
FUTURIST UPDATE

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- * Side Effects of Battling Terrorism
- * Deadlier Earthquakes
- * Bike-Friendly Cities
- * Looming Labor Shortages
- * America's Immigration Cities
- * Click of the Month: Glossarist.com

LOOMING LABOR SHORTAGES

Futurists looking beyond the current unemployment figures see a different problem over the horizon: worker shortages in a wide variety of fields.

Widespread losses of manufacturing jobs in the United States over the past two years conceal a coming shortage of highly skilled workers that could undermine the nation's competitiveness, warns the National Association of Manufacturers. In a recent study, four out of five large and small manufacturers reported a "moderate to serious" shortage of qualified job applicants. Managers blame young people's lack of interest in manufacturing careers, which are stereotyped as "assembly-line" work rather than highly skilled occupations.

Restaurants and other food services will also have trouble filling openings. Human resources--specifically, finding, training, and keeping the best employees--was ranked the number-one concern for U.S. restaurant managers surveyed by the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration.

SOURCES: National Association of Manufacturers, <http://www.nam.org/careers> Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, <http://www.hotelschool.cornell.edu>

MORE on labor shortages: Workforce Stability Institute, <http://www.workforcestability.org>

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