

## TALENT INSIGHTS

Region makes gains in jobs, equity and pay, but open positions remain a threat to long-term success.



MAGNET's 2023 survey of Northeast Ohio manufacturers tells an exciting story of growth and change, and highlights persistent challenges, as our region strives to execute the [Blueprint for Manufacturing in Northeast Ohio](#). This is a summary of key findings on the manufacturing workforce – how talent is both powering our future and holding us back.

**10,000**  
new jobs

**Manufacturing is growing rapidly.**

That's a third of the way to our 10-year goal for the region in just two years! The industry is growing overall and the need for new talent in new positions continues to expand.

Source: Team NEO

**Starting salaries are getting much more competitive.**

**\$14.10 ↑ \$16.30**

per hour for entry-level low-skill jobs, an average increase of 16% in two years.

**\$17.50 ↑ \$21.10**

per hour for entry-level mid-skill jobs, an average increase of 21% in two years.

This is great news for workers and makes manufacturing more competitive with talent, but it is straining companies. 40% of manufacturers say rising wages are hampering their growth.



**DIVERSITY  
TRAINING  
FLEXIBILITY  
BENEFITS**

**Companies are catching up with the realities of the tight talent market and it's changing the industry for the better.**

- 2,000+ people of color have entered manufacturing in the past two years. MAGNET alone has helped more than 750 women and people of color start manufacturing careers since 2021.
- 65% more companies are increasing their formal apprenticeship or on-the-job training programs.
- 58% of manufacturers are looking for ways to increase flexibility for workers through hours and shift permutations, cross-training of roles, or more frequent pay to attract new employees (87% of companies already do this to retain employees).
- Almost 70% more manufacturing companies are on the region's best places to work lists than in 2021 – signaling renewed efforts to help attract and keep the best talent through positive workplace cultures.
- Half of all companies offer tuition reimbursement and almost all companies offer healthcare for all people.
- 25% more companies are recruiting from high schools since 2019.

**10%**

**open entry-level positions**

**Demand for skilled workers is still sky-high, but the talent gap has closed slightly over the past two years.**

The number of unfilled entry-level low- and mid-skill jobs has dropped from 23,000 to 20,000 in Northeast Ohio in the past two years. While this slight drop is promising, with almost 10% of all manufacturing jobs in Northeast Ohio sitting empty, this is still a massive problem that's about to get worse due to spiking retirements.



**Retirements**

**Retirements are a key reason for job vacancies and many more are coming.**

After five years of tracking this data, a record high number of companies report a wave of imminent retirements. 20% of manufacturing companies say that at least 16% of their workforce will likely retire in the next three years. In total, we can expect to see 16,000-34,000 people retire – that's 6-13% of the manufacturing workforce – in the next several years. Historically, companies have underestimated retirements, and they now seem to be finally bracing for the silver tsunami.