

ExecutiveMemo

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A newsletter of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association

January 21, 2009

BRIEFLY

NAM congratulates President Obama; manufacturers offer support for economic recovery

Engler says manufacturers share president's vision of hope and renewal

John Engler, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Manufacturers, congratulated President Barack Obama on his inauguration, and pledged that manufacturers will actively support the efforts of the new Administration to revive our economy, create and preserve American jobs, and strengthen America's competitiveness.

Engler said the NAM and its member companies were encouraged by the new President's address and optimistic about the future. He also commended the new President for reaching out to people across the political spectrum to forge a consensus that can meet the nation's number one overriding challenge – getting the economy growing again and creating jobs. “We pledge to work with the new Administration to pursue competitive tax policies that create jobs and economic growth, establish trade policies that expand markets for U.S. products overseas, and enact energy policies that decrease costs and reduce our dependence on foreign sources,” Engler said.

Michael E. Campbell, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Arch Chemicals, Inc., of Norwalk, Connecticut, and NAM Chairman, said: “We know it will take a lot of work and time to get through this difficult period. We are eager to work with the new President and his Administration to do what is best for our country and America's working men and women. Together, we will turn the economy around and then get to work on the many long-term challenges we face.”

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SBA offers new online resources for small businesses to help with economic recovery

Entrepreneurs can take advantage of new, free online training and other resources offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration to assist them during this period of economic recovery.

The SBA offers a variety of online courses to assist small businesses in more effectively managing their firms in the current economy. The new course topics, available at www.sba.gov/services/training/onlinecourses, include revising business plans to reposition with current conditions, winning customers in a slowing economy, restructuring existing debt, and diversifying your customer base with federal contracts.

The most recently added course is “Downshifting in a Slowing Economy: A Business Planning Guide.” This course is designed to help business owners reorganize and streamline their business strategies. Other related business tools include a new automated business plan template, and an

assessment and strategies guide for surviving in a slowing economy.

“The SBA is helping small businesses with the resources and tools they need in the current business cycle,” said Jeff Andrade, Associate Administrator for Entrepreneurial Development. “In addition, SBA offers a variety of resources and referrals to small businesses uncertain about what to do in the current economy on its Webpage on Economic Recovery at www.sba.gov/helpingmainstreet.”

Each free course is self-paced, and provides practical guidance on how to stay on top of economic conditions. These and other courses can be accessed from the SBA's Website at www.sba.gov/training. To access them, click on “Free Online Courses,” then make a selection under the header “Surviving in a Down Economy.”

The SBA can also help to find local agency offices and lenders. Business own-

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Manufacturers' Career Council established to increase Illinois' competitiveness through education programs

A group of Northern Illinois manufacturers has come together with high school, community college and other community representatives to form the Manufacturers' Careers Council. The Council will provide the direction and programs that will be necessary for the increased skill levels required in industry. Experts say that in Illinois alone, more than 30,000 new manufacturing workers will be needed each year for the next ten years to replace the retiring baby-boomer generation.

“Despite the current recession, we are facing a pipeline crisis,” said IMA Chairman Ron Bullock, also Chairman and owner of St. Charles-based Bison Gear & Engineering Corp. “We predict a workforce deficit of those with the higher skills needed for our companies to compete and innovate in the global economy. There is not a job at our facility today that does not require some post-secondary education.”

One of the strategies the Manufacturers' Career Council is pursuing is high school and community college implementation of the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician training program. MSSC is a nationally recognized certification program that allows students interested in manufacturing careers to be credentialed in the four critical skill areas necessary in advanced manufacturing: safety, quality practices and measurement, processes and production, and maintenance awareness.

The next meeting of the Manufacturers' Career Council will be hosted at Bison Gear's St. Charles, Illinois, facility on January 29, 2009, from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. Interested manufacturers, educators and workforce development representatives are invited and should contact Ms. Michelle Kasper at Bison, 630-443-5797, for details.

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ers can: talk with an SBA representative about financing options and identify local, participating SBA lenders; learn about SBA's Loan Guaranty Program using an electronic guide with audio and many targeted links; and train with expert counseling and mentoring services by talking with an SBA representative or resource partner about management assistance.

MI: Worldwide supply chain top 10 predictions for 2009

Manufacturing Insights predicts 2009 will see strong cost and customer focus in supply chain behavior and spending

In a new study, Manufacturing Insights spoke with technology vendors, consultants, and buyers about what the coming year will hold for supply chains in the manufacturing industry. Although there is no shortage of bad news and indicators, there is a general knowledge within the manufacturing industry that with a downturn comes an inevitable recovery. Even the automotive industry talks about past patterns of their industry being "first in, first out" when it comes to a recession and being ready to serve the pent-up demand. Economic downturns also represent an opportunity for manufacturing companies to recalibrate their operations. Channel partners can be rationalized, inventories reduced, production assets modernized, and, most importantly, supply and demand can be rebalanced in preparation for a recovery.

"In 2009, we expect to see a very strong cost and customer focus in supply chain behavior and spending," said Simon Ellis, Supply Chain Strategies practice director. "Continuing supply chain complexity will drive investments in optimization, modernization, and risk mitigation."

Among the key predictions Manufacturing Insights makes for the worldwide supply chain market in 2009 are the following:

- Companies Will Exploit Well-Performing Existing Tangible and, Especially, Intangible Supply Chain Assets to Ride Out the Financial Crisis and Prepare for Recovery
- Modern Supply Chain Organizations Will Put Expenditure Budgets Under Greater Scrutiny and New Investments Will Be Cost Savings — Focused, Requiring Shorter Payback Periods; Expenditures Will Be Made Through the Lens of Cost/Value
- Supply Chain Technology Initiatives Will Have to Support the Standard Business Platform and Focus on Modernization and Decision Making
- Economic Uncertainty, Particularly for Smaller Suppliers in Emerging Economies, Will Cause Manufacturer "Brand Owners" to Consider Strategic Investments at Critical Supply Points and Financial Support for Key Suppliers
- Sustainability Will Discover Metrics; No Longer a Feel-Good Public Relations Proposition or Even a Regulatory Compliance Mandate; Emerging Standard Measures and a Desire to Benchmark Will Impact Sustainability Initiatives

For more information contact info@manufacturing-insights.com.

DATES OF NOTE

More information/events may be found at <http://www.ima-net.org/calendar.cfm> and <http://www.ima-net.org/MIT/open.cfm>
Email: jstanley@ima-net.org

IMA-MIT EVENT: Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA)

February 9, 2009 — Decatur Conference Center & Hotel, US Hwy 36, Decatur

February 10, 2009 — DePaul University, 150 W. Warrenville Road, Naperville

Learn to maximize the benefits of performing FMEA activities, eliminate or minimize effects of potential failures, gain ideas for other applications and learn about risk evaluation and management.

February 11, 2009

IMA-MIT Event: Project Management for Non-Project Managers — DePaul University's O'Hare Campus, 3166 River Rd., Des Plaines

Learn project management skills, tools and techniques to make the transition to a project leadership role and ensure optimum project execution. This one-day workshop provides increased competence to manage a project through all project stages: initiating, planning, delivering, monitoring, and completing.

IMA-MIT Event: Problem Solving—8D

February 23, 2009 — Decatur Conference Center & Hotel, US Hwy. 36, Decatur

February 24, 2009 — DePaul University, 150 W. Warrenville Rd., Naperville

Designed to demonstrate effective problem solving methods, this workshop will focus on root cause analysis, cause and effect diagrams, five "Why" techniques, team oriented problem solving and containment measures.

February 24–25, 2009

IMA-MIT Event: Project Management Fundamentals — DePaul University, 150 W. Warrenville Road, Naperville

This **two-day** course in real-world project management is perfect for people who are looking to get a general understanding of project management, or for those who wish to get their current projects back on track. Designed for people with little or no formal project management training, this program sets the stage for participants to effectively manage multiple projects and is the prerequisite to advanced project management training.

February 27, 2009

IMA-MIT Event: World Class Customer Service Skills — DePaul University's O'Hare Campus, 3166 River Road, Des Plaines

World Class Customer Service Skills is based upon proactive customer service skills rather than reactive. Rather than just responding to the customer's inquiry, the best customer service representatives strategically gain control of the inquiry (remember it's not just telephone calls anymore), predict the customer's position, and proactively provide the desired results in advance. Although this may sound like a rather obvious solution, it is very difficult to execute.



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Wednesday, Jan. 21, 1PM–2PM CST Tuesday, Jan. 27, 1PM–2PM CST Wednesday, Feb. 4, 1PM–2PM CST

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