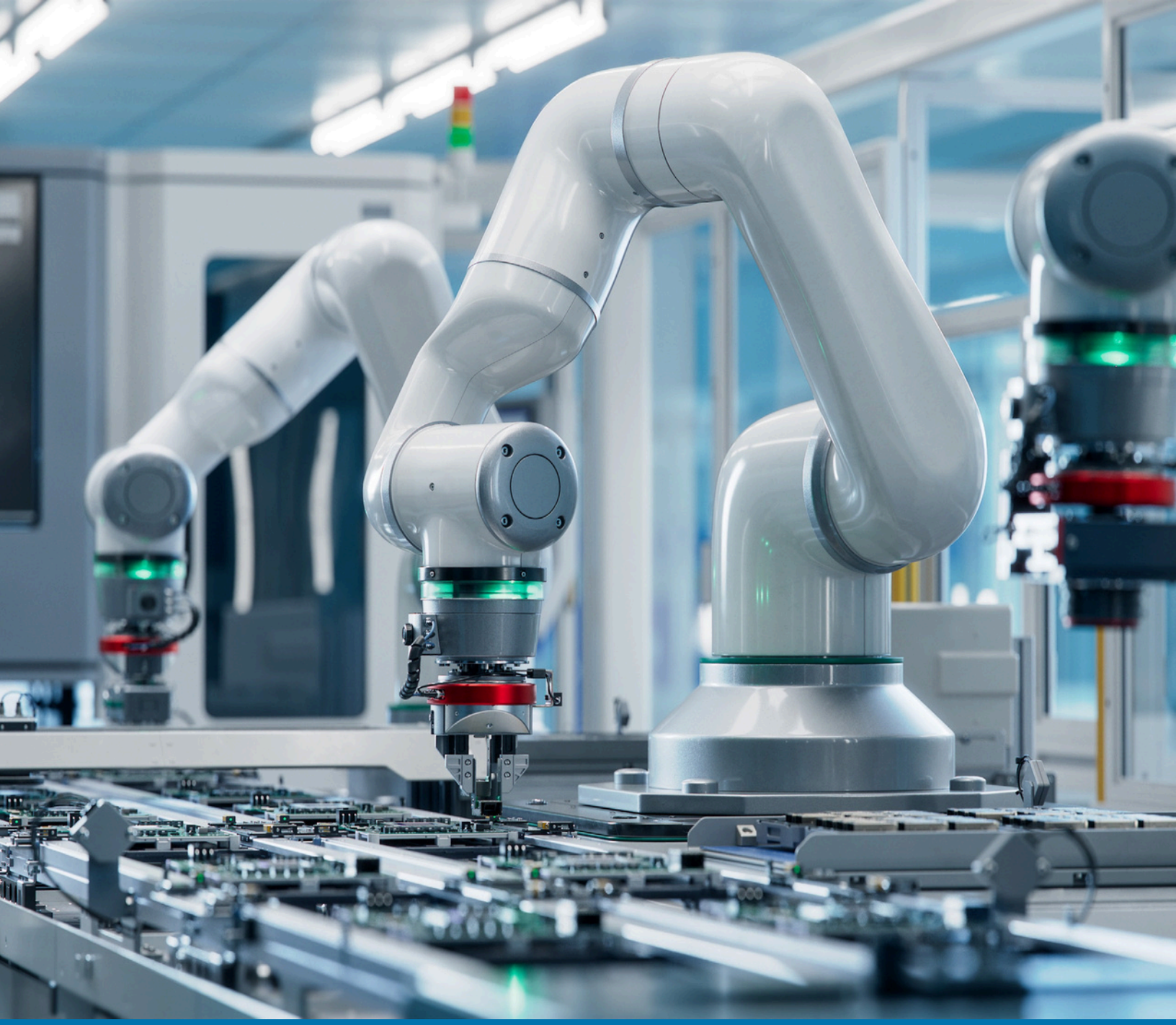
Click below to learn more and access resources such as:

- Workforce blog articles to help you address your talent challenges.
- A library of workforce development resources, including videos, blogs, reports, and a Contact Form to reach out to the MEP National Network for workforce development support.
- Our interactive workforce map where you can quickly search for specific workforce programs, services, and training at your local MEP Center.

Connect With the MEP National Network

If you are interested in learning more about the MEP National Network or how to work with us, please email mfg@nist.gov. You can always contact your local MEP Center to speak with a workforce development expert, ask questions, and learn about upskilling and other workforce resources and support in your area.

Contact your local MEP Center



MEP National Network™

The MEP National Network is a unique public-private partnership that delivers comprehensive, proven solutions to U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing U.S. manufacturing.

Focused on helping small and medium-sized manufacturers generate business results and thrive in today's technology-driven economy, the MEP National Network comprises the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST MEP) and 51 MEP Centers located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

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