



E L E M E N T

MILLENNIAL PERCEPTION STUDY

6.10.2020



ELEMENT CONDUCTED
PRIMARY RESEARCH TO REVEAL
**MILLENNIAL PERCEPTIONS OF
MANUFACTURING CAREERS**

LIVE POLLING QUESTIONS

WHICH BENEFIT DO YOU THINK MILLENNIALS VALUE MOST?

- Healthcare/HSA Match
- Retirement/401K Match
- Vacation Days
- Flexibility/Work-Life Balance
- Tuition Reimbursement

HOW HAS TALENT ACQUISITION CHANGED FOR YOUR COMPANY IN THE WAKE OF COVID?

- It has become harder to recruit talent.
- It has not changed at all.
- It has become easier to recruit talent.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do Millennials perceive manufacturing as a career choice?
2. How do Millennials search for employment?
3. Which benefits do Millennials value most?
4. How do Millennials perceive Northeast Wisconsin (NEW) as a place to work and live?



METHODOLOGY

TWO-PART APPROACH

PART 1—QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- Focus group with NEWMA employees
- Generative research to inform survey

PART 2—QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

- Survey to determine generalizability
- 31 questions, distributed electronically



PARTICIPANTS

NEWMA TARGET AUDIENCE SAMPLE

- n=119
- Millennial Manufacturing Employees in NEW
 - Ages 19-30
 - Employed by NEWMA member organizations

CONTROL GROUP FOR COMPARISON

- n=514 nationwide participants
- n=142 Millennial segment (19-30)

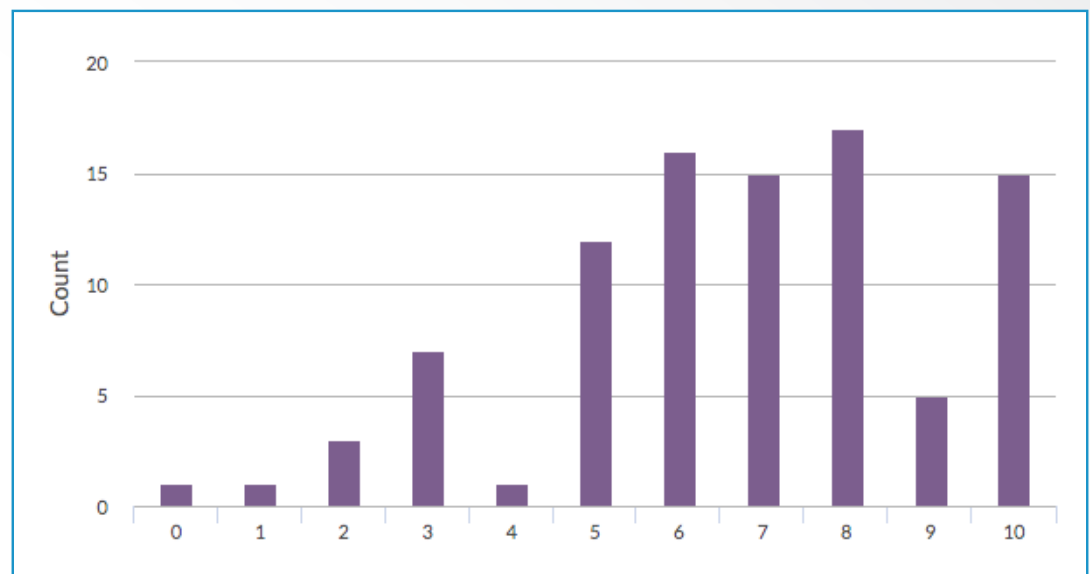


KEY FINDINGS

PERCEPTIONS OF MANUFACTURING

Young manufacturing employees in Wisconsin had a favorable long-term view of manufacturing as a career.

- Majority view manufacturing as a Career rather than a Stepping Stone.
- More than 80% expect to be working in manufacturing in 5 years.
- 76% believe a manufacturing career provides opportunity for growth.
- More than 70% would recommend manufacturing to a friend.

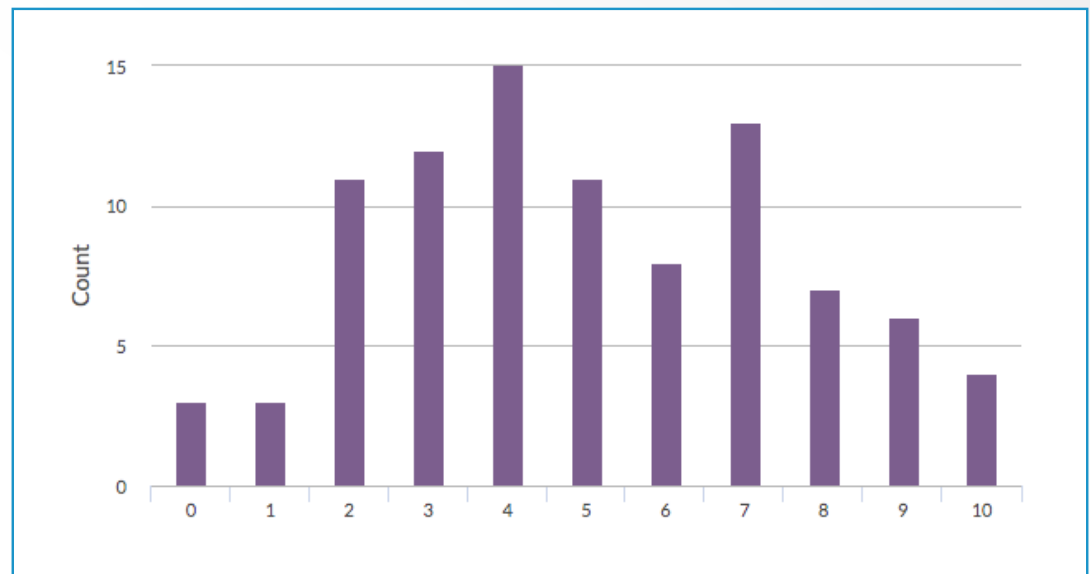


Semantic Differential: Stepping Stone (0) — Career (10)

PERCEPTIONS OF MANUFACTURING

Perceptions about the day-to-day work of manufacturing careers were mixed among young Wisconsin manufacturing employees.

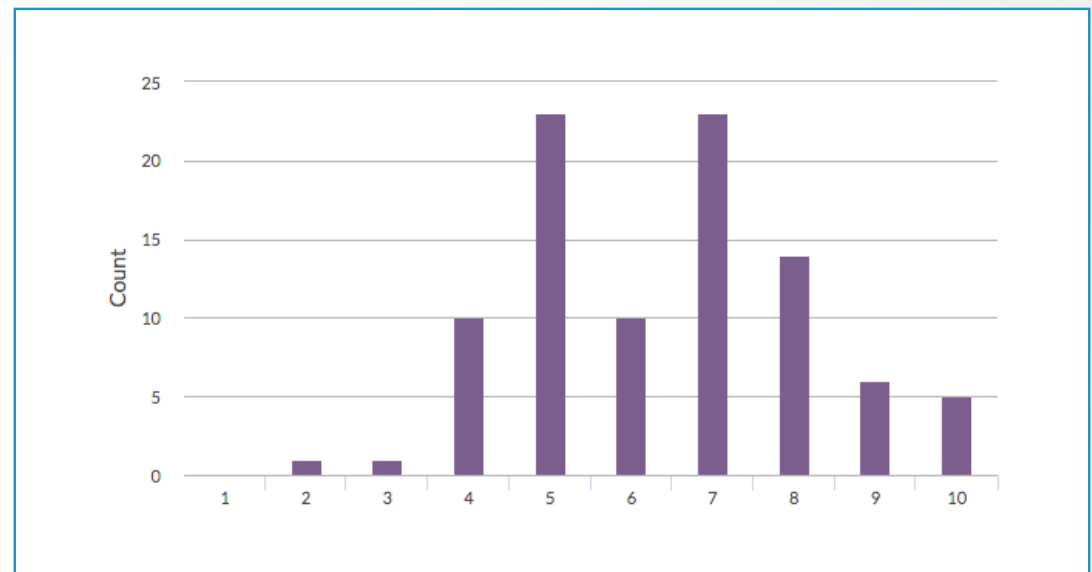
- Participants were split in their characterizations of daily work as Repetitive or Dynamic.
- This was in stark contrast to the qualitative data collected during focus group discussions, who strongly felt that their daily work was dynamic. This is a likely limitation of the small sample size.



Semantic Differential: Repetitive (0) — Dynamic (10)

PERCEPTIONS OF MANUFACTURING

Young manufacturing employees are more likely to view someone who works in manufacturing as a *Critical Thinker* than a *Button Pusher*, but this effect was not as strong as expected.



Semantic Differential: Button Pusher (0) — Critical Thinker (10)



PERCEPTIONS OF WISCONSIN

Young manufacturing employees in Wisconsin had very favorable perceptions of living and working here.

- Young manufacturing employees in Wisconsin rated their desire to live in NE Wisconsin slightly over 8/10 on average.
- Only 21.7% of young Wisconsin manufacturing employees would some day like to live and work somewhere other than NE Wisconsin.
- 74.2% of young Wisconsin manufacturing employees would recommend Wisconsin to a friend who was considering a new place to live.



Word cloud with point size representing frequency of response

PERCEPTIONS OF MESSAGE STRATEGIES

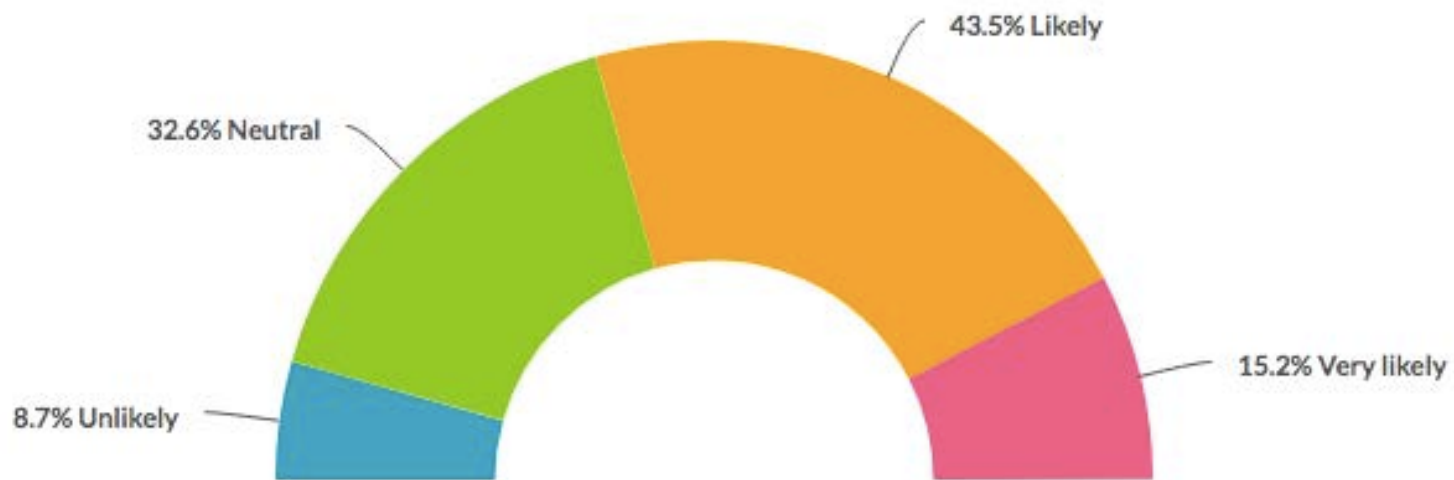
Young manufacturing employees in NE Wisconsin favored a different message strategy than the national audience.

- NEWMA audience strongly preferred *“Wisconsin is the ideal home for people who love sports and seasonal outdoor recreation.”*
- The national audience favored *“Housing costs in Wisconsin are about 15% below the national average.”*
- Both audiences were most apathetic about the message strategy that promoted, *“Wisconsin has the most manufacturing jobs per capita of any state in the U.S.”*



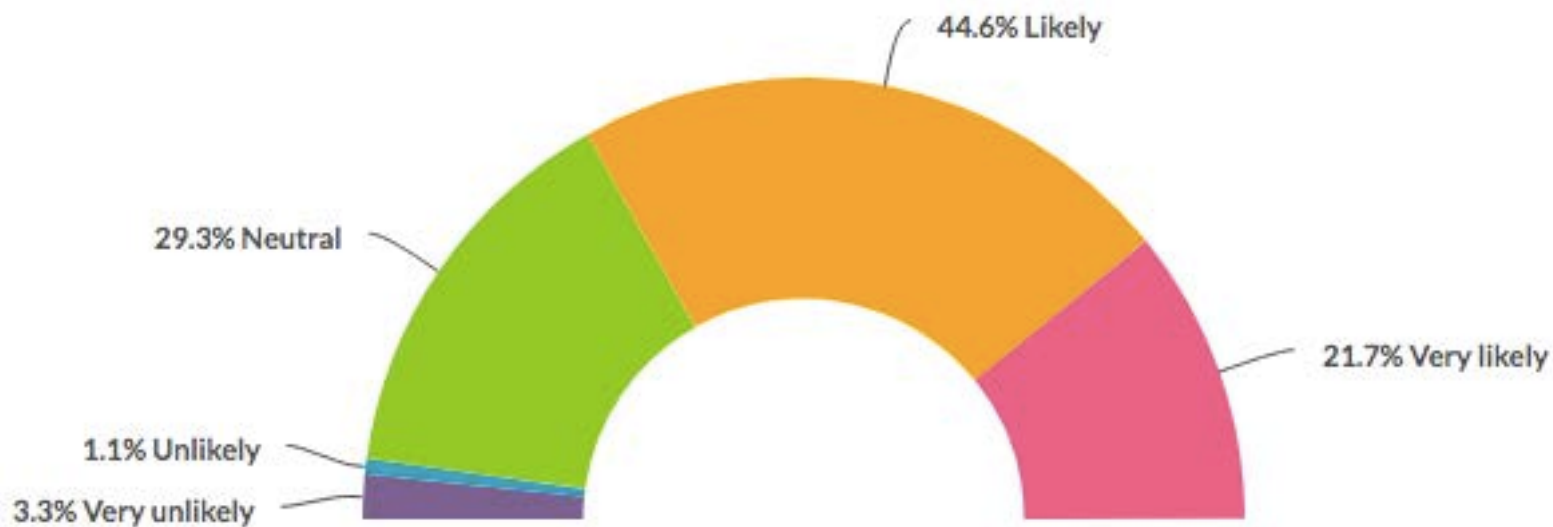
HOW LIKELY WOULD YOU BE TO CONSIDER LIVING & WORKING IN NE WI?

“Wisconsin has the most manufacturing jobs per capita of any state in the U.S.”



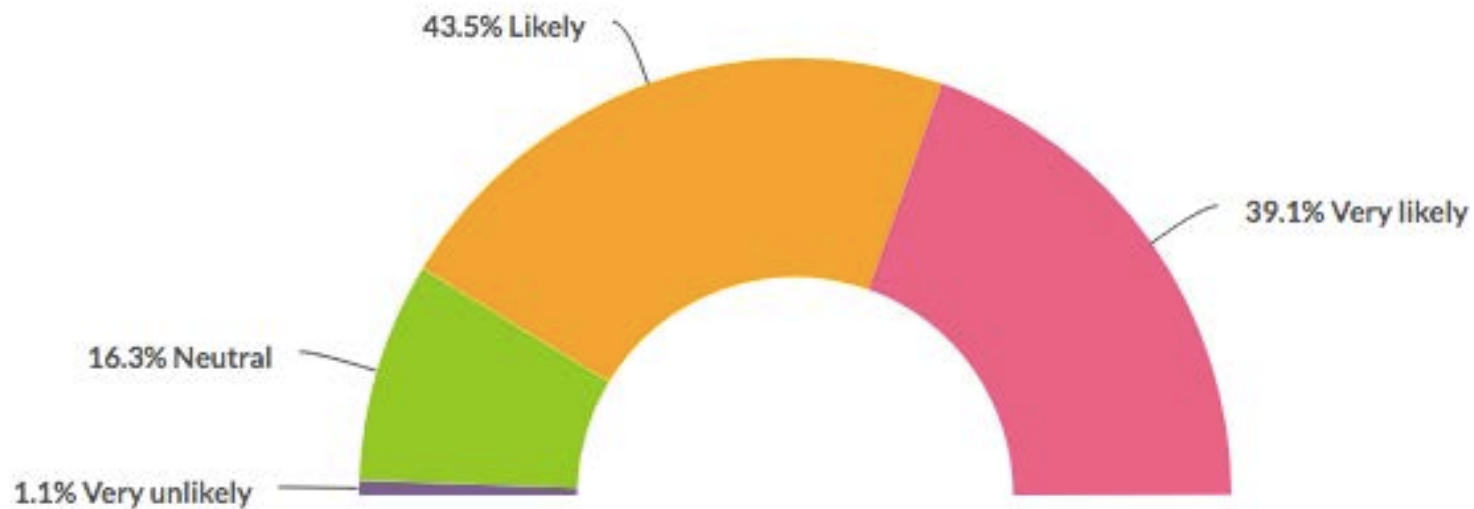
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HOW LIKELY WOULD YOU BE TO CONSIDER LIVING & WORKING IN NE WI?

“Wisconsin is the ideal home for people who love sports and seasonal outdoor recreation.”



SOURCES OF INFORMATION WHEN RESEARCHING JOBS

Young manufacturing employees in NE Wisconsin favor a mix of online and offline resources when looking for a new job in manufacturing.

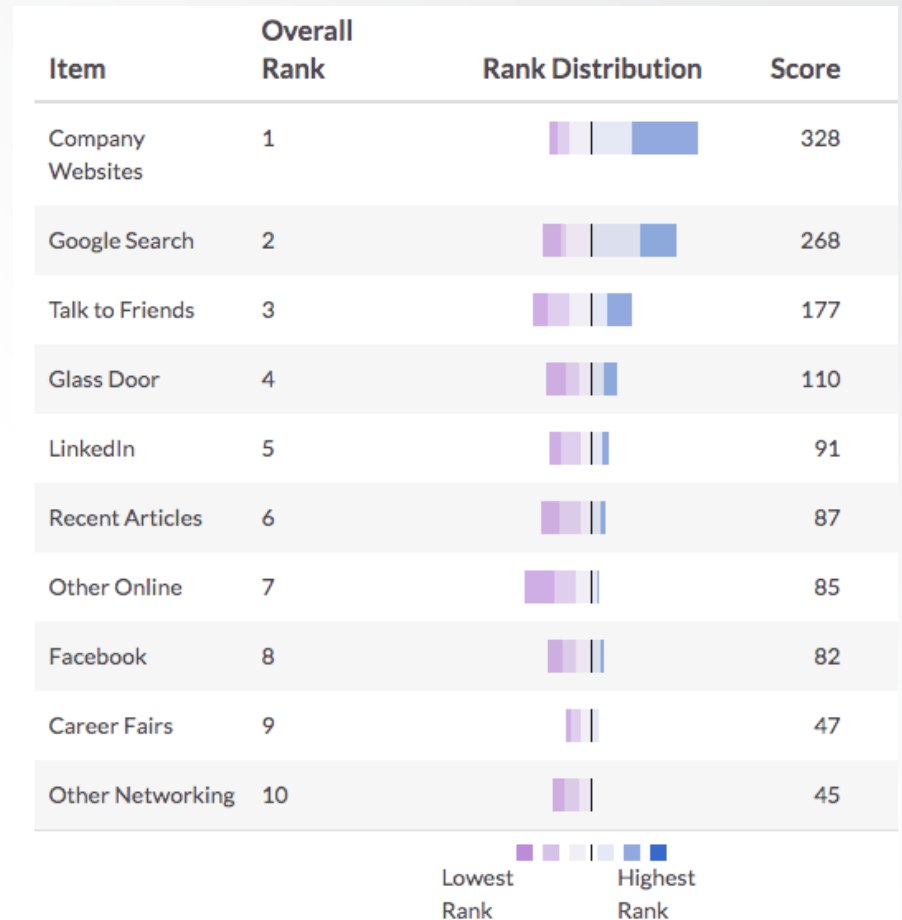
- *Indeed* was by far the top choice among participants, receiving the most total votes as well as the most #1 overall rankings.
- The second most common response among participants was *Google search*.
- *Talk to Friends* rounded out the Top 3, suggesting interpersonal channels remain important.



RESEARCHING A COMPANY BEFORE ACCEPTING OFFER

Digital presence is most important when attempting to win over prospective employees conducting due diligence research.

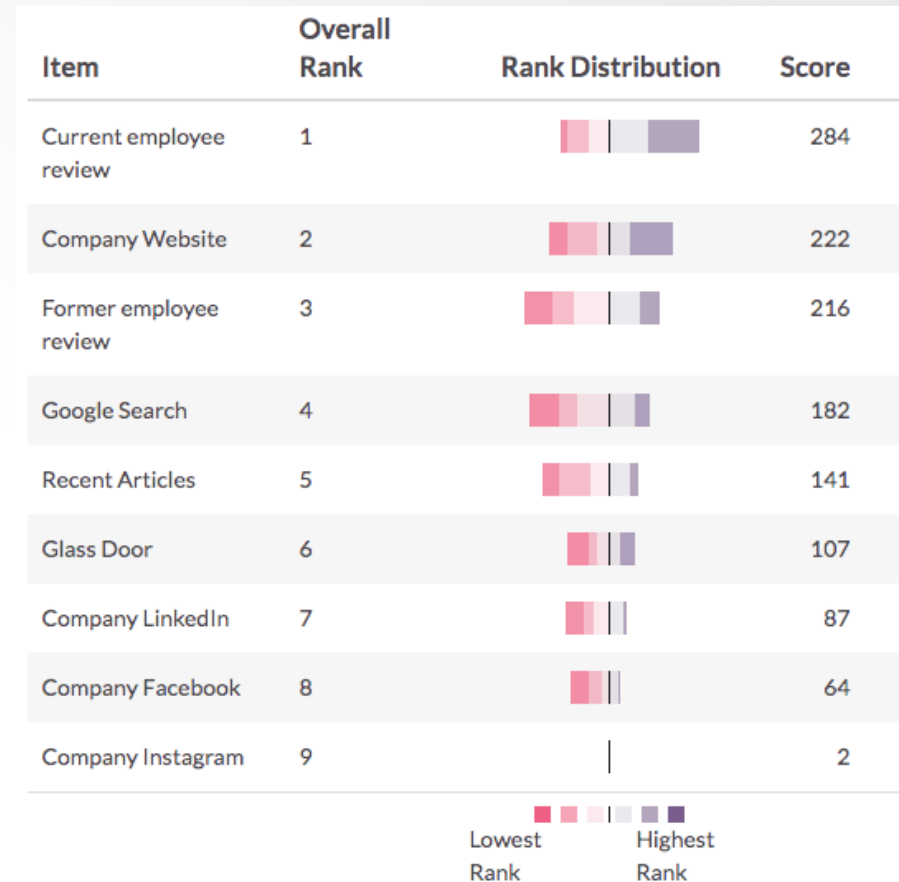
- *Company Websites* and *Google Search* distinguished themselves as the clear top choices for researching any company prior to accepting an employment offer.
- *Career Fairs* rated among the least valued resource among young manufacturing employees in NE WI.



CREDIBILITY OF COMPANY RESEARCH RESOURCES

Current and past employees are regarded as highly credible, but company websites are also trusted despite the company-controlled message and content.

- *Current Employee Review* was by far the most credible source of information.
- *Company Website* and *Former Employee* comprised a second tier, with the latter receiving more total votes while the former received more #1 rankings.
- Online resources like *Glass Door* and company social media channels were seen as least credible.



VALUE OF VARIOUS BENEFIT OFFERINGS

Traditional benefits such as healthcare, retirement, and education reimbursement are less important than flexibility, culture, and vacation.

- Not surprisingly, *Compensation* was most important.
- *Flexibility/Work-Life Balance* received only one less ranking than *Compensation*, though it received significantly fewer #1 rankings.
- A third-place tier emerged, which comprised *Opportunities for Advancement*, *Vacation Days*, *Workplace Environment*, *Schedule Times*, and *Company Culture/People*.
- Among the bottom four were three traditional benefit offerings: *Healthcare/HSA Match*, *Retirement/401K Match*, and *Education Reimbursement*.

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score
Compensation	1		238
Flexibility / Work-Life Balance	2		196
Opportunities for Advancement	3		172
Vacation Days	4		151
Workplace Environment	5		119
Schedule Times	6		115
Company Culture / People	7		112
Healthcare / HSA Match	8		99
Retirement / 401K Match	9		93
Education Reimbursement	10		10



NATIONAL AUDIENCE VS NEWMA AUDIENCE

Comparing NEWMA participants with a national audience revealed interesting differences.

- The national audience was less likely than young manufacturing employees in Wisconsin to view manufacturing as a *Career* than a *Stepping Stone*.
- The national audience had significantly less favorable perceptions of Wisconsin, overall.
- National job seekers favored *Company Websites*, *Indeed*, and *Google Search* as a clear Top 3.
- National job seekers were much less likely to *Talk to Friends* than young manufacturing employees in NE Wisconsin.



CORE RECOMMENDATIONS

ATTRACTING MILLENNIALS TO NE WI MANUFACTURING JOBS

IN WISCONSIN

- Hiring companies should audit/optimize their digital presence.
 - Optimize website content related to careers and culture.
 - Dedicated careers section highlighting key differentiators
 - Employee testimonials as surrogates for “Talk to Friends”
- Promote presence and postings on Indeed.
- Enhance Google rankings for broad keyword phrases like “Manufacturing jobs in Wisconsin.”
- Optimize LinkedIn profile/content before Facebook/Instagram.
- Consider divesting resources from job fairs.
- Companies should audit/optimize their benefit offerings.
 - Promote flexibility, advancement, vacation, and culture.
 - Regard traditional benefits (e.g., healthcare) as secondary priorities, at least for younger employees.



CORE RECOMMENDATIONS

ATTRACTING MILLENNIALS TO NE WI MANUFACTURING JOBS

OUTSIDE OF WISCONSIN

- Focus message strategies around the cost benefits of living and working in Wisconsin.
 - Promote favorable housing prices, overall cost of living, etc.
 - Promote relocation benefits, if offered.
- Do not assume that efforts will be more fruitful in the Midwest.
 - Participants in IL, MN, IN, IA, MO, OH did not indicate more favorable ratings of Wisconsin than those in other regions.
- Optimize website content, Google rankings, and Indeed profiles to attract applicants outside of Wisconsin.
- Invest in promoting job opportunities at out-of-state job fairs and local job centers.
 - These resources were rated as much more important to participants outside of Wisconsin.



QUESTIONS?



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