

America's 10 Most-Wanted Workers

By Mary Lorenz, CareerBuilder.com writer

As more workers from the baby boomer generation retire, millions of jobs are opening up across a variety of industries; unfortunately, hiring managers are having trouble filling these vacant positions.

The reason? In some instances, there is simply a lack of interest in certain industries, such as manufacturing. Many of today's young professionals are focusing on jobs that require computer and analytical thinking skills, rather than ones that require working with their hands. In many cases, however, especially for hiring managers looking to fill management positions, the problem isn't a lack of candidates, but a lack of qualified candidates.

In order to resolve this problem, some employers are offering incentives to older workers who are willing to delay retirement for a few years. Others are offering hiring bonuses to attract new, more-qualified workers. Still, other companies are going right to the source of the problem, setting up courses with colleges and universities that train skilled workers or to pay students' tuition to prepare them for specialized work. Companies like Exelon and General Electric are providing research grants and scholarships for power engineering programs at four-year colleges. And the National Association of Manufacturers recently established the "Dream It. Do It." program to train young professionals and garner interest in manufacturing careers among students.

According to Manpower, Inc.'s 2007 Talent Shortage Survey, the following jobs are most in need of qualified workers right now. Due to high demand, pursuing a job in one of these fields could mean increased pay and more benefits for those willing to take the plunge.

1. Sales representatives

Qualifications: A four-year college degree with courses in marketing, leadership, communication, business and advertising, or a high school degree and a proven record of successfully selling other products. Excellent interpersonal and written communication skills are just as important as education and training. Average salary: * \$40,868

2. Teachers

Qualifications: Educational qualifications for postsecondary teacher jobs range from expertise in a particular field to a Ph.D., depending on the subject being taught and the type of educational institution. Average salary: \$45,281

3. Mechanics

Qualifications: Complete a formal training program in high school, or in a postsecondary vocational school or community college. Some service technicians, however, still learn the trade solely by assisting and learning from experienced workers. Average salary: \$43,760

4. Engineering technicians

Qualifications: An associate degree in engineering technology from a technical institute, vocational school or community college, creativity and good communications skills. Average salary: \$47,759

5. Management/Executives

Qualifications: Vary widely, depending on the size of the organization, but usually include several years of experience within an organization, a bachelor's degree and, oftentimes, advanced degree. Average salary: \$90,913

6. Truck Drivers -- Freight

Qualifications: Valid driver's license, clean driving record and demonstrated ability to handle machinery. Average salary: \$43,053

7. Drivers -- Delivery

Qualifications: Valid driver's license, clean driving record. Average salary: \$29,870

8. Accountants

Qualifications: Professional certification or licensure, a master's degree and proficiency in accounting and auditing computer software. Average salary: \$52,940

9. Construction Laborers

Qualifications: On-the-job training or completion of a formal apprenticeship programs. Average salary: \$40,658

10. Machine Operators

Qualifications: Completion of an apprentice program, on-the-job training or participation in a vocational school, technical school or community college program. Average salary: \$30,176

**Salary information provided by CBSalary.com and includes benefits and bonuses.*

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