

Do you Know the Role of HR in Workplace Civility?

written by Alisa Fairweather | October 2, 2024



In the politically charged climate of today, maintaining civility in the workplace is more important—and more challenging—than ever. For small and medium-sized manufacturing companies, where close-knit teams are critical to daily operations, promoting respect and collaboration is essential. Human resource (HR) specialists play a pivotal role in fostering a positive workplace culture. Here are five key strategies to help promote civility in your manufacturing environment.

1. Lead by Example

In smaller manufacturing companies, where teams work closely together, the behavior of HR professionals and company leaders sets the tone for the entire organization. By consistently demonstrating respectful communication, fairness, and professionalism, HR can establish a benchmark for employees to follow. When leaders model civility, it encourages a culture where mutual respect becomes the norm, reducing the likelihood of conflicts.

2. Create and Communicate Clear Policies

Clear, well-communicated policies are essential in any workplace, but especially in manufacturing settings where team collaboration is crucial. With support or buy-in from top workplace leaders, HR should ensure that policies explicitly define respectful conduct and outline the consequences of incivility. Emphasize the importance of maintaining respect, particularly in high-pressure situations common

in manufacturing environments. Regularly remind employees of these policies through meetings, trainings, and accessible documentation.

3. Empower Supervisors as Role Models

Supervisors in manufacturing often have a significant influence on their teams. HR should train these leaders to model civility and handle conflicts effectively. Equip supervisors with the tools to foster a culture of collaboration and respect, as their behavior directly impacts team dynamics. When supervisors lead with empathy and fairness, it can create a positive ripple effect throughout the organization.

4. Implement Accessible Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Conflicts in a manufacturing environment can escalate quickly if not addressed. HR should establish accessible and straightforward conflict resolution mechanisms that allow employees to address issues constructively. Consider implementing an open-door policy or creating a peer support program to resolve disputes before they escalate. Ensuring that employees feel heard and supported can help maintain a harmonious workplace. Remember that not all conflict is bad, it is natural and properly navigated it can be constructive.

5. Foster a Culture of Recognition and Well-being

In manufacturing, where teamwork is essential, recognizing and celebrating positive behaviors can significantly impact morale and civility. HR can lead initiatives that highlight and reward examples of teamwork and respect. Additionally, promoting employee well-being through access to resources such as counseling services or wellness programs can reduce stress and foster a more positive and productive work environment.

Conclusion

Promoting civility in a manufacturing workplace is not just about managing conflicts; it's about creating a culture of respect, empathy, and collaboration that enhances both employee satisfaction and company success. HR specialists in small and medium-sized manufacturing companies play a critical role in this process. By leading with intention, developing clear policies, empowering supervisors,

implementing conflict resolution mechanisms, and fostering a culture of recognition, HR can help create a workplace where civility thrives.

To learn how IMC can support your HR needs, contact Alisa Fairweather at alisaf@imcpa.com.

New No-Cost Electrical Safety Training Grant Extended to December 31st

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024



NO COST Electrical Safety Training

Manufacturers' Association

The federally-funded grant training for Electrical Safety Training will be offered in Central & South Central PA.
MEETS OSHA NEP70e Requirements!

Training Topics:

- General Electrical Safety Information
- General Electrical Safe Work Practices
- Common Hazards / Arc Flash
- Permitted & Non-permitted uses
- Energy Control Procedures & Lockout/Tag-out

In partnership with:

IMC Industrial Maintenance Contractors

Visit: imcpa.com/electrical-safety-trg/ to learn more. Email: LauriM@imcpa.com or Call: (570) 329-3200 to schedule training



IMC, in partnership with The Manufacturers' Association, is bringing **No-Cost Electrical Safety Training for General Industry** to Central PA.

This opportunity is available through a grant provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Companies are also able to host training sessions onsite with a minimum of 10 participants.

Training Topics Include:

- General Electrical Safety Information
- General Electrical Safe Work Practices
- Common Hazards
- Permitted and Non-permitted Uses
- Arc Flash
- Energy Control Procedures (ECPs) & Lockout/Tag-out (LOTO)

This NO COST training is available to workers and employers covered under the OSH Act of 1970, SEC. 4, codified at 29 U.S.C. 653 (Appendix B). This also includes multiple small businesses and temporarily unemployed workers who are planning to reenter the workforce in a position covered by the OSHA Act within the next three months. Unemployed and high school and college students within three months of employment are also eligible for this training.

The trainer is a CHCM, DSM, CHST, OSHA Consultation Program Consultant and has been the trainer for over 100 OSHA 10- & 30-Hour training programs.

To schedule Electrical Safety Training at YOUR location, please contact Lauri Moon at (570) 329-3200 or by email at laurim@imcpa.com.

Susan Harwood Training Grant Program

This four-hour program honors the late Susan Harwood, former director of OSHA's Office of Risk Assessment, who died in 1996. During her 17-year OSHA career, she helped develop federal standards to protect workers exposed to bloodborne pathogens, cotton dust, benzene, formaldehyde, asbestos and lead in construction.

The training material was produced under grant number SH-39128-SH2 from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. It does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Success Story: NuVisions Saves Employment Contract Through IMC's CMMC Assessment

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024



NuVisions Center, located in Lewistown, PA, exists to improve the lives of persons with vision, physical or mental impairments through services and employment; and to also educate the public about vision loss. They serve the Pennsylvania counties of Huntingdon, Juniata, and Mifflin. NuVisions employs persons with disabilities who perform manufacturing, sewing, janitorial, and customer service-related jobs. They currently employ 44 individuals spread among the various areas.

NuVisions Center approached IMC to discuss their desire to comply with the DFARS 252.204-7012, FAR 52.204-21, and the anticipated CMMC level cybersecurity requirements for government contracting. The need for compliance originated because of a requirement from one of their customers. To maintain an existing employment contract, NuVisions had to achieve the appropriate CMMC level of compliance. Higher levels of compliance are continuing to be assessed by the Department of Defense (DoD) and are a moving target for businesses in need of proving compliance. There are currently three levels being evaluated and considered by the DoD. Level 1 is the most basic, Level 2 is more advanced and results in a SPRS score (NIST 800-171 SPRS Score), and the highest level of compliance is currently rated as CMMC Level 3. Those requirements can be daunting to a small company with limited resources. NuVisions Center did not have in-house IT support and were very concerned about the time investment and how to address such a change in procedures.

IMC worked with NuVisions Center to provide them with professional assistance and

guidance through self-assessment and used the CISA CSET tool to generate necessary reports. The CSET tool reports became the foundation for the project deliverables. The plan included a system security plan, action items, and milestones for incremental completion. A Gap Analysis was created, identifying deficiencies and any CMMC controls which weren't fully met. The project findings were then presented as an Executive Summary showing which requirements were met and any which needed further attention. Throughout the project, NuVisions and their IT contractor provided documentation and answered all questions relative to the content of the requirement.

NuVisions successfully completed the required CMMC requirements. In doing so, they were able to save an employment contract, which resulted in the retention of three jobs for their workforce. Three jobs equate to over 6% of their workforce. That result is very important to the mission of NuVisions Center, and extremely important to the people whose lives are so positively impacted by having a job. The assistance provided by IMC guided NuVisions Center through a process which seemed quite overwhelming and difficult, saving precious time for the leaders of the organization. The project also led NuVisions Center to upgrade some of their IT equipment, which improved operations and further protects their investment from cybersecurity threats.

"We are a small organization and do not have IT staff. Before we found IMC, the task to implement CMMC seemed almost insurmountable. With their help, the process was no longer overwhelming, and we were able to easily manage the implementation of the CMMC requirements." Terry Knouse, Vice President of Operations, NuVisions Center

Success Story: Pik Rite, Inc.

Implements Strategies Learned Through IMC's CI Programs with Positive Impact on Production

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024



Pik Rite was founded by Elvin Stoltzfus and Joe Yoder with a focus on creating a mechanical method for picking tomatoes. Their first machine was built in 1983, and by 1986, Pik Rite had manufactured three harvesters and incorporated the company.

From its initial tomato harvester, Pik Rite has diversified its product line to include equipment for harvesting cucumbers, peppers, gourds, zucchini, squash, pumpkins, and carrots. Additionally, Pik Rite produces vine diverters, commercial waste handling vacuum tanks, water hauling trailers, truck mounted dump bodies, manure spreaders, and municipal leaf collection units. Pik Rite also has a dedicated contract manufacturing line.

Pik Rite has steadily grown since the 1990s, expanding its market coverage, sales, and technological innovations both domestically and internationally. Based in Central Pennsylvania, the company now employs nearly 100 people across two facilities in Lewisburg, PA.

With continuous growth in business and varied industrial and agricultural markets, Pik Rite sought to increase production capacity and capabilities while maintaining their high-quality standards and design flexibility.

Pik Rite faced several critical challenges in their production process that hindered efficiency, employees, and ultimately customer satisfaction. The main bottleneck was cumbersome production flow due to fragmented processes, which led to frequent

delays and increased operational costs. Material handling issues further complicated these inefficiencies, as the lack of streamlined systems resulted in frequent delays and product mismanagement. Employees reported dissatisfaction stemming from repetitive, unnecessary tasks, impacting overall morale and productivity. This ultimately resulted in strained relationships with clients.

Pik Rite has a long-established relationship with the Innovative Manufacturers' Center (IMC) and IMC is a contributor to Pik Rite's continuous improvement journey. Pik Rite selected several personnel to attend the IMC's Lean Level 1 and 2 certification programs to seek potential strategies to address its current challenges in production as well as to build on its mission to give everyone "the opportunity to grow personally while engaging in an atmosphere of unity, respect, and integrity."

Through both the training program and post training assessments, Pik Rite implemented strategies learned from the IMC certification programs that included but were not limited to:

- Streamlined receiving and storage methods in the material warehouse to eliminate waste and improve material flow.
- Implemented a small parts handling system in the fabrication shop to reclaim lost floorspace, eliminate wasted motion, and improve overall flow and efficiency.
- Relocated materials in the fabrication shop for easier access for fabricators.
- Created multiple travel lanes throughout the entire facility to provide direct access from the fabrication shop to the production floor.
- Implemented a smart organization and carting system for Harvester fabricated parts.
- Started a safety hazard removal initiative in the fabrication shop.

These changes led to increased flow in the fabrication shop and production area, reducing the time employees spend searching for materials. Raw materials now flow into the storage areas seamlessly and can be retrieved safely and quickly by the operators.

Fabrication has become approximately 15% more time efficient while utilizing full sheets of raw material. Production now tracks and utilizes 100% of their remnant

material, up from approximately 25%. Overall throughput has increased by 8-10% with these changes and has even spiked to 20% in unique scenarios. Since implementing a safety hazard removal initiative in the fabrication shop, Pik Rite has had zero incidents, improving from 1-2 reported incidents per month, previously.

“The IMC and its staff have played an integral part in the success of Pik Rite’s Continuous Improvement culture as well as directly influencing more efficient production and operations. The proof is in our results – our workplace is safer, our employees are happier, and we’re getting more quality work delivered to our customers, faster.”

Caleb Thomas, Product Line Manager

IMC participates in STEM program

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024

IMC Business Advisor Rick Terry used the Lego Airplane Simulation Factory to introduce students to manufacturing flow and key concepts during the 2024 Remake Learning Days STEM to the Skies program on May 14 and 16. Now in its third year, this northeastern Pennsylvania initiative offers hands-on learning experiences for youth, families, and educators to explore creative and fun ways of learning. In addition to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), the program emphasizes the importance of teamwork and collaboration.







IMC Featured in Manufacturing in Focus Magazine

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024





Manufacturing in Focus
Magazine May 2024

IMC is excited to share our inclusion in the May issue of Manufacturing in Focus Magazine along with Central PA manufacturers Curry Fluid Power, Chicago Rivet & Machine Co. and Architectural Precast Innovations.

To discuss how IMC can partner with your Central PA manufacturing company, give us a call at 800-326-9467.

Manufacturing in Focus Magazine May 2024

Voting To Begin for “What’s So Cool About Manufacturing?” Central Susquehanna Video Contest

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024



IMC is proud to announce online voting for the 4th year of the Central Susquehanna “What’s So Cool About Manufacturing?” (WSCM) student video contest. Voting will commence Tuesday, March 26, 12:01AM, and remain open until Thursday, March 28, 11:59PM, on the Central Susquehanna contest page at <https://www.whatssocool.org/>. The winner will be announced during an awards event to be held April 16th.

Central PA school districts participating in this year's video contest include Bloomsburg, Central Columbia, Huntingdon, Mount Carmel, Southern Columbia and Williamsport. These school districts videos will highlight these "cool" manufacturers in Central PA: Bloomsburg Carpet, GAF, Gardners Candies, Great Dane, Press Enterprise and West Pharmaceutical Services.

Student videos compete for the most votes to win the coveted "Viewers' Choice Award." The videos will also be reviewed by a panel of judges for awards in three other categories, including Outstanding Overall Program, Outstanding Team Spirit and Outstanding Brand Placement.

"We are excited to see our school districts and communities participate and support the hard work the students, teachers and manufacturers have put into this program," said Lauri Moon, Co-Manager of the Central Susquehanna WSCM regional contest. "Online voting affords everyone the opportunity to participate and see the videos while further spreading the message about cool career opportunities in Central Pennsylvania manufacturing.

The WSCM program was created to generate excitement that draws students toward STEM education opportunities and to consider manufacturing career paths as they engage with local manufacturers, recording and presenting their experiences in an educational and "cool" way through documentary video production.

WSCM Central Susquehanna will choose two videos to represent the region in the Annual Statewide "What's So Cool About Manufacturing?" Awards May 15th in Harrisburg.

Pennsylvania Manufacturers Report

Significant Benefits and Impacts from Statewide Industrial Resource Center Program

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024

According to data voluntarily provided by 575 small and mid-sized manufacturing firms across Pennsylvania throughout 2023, the statewide Industrial Resource Center (IRC) initiative, the Commonwealth's flagship program for strengthening the competitiveness and resiliency of smaller industrial firms, generated significant positive results among users of their services. Over the past 12 months, manufacturers that utilized IRC professional services avoided 7,197 layoffs while adding 1,462 full-time workers to their rosters. They also realized \$796.8 million in retained sales and secured \$256.4 million of new customer orders as results of their IRC advisement and engagements.

In addition to growing their workforces and increasing their top-line revenue numbers, companies that performed consultative projects with their regional IRC reduced their non-personnel operating costs by \$187.1 million over the past 12 months, avoided \$36 million of unnecessary expenditures, and invested more than \$376.8 million in new equipment, facility expansion, advanced technologies and workforce training.

Pennsylvania's IRC initiative consists of seven affiliates across the Commonwealth including the IMC.

The revenue, cost savings, regional investment and job impacts reported by 575 IRC clients was gathered by an independent market research firm and confirmed by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

[Click here to View the IRC Network 2023 Client Engagement Impact](#)



IMC Recognized by SHRM to Offer Professional Development Credits (PDCs) for SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP® Recertification Activities

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024



The Innovative Manufacturers' Center (IMC), Inc. is thrilled to announce its recent recognition by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) as a SHRM Recertification General Provider. IMC is now authorized to offer Professional Development Credits (PDCs) for SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP® recertification

activities.

As a SHRM Recertification General Provider, IMC's SHRM approved training programs will qualify for SHRM Professional Development Credits. These credits are specifically designed to enhance HR knowledge and competency in alignment with the SHRM Body of Applied Skills and Knowledge™ (the SHRM BASK™).

Dennis Gilbert, President of IMC, expressed his enthusiasm about this recognition, stating, "IMC is excited that our approved training programs and events will be able to provide SHRM Professional Development Credits to our manufacturing clients. Small and mid-sized businesses, including manufacturing, face a special challenge in attracting, selecting, onboarding, engaging, and retaining workers today, and IMC continues to add programs and services to assist our clients in addressing these concerns, including our 5 Module webinar series, 'Meeting the HR Challenge.'"

About SHRM: The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is a leading professional organization dedicated to advancing the practice of human resource management. SHRM provides resources, tools, and networking opportunities to HR professionals globally, aiming to elevate the HR profession and contribute to organizational success.

Success Story: Rockland Manufacturing Invests in Training to Prepare Workforce for Change in Production Flow

written by Lauri Moon | October 2, 2024



Rockland Manufacturing Co., located in Bedford, PA with approximately 250 employees, is a medium-sized manufacturer of bulldozer blades, loader buckets, beach cleaning equipment, and land clearing equipment. Rockland primarily serves the crushing, aggregate, and log loading markets.

Rockland was beginning to implement a major change to their long-established production methods. In fact, the current flow had been in place for well over 30 years. The major change was to create a combined production method/department from two formally standalone functions. The change required changes in supervision, ERP tracking, production planning and scheduling, and manufacturing engineering processes.

The change is driven by the need to improve efficiency, specifically by reducing the amount of handling and transportation of certain products. By combining production functions for several of their product lines, both assembly and finish welding functions will be accomplished at the same workstation. Formally, a product would be assembled at one location in the plant, then transported by overhead crane to be staged at the second location until that department had capacity to work on it.

Rockland had already conducted experiments to prove that the change to the production flow would be successful in improving efficiency, but since the change had far-reaching affects throughout most departments within the entire company, management felt that specific training of key stakeholders was needed to help build unified momentum for implementation and asked IMC to provide this training.

The Rockland management team, while in consultation with IMC Business Advisor, Tim Davis, expressed concern about meeting project goals and objectives since the front-line production workers and their direct supervisors were accustomed to years of the current state workflow processes. Many organizations entering significant operational change are very good at getting the proper capital requirements and soft costs calculated and controlled, the weakest link is often underestimating the human

side of change. As such, IMC proposed a Change Management training initiative that would complement the capital investment already being made.

Tim Davis expressed, “This training is essential, it is beyond the capital equipment, renovation, and other costs normally associated with significant change, it can make or break the change effort including the need to extend timelines and adjust milestones when employee teams struggle through the transition.”

The IMC team helped Rockland identify key personnel who had responsibility and direct impact on the change requirements. Additionally, the team investigated the organizational requirements compared with the current state of the supervisors and other key personnel to identify gaps and develop a program specifically designed to help the Rockland team navigate a successful transition.

A highly customized change management training initiative was deployed by the IMC. It focused on how to anticipate the implications of change, how to monitor and adapt to change, how to communicate through it, and how to keep changing and improving. This training included interactive exercises to help the participants be more comfortable with the new changes to their workflow, break down potential barriers to implementing change by improving communication, and really focus on the importance of positive changes in production. All customized to align with the requirements for a successful transition to the new process.

Impressed with the results, the Rockland management team reported that the training provided by the IMC was successful in helping their workforce understand the need for change in their production methodology. Particularly, they pointed out that communication about the change improved. The interactive exercises conducted by IMC in the training helped break down communication barriers and improved teamwork. The momentum for moving forward with the production change was achieved, and since then the new assembly/weld function is established and becoming an accepted part of the company’s culture.

“We’re very pleased with the results of the training. It was a great way to break the ice regarding a systemic change in one of our oldest and most experience facilities. By training on change management, discussing the benefits of the change, and how to properly communicate the outcomes of the change, we experienced much less of

the typical resistance to change that one usually experiences in any business environment. The project was done faster, with less effort, much less drama, and most importantly, we haven't had any trouble with making the change stick over time. We're now building more, more efficiently, together, than ever before." Bo Pratt, President, Rockland Manufacturing Co.

