

Some Suggestions to Help With Your Skilled Worker Shortage

Very often, when meeting with Human Resource professionals or business owners in various industries, we hear that recruitment is an issue they face. This may sound familiar to you: You have good jobs available but can't seem to find skilled workers to fill those vacancies. While more global approaches are being taken to address this problem, here are some quick tips and suggestions that may help your company today.

Training: Take time to thoroughly assess the skills of your current employees as well as the needs of your business. Where there are gaps, consider training your employees in order to bridge those gaps. Whether you use a more seasoned worker or an outside training provider, this may be a good option for both the company and the employee. With training, you can move those employees into your higher level positions. This may create new openings that require a more common skill set, making those job openings easier to fill than the specialized, highly skilled ones. The payoff for training your employees are well worth your investment. The result is employees who know your company, have advanced skills to help grow your business, and feel good about the investment you made in them.

Technology: Using technology in your recruitment process can, among other things, help you reach a broader audience, save you time and money, and leverage resources that are already in existence. Business Networking sites such as [LinkedIn](#) and [ZoomInfo](#) offer methods for your search for individuals in your field using keywords. You can then contact those individuals and give them information about your company and the opportunities you have available. You can also subscribe to e-newsletters that are specific to your industry or region. This will help you to network with people in your field to see what they are doing to help address the challenges they are facing. These newsletters also keep you up to date on what's happening in your industry or region. Some examples of websites that offers these types of newsletters include: [Industry Week](#) (manufacturing), [Greater Rochester Enterprise](#), [New York Photonics](#), and many others. Social Networks such as [Facebook](#) and [MySpace](#) may also be a source for locating individuals in your industry. Participating in Virtual Job Fairs can mean more exposure for your company than a traditional job fair. Virtual Job Fairs run for a longer period of time, are accessible to anyone, anywhere the internet is available, and are marketed to professional level job seekers and college graduates and alumni. To effectively and easily tap into both active and passive job seekers, technology is a great resource.

Testing: By implementing assessments and testing in your recruitment process, you can help to ensure that a potential candidate has the skills and aptitude required to effectively perform the tasks required for a particular job within your company. There are hundreds, if not thousands of pre-employment assessments available. Some, such as the [WorkKeys System](#), measure a person's trainability or aptitude. This assessment is a reliable way to measure foundational skills to ensure you are hiring the most qualified, trainable candidates. Skills assessments such as [Provelt](#) are basic hiring tools that are simple to administer, cost-effective and a reliable way to determine whether or not a candidate truly possesses the skills represented on their resume. For example, if you are looking for a CNC Operator who must know how to read blueprints, you can have a job candidate tested for blueprint reading to ensure that they have the skill level required to be an asset in that position. There are also many pre-hire personality tests available. These types of tests can give you insight into a candidate's job fit, attitude toward work, behavior, and more. The key to successfully utilizing testing and assessments is choosing the appropriate assessments for your particular jobs. There are hundreds of companies that specialize in pre-employment assessments and they can guide you in finding assessments that address your company's needs. You can do a simple Google search for more information on which assessments and tests are available in your region.

Again, these are just some suggestions on ways to help if your company is experiencing challenges with recruitment. If you would like more information or want one of our Business Services Representatives to talk to you about your specific needs, please contact Christina Bakewicz at 585-232-5232 or CBAKEWICZ@ROCHESTERWORKS.ORG.

Resources to Help Small Businesses Purchase Equipment

There are many resources available for growing businesses in the Greater Rochester Area. It can sometimes be a daunting task to gather information on all of these programs and then determine what program best fits your needs.

While these programs do have eligibility requirements, many companies qualify for assistance. There is no way to cover all of the Economic Development resources available, but here is information regarding some that are available in our region that assist with purchasing equipment:

The following programs are administered through Monroe County and are for **non-retail, for profit businesses that are headquartered in Monroe County**. Companies must also:

- Meet the [SBA's definition of a small business](#)
- Create one job for every \$50,000 in equipment purchased up to \$200,000 or increase employee base by 10%, whichever is less. Job creation must occur in Monroe County within 24 months of equipment purchase

The GreatRate: Provides businesses with an interest subsidy on a fixed rate loan or a capital lease used to purchase machinery or equipment, if the company meets its job creation requirement. The subsidy will be 3% or 4%, depending on whether or not the equipment is purchased locally. Call 585-753-2000 or [Click here](#) for more details.

GreatRebate: Provides businesses with a rebate on equipment purchases of at least \$50,000 if the company purchases the equipment with cash (not borrowed funds) and meets its job creation requirement. Rebates can be up to \$5,000. Call 585-753-2000 or [Click here](#) for more details.

Monroe Manufacturing Rewards: Provides manufacturing businesses with a rebate on manufacturing equipment purchases of \$25,000 to \$49,999. The rebate will be \$1,000 upon proof of purchase of qualified equipment. Unlike the 2 previous incentives, there is no specific job creation criteria associated. However, the company must meet the following criteria:

- Be a manufacturer
- Purchase equipment not subject to sales tax under article 28 of NYS Tax Law
- Meet SBA's definition of a small business
- Be headquartered in Monroe County
- Have equipment physically located in Monroe County

Call 585-753-2000 or [click here](#) for more information.

SBA 504 Program: This program provides long-term financing for the purchase of land, buildings and equipment at a fixed-rate on interest. Funding for SBA 504 loans is provided through a partnership between the SBA and a private sector lender. Call 585-753-2000 or [click here](#) for more information.

Tip: The best way to find out if your business and pending equipment purchase is eligible for these incentives is to contact the Monroe County Economic Development office directly at 585-753-2000 **before the equipment is purchased**. In some instances, these programs cannot be used if the equipment has already been purchased.

The City of Rochester also has Economic Development staff dedicated to assisting businesses of all sizes that are **located in the City of Rochester**. With regard to purchasing equipment, the following are some of the programs that are available:

Targeted Business Assistance Program: Through loans, this program assists targeted small businesses facing barriers to raising capital for growth to stimulate city employment, investment, and

development. One of the ways this is carried out is by providing capital for real estate purchases, building rehabilitation, new constructions or expansion, machinery and equipment, or working capital. For more information, call 585-428-6808 or [click here](#).

Additional Loan Programs:

Rochester Economic Development Corporation (REDCO) Loan Fund: This program is designed to create/retain jobs and stimulate investment. The fund provides \$25,000 - \$250,000 loans for equipment, real estate and working capital to industrial businesses in the city. For more information, call 585-428-6808 or [click here](#).

Kodak/City Economic Development Fund: This program provides loans up to \$100,000, which must be used with other capital resources, for real estate, machinery/equipment and working capital to industrial or high-technology firms for projects that create/retain city jobs. For more information, call 585-428-6808 or [click here](#).

Again, this is not an all inclusive list of the resources available, but it should help give you an idea of the great benefits to doing business in Greater Rochester!