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In the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, there is a debate as to whether our technologically advanced economy benefits or disadvantages the U.S. workforce. Artificial intelligence, robotics and the internet of things are sweeping across industries, triggering job security fears among some workers. In reality, companies are utilizing such technology to find the right employees, at the right time. With the help of predictive analytics and similar data processing, companies can reach and hire a larger pool of qualified applicants.

Job openings are projected to meet, even surpass, the historical peak of [2001](#) in the coming years. As the manufacturing industry reevaluates its future, it is clear that there is a significant skills gap. A report by The Manufacturing Institute reveals that unfilled manufacturing jobs could reach [2.4 million](#) by 2028, causing the U.S. to lose \$454 billion. Following the economic recession of 2008, millennials being introduced to the workforce were forced to reevaluate the terms of full-time work. This led them to look for part-time contract work, consequently helping the manufacturing industry. To proactively fill positions in this changing industry, there needs to be a strong collaboration between people, processes and systems.

The use of predictive analytics and machine-learning has become an efficient way to find and employ skilled candidates. Using these processes eliminates the guesswork and time expenditure of placing employees through more traditional methods while allowing for more targeted recruitment strategies.

No stranger to product fluctuation and supply chain breakdowns, manufacturers and top-tier suppliers are in an ideal position to hire from the gig workforce. To streamline the process, operations and workforce management teams can take the following steps:

No. 1 – Utilize predictive analytics to monitor productivity and identify inconsistencies

Gathering quality performance metrics from one end of the supply chain to the other, manufacturers can determine which processes are working and where inconsistencies exist. This type of data-driven decision-making helps target and hire freelance workers who possess the necessary traits and skills to maintain fluidity and performance in meeting objectives. The use of predictive in recruiting from large talent pools allows companies to select and retain talent committed to advancing within the field. Utilizing the gig economy, businesses may find talent to fulfill their need, but

that support the long-term mission. Predictive analytics recruits with the goal of retaining; bringing in the best talent and determining best next steps for continued training and advancement. Continuously analyzing workplace and labor data assures hiring and turnover needs are both met and kept.

No. 2 – Deploy a mobile platform

As a predominantly millennial-led group, gig workers spend most of their time on mobile devices rather than traditional forms of communication. To reach the key players of the 21st century, businesses must reimagine traditional recruiting channels. With a text or click, employees are being hired and offered incentives to recruit others. , it is just as to continue utilizing the technology that first attracted the talent. a platform where employees can go to train, receive feedback and monitor progress streamlines processes steering away from constant supervision as a means of assuring quality performance.

Simultaneously, scalable applications, specifically solutions software, can compile employee related data (tenure, attendance, performance, issue identification) for employers into one presentable dashboard while allowing for real-time communication. To effectively communicate through the multiple channels of the management supply chain, liaisons at each manufacturing and supply chain location need to be trained and fluent in the use of mobile, integrated data platforms.

No. 3 – Develop scalable solutions

To further economize, manufacturers and suppliers should carefully analyze the ebb and flow of their production needs, as many experience apparent seasonal trends. A flexible, trained and scalable workforce acquired through the above processes can allow manufacturers to reduce costs and ensure staffing levels are managed accordingly for seasonal production demands.

Leveraging innovative recruiting channels streamlines manufacturing business processes, while lowering overhead and saving time. As competition continues to scale, it is crucial to adapt to the economic environment; in this case, the utilization of the gig economy in tandem with modern technological offerings and trends.

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