EXCELLENCE in MANUFACTURING TRAINING AWARD

sme 2026

SME's Excellence in Manufacturing Training Award honors a manufacturer who demonstrates exceptional commitment and dedication to upskilling the workforce, enhancing talent, and preparing new and incumbent employees for a successful career in manufacturing.

To apply for the Excellence in Manufacturing Training Award, please respond to each of the criteria listed below and include specific examples. You are encouraged to attach supporting documentation.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY
FEBRUARY 8, 2027
AT 11:59 PM ET

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Industry:

Number of Employees:

Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

Phone:

Email:

EXCELLENCE IN MANUFACTURING TRAINING AWARD

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Please describe how your organization embodies the attributes of a high-performance learning organization in each of the following areas. Please provide samples of any materials you feel will demonstrate how your training program is a leader in supporting workforce development in manufacturing. Check "Example Provided" next to areas where you are providing supporting documents and indicate in the attachment's file name which criteria your samples support.

1.0 LEARNING AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

1.1 Describe how leadership demonstrates its commitment to training, including the time and resources set aside for learning.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

1.2 Describe how learning is built into daily business processes and how employees are recognized for skill growth.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

2.0 DEFINED JOB PROFILES AND QUALIFICATIONS

2.1 Describe how job profiles and their required competencies are defined, documented, and kept current.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

2.2 Describe how leaders use job profiles to discuss skills gaps, performance, hiring, and career development.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

3.0 STRATEGIC CONTENT ALIGNMENT

3.1 Describe how you decide what training content to build or buy, and which employees receive it.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

3.2 Describe how you balance development time against production demands.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

4.0 PEER TRAINING

4.1 **Describe how your OJT program is structured, including how peer trainers are selected and prepared.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

4.2 **Describe how OJT is documented and how workers are qualified or signed off.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

5.0 MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

5.1 **Describe the tools and methods used to measure learning success for individual employees.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

5.2 Describe how you measure the training program's impact on business results such as quality, safety, productivity, and retention.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

5.3 Describe how you use measurement results to improve your training. Provide examples of results.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

6.0 JUST-IN-TIME LEARNING

6.1 Describe the performance support tools available at the point of need, such as work instructions, job aids, or digital resources, and how employees access them.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

6.2 Describe how you keep performance support materials accurate and up to date.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

7.0 CAREER DEVELOPMENT/PROGRESSION

7.1 Describe the career pathways available for roles across your organization and how employees pursue advancement.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

7.2 Describe how career pathways have built capability from within. Provide examples, such as internal promotion rates.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

8.0 HUMAN PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

8.1 **Describe how the learning function partners with other departments inside your organization.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

8.2 **Describe your partnerships with colleges, schools, workforce development groups, vendors, and consultants.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

8.3 **Describe how you decide whether a performance issue needs a training or non-training solution. Provide an example.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

9.0 LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE (PEOPLE, PROCESS, POLICY)

9.1 **Describe the people, roles, and systems (such as a learning management system) used to manage, distribute, and track learning.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

9.2 **Describe the policies that sustain learning and make sure every member of the workforce can access it when needed.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

10.0 SOCIAL LEARNING/COMMUNICATIONS

10.1 **Describe the platforms or channels used to encourage communication, knowledge sharing, professional networks, and communities of practice.**

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

10.2 Describe your formal mentoring program, including how mentors and mentees are matched.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY / RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

11.1 Describe training that helps employees reduce scrap, energy usage, emissions, and other forms of waste.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

11.2 Describe measurable results your sustainability-related training has achieved.

EXAMPLE PROVIDED ☐

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Please provide samples of any materials you feel will demonstrate how your training program is a leader in supporting workforce development in manufacturing. Place a checkmark in the box next to areas where you are providing supporting documents and indicate in the attachment's file name which criteria your samples support:

- Marketing collateral
- Social media presence
- Hands-on training materials
- Online training materials
- Industry letters of support (preference for employers that have hired graduates/completers)
- Testimonial video or highlight story of your program

Save your file. Email application and supporting documents to Bryan Knaack at bknaack@sme.org.

SUBMIT APPLICATION