

A DATA REPORT FOR MANUFACTURERS & HR LEADERS

The \$1 Trillion Talent Crisis

How New American & New American workers Are Solving Manufacturing's Biggest Problem — And Why Language Is the Only Thing Standing in the Way

2.1M

Manufacturing jobs unfilled by 2030

449K

Open positions right now

4%

New American turnover vs. 11% average

25%

Of accidents involve language barriers

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS REPORT

1

The Crisis in Numbers

449K open jobs today. 2.1M by 2030. Why traditional recruiting has failed.

2

The Hidden Cost of Language Barriers

\$4,900 per LEP worker. OSHA liability. 25% of accidents.

3

The Untapped Workforce

Who New American & New American workers are and why they outperform.

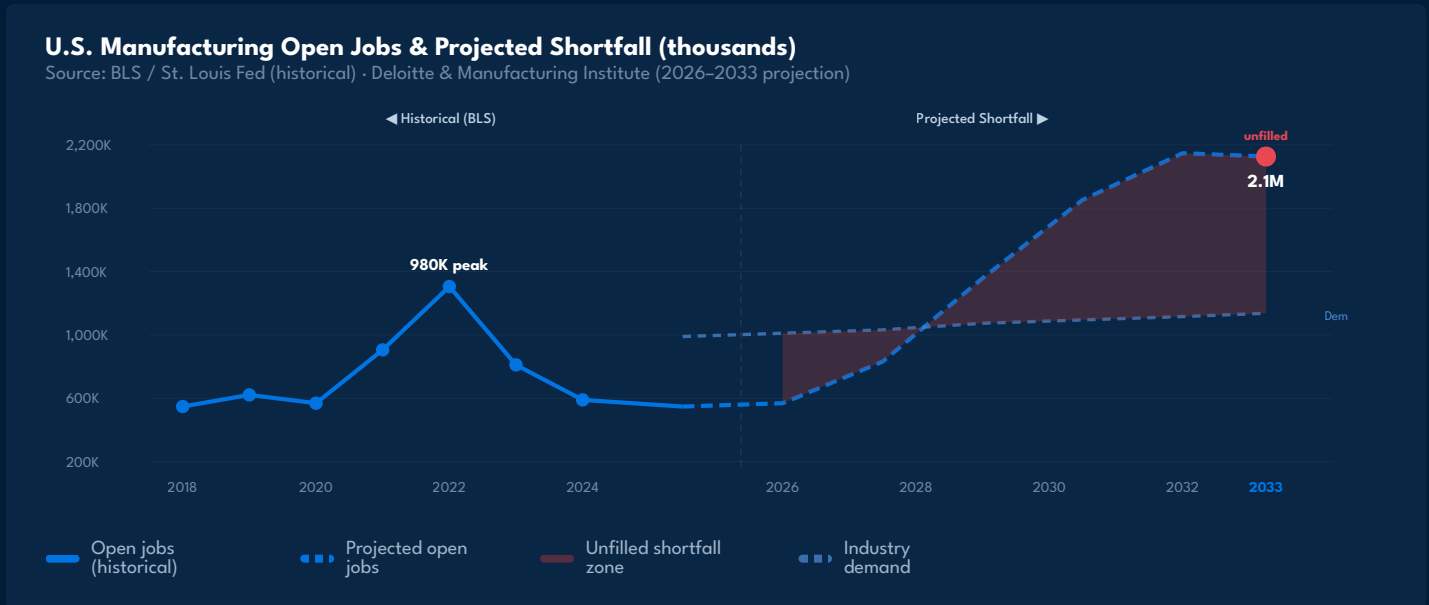
4

The ROI of Closing the Gap

55% drop in workers' comp. 60% fewer incidents. Proven at 50 facilities.

1 The Crisis in Numbers

American manufacturing faces a structural workforce emergency. The numbers tell a story that every manufacturer and HR leader needs to understand — and act on — before it's too late.



3.8 Million New Workers Needed by 2033

Nearly half — 1.9 million — are at risk of going unfilled

Source: Deloitte & The Manufacturing Institute, 2024

The manufacturing sector employs roughly 12.7 million Americans, but factory employment dropped by more than 70,000 jobs since April 2025 — the lowest point since March 2022. Twenty-six percent of today's workforce (approximately 3.9 million workers) is age 55 or older and approaching retirement.

Meanwhile, 82% of manufacturers report they cannot increase revenue growth, 81% cannot maintain production levels, and finding talent is now 36% harder than in 2018. Ninety percent say production departments are the hardest hit. This is not a temporary staffing blip — it is a structural crisis.

The workforce exists — the barrier is language.

There are millions of New American and New American workers who are eager, authorized, and ready to fill these roles. But when every system on your factory floor — safety training, compliance documentation, quality specs, maintenance procedures — is English-only, you're locking out the very workforce that can solve this crisis. UnDesked's AI translation engine eliminates that barrier instantly, converting every critical system into every worker's native language. No human translators. No waiting. The technology finally exists to close the gap between open jobs and willing workers.

2 The Hidden Cost of Language Barriers

With nearly 30 million LEP individuals in the U.S. and New American workers representing 1 in 5 manufacturing employees, the communication gap on factory floors is widening — and costing manufacturers dearly across safety, compliance, and productivity.

25% of workplace accidents involve language barriers

OSHA reports that language barriers are a contributing factor in a quarter of all on-the-job accidents.

OSHA mandates that all safety training be delivered in a language and vocabulary employees can understand. Under the General Duty Clause, employers must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards — and language barriers that prevent adequate training constitute a direct violation. Courts have consistently ruled that employers cannot claim “adequately communicated work rules” when those rules were never communicated in the employee’s language. Fines for serious violations start at \$16,131 each, and willful violations can reach \$161,323.

Where Language Barriers Hit Manufacturing

Source: OSHA data, Relay survey, and manufacturer reports



THE COST PER BARRIER

\$161,323

Max OSHA fine per willful safety violation tied to language barriers

\$4,900 / worker

Annual lost labor cost from ad-hoc translation per LEP employee

+50% fatality rate

Hispanic & Latino workers face fatality rates nearly 50% above the overall average

83% demand change

Of workers say they want better translation technology on the floor

Hispanic and Latino workers — among whom LEP rates are highest — experience the highest workplace fatality rate of any group, nearly 50% above the overall rate. New American Hispanic worker fatalities reached 727 in 2021, a 5.1% increase and the highest count since tracking began.

6.5 hrs

Per week LEP workers spend on ad-hoc translation

\$500K

Total annual hidden cost for mid-size operations

727

New American Hispanic fatalities in 2021 alone

How UnDesked’s AI Translation Engine Eliminates These Costs

UnDesked replaces ad-hoc translation tools, bilingual coworker dependency, and outdated phrase books with a single AI-powered platform. Every safety procedure, every compliance form, every quality spec — translated instantly and accurately into any language on the floor. Workers access translated resources via QR codes, touchscreen kiosks, digital signage, and personal mobile devices. No company email required. No IT lift. OSHA-defensible digital proof trails are generated automatically for every training completion, turning your biggest compliance liability into documented proof of due diligence.

3 The Untapped Workforce

While manufacturers struggle to fill positions, a massive pool of eager, motivated, and legally authorized workers remains underutilized: immigrants and New Americans. This isn't just a feel-good narrative — it's an economic imperative backed by hard data.

1 in 5 U.S. employees is New American

19.2% of the total workforce in 2024, up from 12.4% in 1999 — Bureau of Labor Statistics

New American workers as % of Manufacturing Sub-Sector (2024)

Source: BLS / Manufacturers Alliance



These workers fill roles that domestic labor pipelines cannot supply — especially physically demanding, shift-based production positions. As the U.S.-born population with a high school education or less has shrunk dramatically over two decades, immigrants have stepped in. Nine of the top ten occupations with the largest New American share are labor-intensive.

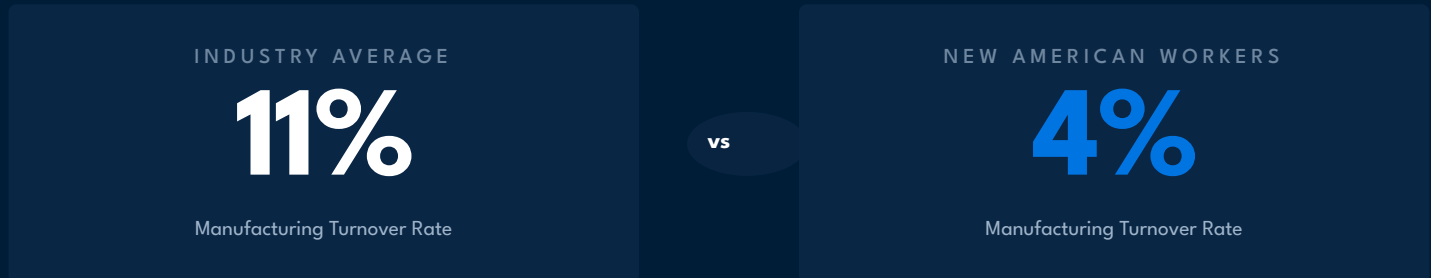
In 2022, roughly 1.8 million New American workers joined the labor force compared to 1.3 million native-born. New Americans contributed over \$21 billion in U.S. taxes and held \$56 billion in spending power. Thirteen percent of New Americans are entrepreneurs, compared to 9% of the U.S.-born population. The National Association of Manufacturers itself has stated that immigration is an essential part of the workforce solution.

Connecting This Workforce to Your Factory Floor

The gap between these willing workers and your open positions is language — and UnDesked closes it from Day 1. When a Burmese worker arrives for orientation, they don't struggle through an English-only safety video. They access a tablet, kiosk, or their own phone and complete LockOut/TagOut training in their native language, with digital proof of completion generated automatically. When a Somali new hire needs to enroll in benefits, the forms appear in Somali. When a Spanish-speaking line worker spots a hazard, they file a near-miss report in Spanish — instantly routed to the right team. The result: workers who were previously locked out of critical systems become fully productive, fully compliant team members within days instead of weeks.

4 The Retention & Performance Edge

The most compelling business case for hiring New American and New American workers isn't just that they're available — it's that they stay. In an industry plagued by turnover, these workers consistently outperform retention benchmarks by dramatic margins.



Source: Tent Partnership for New Americans / Fiscal Policy Institute — study of 26 firms across 4 U.S. regions

73% of firms report higher retention among New American employees

Only 4 of 26 companies reported higher turnover for New Americans vs. other workers.

- Higher retention saves approximately \$5,200 per year per worker in recruiting, onboarding, and training costs.
- Employers report measurable gains: on-time delivery up, quality metrics up, institutional knowledge retained, and a more connected workforce overall.
- New American hires create self-sustaining talent pipelines — employees actively recruit friends and family from their communities, reducing recruiting costs.
- Resettlement agencies function as de facto recruiting partners, directing qualified, work-authorized candidates to employers with proven track records.

“On-time delivery is up, quality is up, residual knowledge is staying here, and I think we have a more connected workforce.”

— Head of a manufacturing company, Tent Partnership for New Americans study

For a manufacturer with 200 workers, reducing turnover by even a few points saves hundreds of thousands annually.

Why UnDesked Drives Retention

Workers who feel invisible disengage and leave. UnDesked makes every worker visible by delivering every critical resource — benefits enrollment, shift schedules, policy acknowledgments, training materials — in their native language. Workers feel seen. They understand their environment. They report hazards instead of staying silent. They pass compliance training on the first attempt. They show up for their second month, and their sixth. At a Fortune 500 plastics manufacturer using UnDesked across 50 facilities and 8,500 deskless workers, employee engagement increased 35%, driven by multi-language resource hubs and anonymous surveys that gave workers a voice for the first time.

5 The Compliance & Business Case

The business case extends far beyond filling empty positions. It encompasses regulatory compliance, financial incentives, and long-term competitive advantage.

OSHA COMPLIANCE — WHAT MANUFACTURERS MUST KNOW

- OSHA requires all safety training be delivered in a language and vocabulary employees understand — this is law, not a guideline.
- Under the General Duty Clause, language barriers preventing adequate training constitute a direct legal violation.
- Courts have ruled employers cannot claim “adequately communicated work rules” if not communicated in the employee’s language.
- English-only training for LEP workers does not satisfy OSHA requirements — even for seemingly simple tasks.
- Serious violations: \$16,131 per violation. Willful violations: up to \$161,323 each.

Language barriers affect every compliance function simultaneously

Safety, HR, Quality, Maintenance, Production, and Compliance — all compromised by the same root cause.

Financial Incentives for Hiring New Americans

WIOA On-the-Job Training

UP TO 50% OF WAGES · 75% FOR SMALL EMPLOYERS

Contact your local American Job Center or state workforce board. Typically 3–6 months — often \$5,000–\$15,000+ per hire depending on wage and role complexity.

State Workforce Training Grants

~\$1,500–\$5,000 PER TRAINEE · VARIES BY STATE

Apply through your state workforce development agency. Kentucky BSSC, Michigan Going PRO, Georgia Quick Start, Texas SDF, Indiana ETG, and more.

ORR-Funded Resettlement Services

FREE WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT

Transportation, case management, and soft-skills training — accessed through your local resettlement agency. Reduces onboarding friction and first-90-day attrition.

Turnover Cost Savings

~\$5,200 PER RETAINED WORKER · PER YEAR

Accrues automatically with lower turnover. 4% vs. 11% on 100 workers = \$36,400/year saved in recruiting, onboarding, and training costs.

New Americans contributed \$21B+ in U.S. taxes and held \$56B in spending power

Source: New American Economy | 13% of New Americans are entrepreneurs vs. 9% of U.S.-born population

UnDesked: One Platform — Six Pillars of Compliance

Safety

LockOut/TagOut, MSDS, PPE, near-miss reports, emergency protocols — all in the worker’s language with OSHA-defensible proof trails.

Maintenance

Equipment manuals, SOPs, and work order submission in every language — with automatic routing. 45% faster response time.

Compliance

Policy acknowledgments, e-signatures, benefits enrollment — legally valid because workers actually understand what they sign.

HR & Onboarding

Onboarding workflows, benefits forms, shift schedules in native languages. 30% faster onboarding. Workers feel seen and stay.

Quality

Work orders, process instructions, inspection criteria delivered at the station in the worker’s language. Scrap and rework eliminated.

Production

Line instructions, equipment issue reporting, shift communication. Workers execute from Day 1. 20% higher operational efficiency.

6 Bridging the Gap

The data is clear: manufacturing has a massive worker shortage, New American and New American workers are the most viable solution, and language barriers are the single biggest obstacle. The question isn't whether to act — it's how.

What Isn't Working

- * Generic ESL programs that teach conversational English but not job-specific vocabulary
- * Ad-hoc translation apps costing \$4,900+ per LEP worker annually in lost productivity
- * One-size-fits-all onboarding ignoring cultural context and literacy levels
- * Reliance on bilingual coworkers for informal translation — creating inefficiency and liability
- * Paper-based safety binders that go stale within a week of printing

What Works

- AI-powered translation of every critical system — Safety, Compliance, Quality, Maintenance, HR, Production
- Instant, accurate translation into any language on the factory floor
- OSHA-defensible digital proof trails for every training completion
- Culturally informed delivery that respects backgrounds while accelerating readiness
- Measurable outcomes and ROI documentation for plant managers



THELANGUAGEGAP.COM

AI-Powered Translation — Built for the Factory Floor

TheLanguageGap.com, powered by UnDesked, connects manufacturers with New American job seekers through AI-powered, job-specific language translation. Our AI engine instantly translates every critical system — Safety, Compliance, Quality, Maintenance, HR, and Production — into every worker's native language. No human translators. No outdated phrase books. Via kiosks, QR codes, digital signage, and mobile.

55%

Drop in workers' comp costs

60%

Fewer safety incidents

30%

Faster onboarding

45%

Faster maint. response

Results from Fortune 500 manufacturer case study — UnDesked.com/case-study

How It Works — No IT Lift, No Company Email Required

01

Upload

Your existing safety docs, SOPs, compliance forms, and training materials go into UnDesked.

02

AI Translates

Our AI engine translates everything instantly — Burmese, Somali, Spanish, Arabic, Swahili, and dozens more.

03

Deploy

Workers access resources on any web-based device — tablets, kiosks, digital signage, or their own phone. No email needed.

04

Track & Prove

Every completion generates OSHA-defensible digital proof trails. Every interaction is documented.

The workforce is out there. The language gap is the barrier. We close that gap.

1

Upload

Your safety, compliance, HR, and production content goes into UnDesked

2

Translate

AI instantly converts every system into any worker's native language

3

Deploy

Any web-based device — tablets, kiosks, signage, or mobile. No email or IT lift required

4

Prove

OSHA-defensible digital proof trails for every training completion

Live on factory floors today | English · Spanish · Burmese · Somali · French · Arabic · Hindi · Chinese · Swahili · and dozens more

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 2.1 million manufacturing jobs at risk of going unfilled by 2030
- Language barriers contribute to 25% of workplace accidents
- New American workers show 4% turnover vs. 11% industry average
- OSHA mandates training in a language workers understand
- UnDesked's AI translation engine closes the gap across all six pillars — Safety, Compliance, Quality, Maintenance, HR, and Production — instantly and at scale

PROVEN AT SCALE

A Fortune 500 plastics manufacturer deployed UnDesked across 50 facilities and 8,500 deskless workers — 80% without company email or computers. Results in the first two years:

\$2.2M

saved in workers' comp

10x

increase in near-miss reports

35%

boost in engagement

TheLanguageGap.com

UnDesked.com

Schedule a free discovery call to learn how we can help your manufacturing operation access this untapped workforce.



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Sources: Deloitte, Manufacturing Institute, BLS, OSHA, New American Economy, Tent Partnership for New Americans, Fiscal Policy Institute, Relay