The National Tooling and Machining Association and the Precision Metalforming Association conducted their annual Federal Government Advocacy Survey in December 2013. Responses came from 134 metalworking manufacturers who averaged 64 employees in 2013. These manufacturers supply components, tools, and other products and services to the agriculture, aerospace, appliance, automotive, defense, electronics, energy, medical, transportation, and other industries.

- 90% of surveyed manufacturing business are experiencing challenges finding qualified employees.
- 37% of the companies having trouble finding workers are having severe challenges.
- 53% of the companies having trouble finding workers are having moderate challenges.

- 74% of surveyed manufacturers currently have “skilled” job openings, up from 69% in 2012.
- 66% of manufacturers with open jobs have up to five openings.
Part of the problem facing the manufacturing sector today is the aging workforce.

55% of surveyed manufacturers report that the average age of their skilled workers is between 41 and 50 years old.

Nearly 20% report that the average skilled worker in their company is between 51 and 60 years old.

Less than 2% report that their average skilled worker is under 30.

To fill the gap in qualified skilled workers, the surveyed manufacturing companies are trying several different techniques. Some of the most popular are shown here.