

# *Identify and Nurture Future Talent*



**PT WORK Force**<sup>®</sup>



# Find & Nurture Talent

An oft-heard statement about the power transmission/motion control distribution industry is that it's a "relationship business." Relationships between manufacturers and distributors build inventory channels and marketing plans. Relationships between distributors and end customers build value in uptime and efficiencies.

Building relationships can also help you overcome a growing issue—finding the talent you need to fill open positions. Even if you don't feel it now, you will. If you're like many PT/MC companies, you employ people who are on the cusp of retirement. Or, if you're trying to grow your business, you're going to need people to keep up with the new customers and serve the new markets. Where is that talent going to come from?

Once you have a position open that you need to fill, you're already late to the game. Companies—from Wal-Mart to Grainger—are out there right now, filling their talent pipelines with people they might not hire for three to five years. You can't afford to wait until you've got an open position. You need to build relationships that help you identify and nurture the talent you'll need in the future.

Similar to how you build your customer base, start cultivating potential candidates. It's not that hard but it does take time and effort on your part. There are potential candidates everywhere you turn.

Once you've identified a source for potential talent, take that first step—and then the next and the next. Remember— you're competing with many, many other local businesses who might be more familiar or more visible. Whichever route you choose, become a valuable partner by committing (and following through) in ways which benefit your source.

***Not sure where  
to start?*** 

# Schools

Contact your local elementary, middle and high schools and community/technical colleges to find out if they have any opportunities for you to exhibit at a career event, present to a class or host a field trip at your company. Yes we said elementary school—it's not too early to begin planting the seed about power transmission/ motion control.

Attend a career event at a school. When you call the school, ask to talk to a career counselor, guidance counselor, administrator, assistant principal, etc. If you have a child attending the school, talk with their teacher. Ask if they have a class career day or perhaps a career event you can attend.

For more information, download the PT WORK Force® D.I.Y. Guide: "[Career Fair Participation](#)" or access the webinar [Volunteer for a Local Career Fair: It's Easy, Fun and Rewarding](#).

Make a presentation to a class. Tell the story about how your company got started, what it stands for, how it helped "save the day" for one of your customers or how your employees helped out at a local charity. Putting your company in the lead role of a story can make your company be remembered by the students you address and make them eager to learn more.

For more information, download the PT WORK Force® D.I.Y. Guide: [Giving a Classroom Presentation](#) or access the webinar [The Do's & Don't's of Classroom Presentations](#)

Offer a scholarship. Work with the school to develop the criteria and then let the school determine who gets the scholarship. Your company's name will be tied to this scholarship, and you may be putting your future employee through training needed to work in your company.

Host a company tour. Instructors, especially at community college and technical schools, are anxious to show their students the career opportunities out there. And, for many, seeing is understanding—many visual learners need to see, touch and hear before they can understand what power transmission/motion control is all about.

For more information, download the PT WORK Force® D.I.Y. Guide: [Giving a Company Tour](#) or access the webinar [Impress Your Future Workforce with a Company Tour](#).

Mentor a student. Connect with your local colleges, community colleges and technical schools and get to know someone in their placement office (career center). Offer to come in and speak to a group of students. Tell the placement office you are willing to talk one-on-one with any student who is interested in learning more about industrial distribution and leave your business cards. And, don't forget to post any openings you may have on their job/ bulletin board. You want to get your company name out in every place you can.

Sponsor an intern. Contact local technical and community colleges to see if they have an established internship program and how your company can get involved. Even if an intern would not make a good hire, chances are they know someone who would.

# Local Organizations

Participate in Manufacturing Day. Each year, on the first Friday in October there is a nationwide event called Manufacturing Day, sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturing and the Manufacturing Institute. Manufacturers (and distributors) can host an open house/company tour for those interested in learning more about the field. Many schools bring their students to these events to learn more about the manufacturing process. People are curious about what you do— let them see your company in action.

And, when people come to your event (whether local residents or a bus load of students) make sure you get their name and email address. Add these to your database. Send them a thank you for attending your event and let them know you are always interested in finding new talent. Ask if they know anyone who might be interested in the field and encourage them to forward your email.

[For more information, visit the Manufacturing Day website.](#)

Support young people with an interest in technology. There are a number of organizations—[SkillsUSA](#), [SkillsCanada](#), [FIRST Robotics](#)—with teams at the local level. These teams compete regionally and nationally to see who is the best at a particular skill—robot building and maneuvering, CNC operation, electrical wiring, etc. many of these skillsets are those that companies like yours are looking for.

If you have equipment they can use in building or practicing their particular skill, consider donating it to a team in your area. These groups are also looking for volunteers and monetary support. In many cases, your company can be listed as a supporter of the team, on their website and at local events where the teams participate. If you volunteer to help out by lending your experience, you can see first-hand the interest level and the ability of all those on the team. Then, you can start building your talent pipeline with those you know are both interested and talented. If this is not something you would like to do, ask your employees if they are interested and be sure to allow time off for participation at events.

Join a parent/ teacher organization. If you have a child in school, join their PTO. Parents/ guardians and teachers have a great amount of influence on their children. Convince the parents/guardians (or teachers) that a career in industrial distribution with your company can be a great opportunity for their child, with good pay and benefits and not requiring a college degree, and they will tell their children.



# Local Organizations

## Continued

As you are talking with parents/guardians, you can find out what their children might be interested in and you can find out what their parents/guardians do—they could be a future customer or employee. If it meets with what your organization needs, offer to talk with the child about the talent required. Or, invite both the child and parents to tour your company and learn more about future opportunities.

Get involved with a local charity or cause. When your company is represented at events, start conversations about your company and what you do. Your company name could be featured on the event promotion or at the event itself. Supporting a local charity is something the younger generation is very committed to doing, and you can make connections with both future employees and parents.

If you can't get involved personally, let employees choose a charity they would like to support and give them time off to attend events. Encourage them to talk about your organization with those they meet. And if volunteering time is not something you can do, there are other ways to get involved: sponsor a booth at a local event, make a cash donation or equipment to a cause, sponsor a local Little League team, etc. Anything that will get your company name on a sign, in the local paper, attached to a prize, on a t-shirt or uniform is a great opportunity for your company to find future employees and create new business.

Join the Chamber of Commerce or local business group. There you will get to meet other businesspeople, and you will be recruiting within your local community. Ask what business they are in—they could be a potential customer. Talk with those other business owners and find out how they are finding new employees and growing future candidates.

In most cases, a new employee will be living in your community or very close by. Establishing relationships with other businesses can get you leads on candidates that didn't fit their organization or open position but might be a perfect fit in your company.



# Your own Workforce

Establish company ambassadors. Find people in your company who are passionate about what they do and want to let others know. Give them the tools they need to promote your business as a great place to work. Encourage them to find opportunities to talk with groups, tell their neighbors and friends about what your company does. Help them put together a story about what they like best about working at your company, do a video of them telling their story AND post it to your website.

Give them **TIME OFF** to attend various events where they will have the opportunity to interact with potential employees and encourage them to get names and contact information on those people who show an interest in what they are saying.

Start building a database of those individuals (both young and old) who seem interested in your organization. When you are holding an open house or giving a company tour or attending a local event, send them an email inviting them to attend. People won't know all the great things about your organization if they don't interact with you and your employees.

If you know the skills an individual has or what their talent or interest is, include that information in the database. When you have an opening, go to your database and find those with that skill or interest. Send an email (or if you have a mobile number, send a text) to personally invite them to apply for an open position.

# Public Relations

Use your website to tell your company story. Make sure your website has an “about our company” section and careers page. The About section should include your company history, any achievements your company has attained, how it has grown, what it does, your culture, etc. Make sure you have employee’s pictures (videos are even better) saying why they enjoy working at your company.

Include a way for someone to sign up to receive more information on your company, be included on your newsletter list or come in for an informational interview to learn more about the field and your organization.

Leverage your social media presence. Your company needs a social media presence to stay in contact with those individuals you believe will be good candidates for a potential hire. Include your LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram information on your business card and encourage those you come in contact with to follow your company. You can post information on upcoming events where your company will be present as well as information about your organization and any company news that might be of interest.

Since video has become so prevalent and captures someone’s attention quicker, consider starting a YouTube channel for your company. Post videos of your organization while someone does a “virtual tour” of your company. Take videos of the events you attend and post them. Remember to keep them short and interesting to show off all the good things about your company.

# Broaden Your Audience

In addition to the younger generation, there are others who could make great additions to your talent pipeline:

- Career-changers, teachers and parents may be looking for other career opportunities. When talking with them about your company, ask if they might be interested in a future position.
- Retired people know how to work hard and will probably have at least some of the skills you are looking for. Many are interested in re-entering the workforce on either part or full-time basis. Get in touch with your local AARP chapter to find out how to get in front of them.
- Veterans are a great addition to your talent pipeline. Many have the experience you may need—inventory, purchasing, warehouse, machinists—the list of jobs within the military is endless. These individuals also know how to work on a team, and many have leadership skills.
- Stay-at-home moms whose children are growing up. Moms have great experience with scheduling, juggling many tasks at once and may be looking for a way to re-enter the work world.





# *Remember,*

There are potential candidates everywhere you turn - you just have to know how to cultivate them and keep them interested in your company.

Get your name in front of as many people as possible.

Both young and old—students, career-changers, retirees, veterans, those re-entering the workforce - and develop relationships with them. The sooner you start to build and grow your talent pipeline, the better off you will be.

It just takes getting involved in activities in your community and keeping up a dialogue with potential candidates before you need to hire.



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## About the *PTDA Foundation*

As the charitable arm of the Power Transmission Distributors Association, The PTDA Foundation champions education, outreach, and research initiatives relevant to the power transmission/ motion control (PT/MC) industry that enhance the knowledge, professionalism and productivity of industry stakeholders.

PT Work Force is a key initiative of the PTDA Foundation that is developing resources to help PT/MC companies attract, hire, on-board, train, manage and retain employees. The PT WORK Force can be reached at [ptda.org](http://ptda.org)

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