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Manpower's Annual 10 Hardest Jobs To Fill Survey: Engineers, Machinists and Skilled Trades Top List In U.S.

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MILWAUKEE, April 22, 2008 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Engineers, machinists and skilled trade workers are among the nation's most challenging positions to fill, according to survey findings released by Manpower Inc.

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"From our research it is clear that across the country employers are experiencing a mismatch between the talent their businesses need and the skills and abilities potential employees possess," said Jonas Prising, President of Manpower North America.

The 10 Hardest Jobs to Fill, as reported by U.S. employers for 2008, are:

1. Engineers
2. Machinists/Machine Operators (10)*
3. Skilled Trades
4. Technicians (4)
5. Sales Representatives (1)
6. Accounting & Finance Staff (8)
7. Mechanics (3)
8. Laborers (9)
9. IT Staff
10. Production Operators

* Rank in 2007 Top 10 Hardest Jobs to Fill

For the third consecutive year, sales representatives, technicians, accountants/finance staff and machinists remain on the Hardest to Fill list, confirming that job seekers with specific skill sets are still in demand. Second on the list in 2006, engineers found themselves in the number one position this year, after dropping off completely in 2007. Employers are also finding it difficult to fill openings for skilled trades people, IT staff and production operators, all new to the 2008 list.

To succeed in the contemporary world of work, employers must not only encourage current employees to re-skill and up-skill to ensure they meet workload demands, but also refine their recruitment and retention strategies for a new generation of workers.

"While job categories have shifted on the list, it is clear all companies must have a plan for transitioning from baby boomers to younger generations," said Melanie Holmes, Vice President, World of Work Solutions for Manpower North America. "It is essential for companies to find a balance where they are attracting and retaining aging workers while still developing innovative recruiting programs targeting young professionals, especially those interested in technical and trade careers."

Current trends in hiring also point toward employers focusing on more than simply finding an individual who has the role-specific competencies required to fill the opening. "Companies want employees who have the soft skills, work ethic and culture traits that fit their company," Holmes said. "Hiring managers recognize the high cost of hiring the wrong individual for their organization so they are taking more time to find the right fit, even for these hard to fill positions."

The U.S. findings are part of a Manpower global study in which more than 42,500 employers across 32 countries and territories were surveyed in late January 2008. Skilled manual trades, sales representatives and technicians are the hardest jobs to fill this year. Manpower surveyed 2,000 U.S. employers in the third annual survey to determine which positions employers are having difficulty filling this year.

The survey announcement coincides with the publication of the Manpower White Paper, *Confronting the Talent Crunch: 2008*, updated since its original publications in 2006 and 2007. The white paper highlights talent issues around the world and what businesses, government and individuals should be doing to adapt their human resource strategies.

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