



IMPROVING THE SKILL BASE

Top Picks

Workforce Training and Development

Lea A.P. Tonkin, editor-in-chief

Taking initiative to meet workforce training and development challenges can start close to home, counseled Michael Tamasi, president and CEO of AccuRounds, Avon, MA. He shared recommendations for related resources, noting that similar resources are available in other regions of the country.

Start by contacting a local or state workforce training fund or similar agency, Tamasi said. In Massachusetts, for example, information about applying for matching funds in a grant-type program is available through Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund Programs (www.mass.gov). Resources providing free assistance in the application process are also available through the state agency.

“Our employees have received training in math and trigonometry, plus all types of lean training (such as 5S and setup reduction), English as a Second Language (ESL) training, supervisory skills, and technical development training through four grants during the past 10 years,” Tamasi said. “You are improving the

overall skill base and the earning power of employees, an incentive to participate in the training sessions.” Another regional group recommended by Tamasi is Greater Boston Manufacturing Partnership (www.gbmp.org).

Technical Change Associates (TCA) in Utah is a lean business consulting group, Tamasi noted (www.technicalchange.com).

Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) partnered in training programs at AccuRounds, Tamasi said. For example, MassMEP provided Machinist On-Site Training (MOST).

“It was a neat program. They had classes on a bus in our parking lot. Students learned how mini-milling and lathe machines worked, and we had an opportunity to hire trainees at the end,” said Tamasi. In every region of the United States, MEP assistance is available; check the MEP website www.nist.gov/mep/ for a local contact.

“We constantly need to have upgraded training in continuous improvement and other lean techniques,” he added. “We participate in networking groups to help us do that.” He cited the National Tooling & Machining Association (www.ntma.org), the Precision Machined Product Association (www.pmpa.org), and the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (www.nims-skills.org/web/nims.home) as examples, noting that industry-specific trade groups abound.

“The National Skills Coalition (info@nationalskillscoalition.org), a group based in Washington, DC, gets the word out on workforce development,” Tamasi said, adding that the group endorses sector partnerships for effective workforce training. Last year, he participated in a coalition meeting that attracted the Secretary of Labor. •



Michael Tamasi is a second-generation owner at AccuRounds. He has worked in the family business for 26 years. He received a B.S. in mechanical engineering from the University of New Hampshire and a master’s degree in business administration from Babson College. Tamasi is active in several industry and community organizations.

AccuRounds (www.accurounds.com) is a contract manufacturer focused on machining precision, custom cylindrical components — intricate shafts, pins, and valves — as well as assemblies for numerous industries including medical, defense, semiconductor, aerospace, and oil/gas. The company employs 62 people and attained nearly \$11 million in revenue during 2010.