

Happy New Year 2025!



RICH HOBBS
CEO Corner



2025 Manufacturing Trends: Driving Change in a Transformative Era



The manufacturing landscape is evolving rapidly, driven by advancements in technology, sustainability priorities, and workforce demands. In this month's CEO Corner, our President & CEO **Rich Hobbs** shares actionable insights.

Discover how smart factories, digital transformation, supply chain resiliency, and sustainability are shaping the future—and how MRC helps you navigate these changes with expert guidance, training, and customized solutions. Position your business for success in 2025 and beyond. [Read More](#)

Santa's STANDARD WORKshop

Lean Manufacturing Meets Holiday Magic



What happens when Lean Manufacturing principles collide with the holiday spirit? At MRC, we call it *Santa's STANDARD WORKshop*. This December, our team transformed Lean Enterprise Works into a holiday production floor, proving that Lean isn't just for factories—it's a philosophy that can bring joy to our communities.

With over 40 bicycles assembled in record time and delivered to children in need through **Community Bike Works**, this event blended innovation, teamwork, and heart. Participants from local manufacturing leaders like Airlite Plastics, Crayola, East Penn Manufacturing, and Ocean Spray saw firsthand how Lean concepts like 5S and line balancing can be applied to something as meaningful as holiday giving.

This unique initiative was more than just a workshop; it was a testament to how manufacturing skills can create real impact. To read Gene Kaschak's inspiring account of the event—with [Video](#) of this festive day—[Read More](#)

MRC's Holiday Luncheon

Celebrating Tradition, Innovation and Growth!

MRC marked another incredible milestone for the Manufacturers Resource Center as we celebrated the holiday and 36 years of noteworthy success! Once again, what made this gathering truly special was the presence of our past and present leadership – a testament to the enduring commitment and dedication to our mission, the essence of unity, growth, and collective achievement.

In the group photo, from right to left is MRC CEO, **Rich Hobbs**, **Jack Pfunder**, endearing predecessor and creator of "What's So Cool About Manufacturing," and **Edith Ritter** our visionary founder of MRC. Also, alongside them on the left stands **Nancee Noderer**, our retired VP of Finance and Administration, who was an unwavering backbone across the transformative years. Each made the occasion very special.



This past year has been nothing short of extraordinary, and we owe it all to the leadership of the MRC Team and the unwavering support and confidence vested in us by our incredible community. With immense gratitude, we begin the new year with even greater aspirations and a firm commitment to fostering innovation, excellence, and collaboration. Here's to another year of milestones, growth, and shared success!

Inspiring the Next Generation: Lehigh Valley Dream Team



The LV Dream Team kicked off the year with its winter training session, welcoming four new members and preparing for an exciting season of STEM presentations in local schools. From mentoring partnerships to hands-on training in classroom engagement, Dream Team members are inspiring students to explore careers in manufacturing while sharpening their own professional skills.

Curious about the new team members, interactive presentations, or how to join this impactful program? **Learn more about the January Dream Team meeting and how to get involved!** —[Read More](#) (incl. photos and video)

Smart Manufacturing Grant Opportunities

Meet Shawn Furman
Advanced Manufacturing Technology Manager



Looking for ways to modernize your operations and unlock opportunities for improvement? MRC, in partnership with key organizations, is offering grants and free assessments to help you embrace Smart Manufacturing technologies and improve energy efficiency. Whether you're interested in IoT, AI-driven decision-making, or exploring sustainability initiatives, we've got you covered.

Discover how these programs can reduce costs, boost productivity, and enhance competitiveness for manufacturers in the region. Learn more about the available resources and how to get started today. [Read More!](#)

Here's Your Assessment Opportunity -- **Understand Your Readiness**: Gain a free personalized snapshot of where your operations stand in adopting advanced technologies. It's Quick, Easy, and designed to help you move forward! [Click Here to Start Your Free Assessment](#)

Featured Success Story Mitsubishi Chemical Group

A leading global manufacturer of high-performance thermoplastics and composites in the form of semi-finished products and finished parts, MCG Engineered Shapes and Solutions brings ambitious ideas to life across a wide range of applications and industries.

MRC Delivers Failure Modes Effects Analysis (FMEA) Training to Mitsubishi Chemical Group, Increasing Successful Installation Rate

MCG Industry Spotlight



Aerospace



Automotive



Food



Renewable Energy



Semiconductors

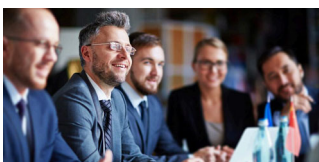
“We turn to MRC for many of our training needs. Their instructors are knowledgeable, can relate to manufacturers, and show us how to implement training in our processes.”

..... Matt Seeuwen, NA Continuous Improvement Manager

For the full story, [Read More](#)

2024-2025 Forums

CEO Forum



Peer-to-Peer Coaching for CEOs, Owners, Presidents, & COOs MRC offers this CEO Forum for executive leaders with a strong emphasis on problem solving and best practices. The Forum is an opportunity to meet with other decision-makers in a confidential setting. To join, please contact Diane Lewis at (610) 554-5196..

HR Forum - Drug Testing and Marijuana-Related Issues Impacting the Workplace



MRC HR Forum Update
All Things Drug Testing and Marijuana-Related Impacting the Workplace

With PA being one of the most challenging and litigious states for marijuana-related workplace concerns, Strategic and practical guidance was shared on navigating this evolving landscape.

From managing medical marijuana cardholders to designing compliant drug testing programs and training managers effectively, this session was packed with real-world scenarios and actionable advice. .

Join us for the next MRC HR Forum to gain insights from industry leaders, network with peers, and discuss pressing HR topics in a collaborative setting. Contact Diane Lewis at (610) 554-5196.

Safety Forum- ▪ Walking Surfaces ▪ Forklifts ▪ Solvent Contaminated Wipes



Workplace Safety Forum Update
▪ Walking Surfaces ▪ Forklifts ▪ Solvent Contaminated Wipes

The discussion centered on: **Walking-Working Surfaces:** Understanding OSHA's guidelines for safe walking surfaces, including ladders, floors, and stairways. From inspections to proper maintenance, we covered strategies to prevent slip, trip, and fall hazards in the workplace.

Forklift Safety: Powered Industrial Trucks (PITs) are essential in many industries but also pose significant risks if not operated correctly. We explored OSHA's requirements, including training, daily inspections, and key safety practices to ensure operators and pedestrians stay safe.

Solvent-Contaminated Wipes: Compliance with EPA and DEP guidelines can be tricky. We provided an overview of handling solvent-contaminated wipes, including conditional exclusions and best practices for environmental compliance.

Join us for the next **Safety Forum** for pressing safety topics in a collaborative setting. Contact Diane Lewis at (610) 554-5196.

Latest Advancements at MRC

Leadership & Organizational Development

Critical Skills to Develop a Positive, Productive and Adaptable Workplace



Meet Janelle Rabenold, Director Leadership Development & Training Strategy

Janelle brings to MRC over 15 years of expertise in leadership and organizational development. Known for her personalized approach and passion for empowering others. She helps individuals and teams thrive through these new impactful programs focused on emotional intelligence, effective communication, and team dynamics. Janelle excels in guiding individuals and teams toward achieving their personal and business objectives, leveraging her expertise in leadership and talent development. She has earned a reputation as a trusted partner, coach, and facilitator, fostering growth and success for both colleagues and clients alike.

Janelle teaches skills that contribute to a cohesive and motivated team culture, which is essential for any organization aiming to thrive in today's ever-changing environment.



MRC's **Manager Essentials** program offers mid-level managers a cohort-based learning experience focused on practical leadership development. Participants engage with peers, sharing insights and strategies in a collaborative setting to strengthen management skills. Upcoming course begins March 17th. [View Here](#)



Conflict Management is essential for maintaining a harmonious work environment. Conflict management helps employees resolve differences constructively, reducing tension and increasing collaboration. This is especially important in dynamic workplaces where differing viewpoints are common. Upcoming workshop is on April 3rd. [View Here](#)

REMINDERS! Educational Resources 24/7



Manufacturing Insights Blog - Your vantage point to anticipate market shifts, optimize operations, and strategize for the future. A guiding compass through business complexities providing valuable information and insights into the dynamic world of manufacturing. [View Here](#)



Training and Events Schedule MRC is an industry leader in training manufacturing employees in all aspects of the business. [View Here](#)



On-demand Webinars provide manufacturers with a valuable, no-cost resource to expand their knowledge on a variety of topics that can enhance their business' products, processes, and financials. [View Here](#)

MRC NEWS

MRC News - Stay informed with the latest updates from MRC on our NEWS page. Here, you'll find stories celebrating the achievements of our team, our clients, and the manufacturing community, as well as press releases, new program announcements, and inspiring initiatives like "What's So Cool About Manufacturing." [View Here](#)

SUCCESS STORIES

Success Stories - MRC has helped hundreds of manufacturing companies throughout Pennsylvania. Read some of our client success stories and learn how MRC helps manufacturing clients just like you. [View Here](#)

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GET THE RESOURCES YOU NEED TO THRIVE

Contact the MRC Team today for the answers to your biggest challenges.

[SCHEDULE A MEETING](#)

TRAINING EVENTS CALENDAR



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