



# NTC 2019: A Crossroads of Talent and Technology

By Miles Free – Director of Industry Research and Technology

Marx wrote of “capital and labor.” My economics professor spoke of “supply and demand.” The accounting professors were all about “profit and loss.” Your setup guys are all about “feed and speed.” What about us? What two words summarize our view of our businesses?

Not just the shop floor, but also our business? In my experience, visiting the member companies of the PMPA, I would suggest that those two words would be “talent and technology.” I choose talent, because it drives the production of the products with which we delight our customers. I also choose technology, because it provides the ways and means to produce those components.

“The Crossroads of Talent and Technology” is the theme for PMPA’s National Technical Conference, which will be held in Cleveland, Ohio, on March 31 to April 2, at the Huntington Convention Center. Our industry does find itself at a crossroads; the makeup of our talent is changing, as is the technology that our talent deploys.

## Talent

Our talent drives the production in our shops by employing their knowledge, training, skills and experience. Experience is an effective teacher, but it can also be an expensive one. I’ve often thought of experience as the lessons we get when we miss the class. Skills are honed on the job, and training is a deliberate and formal act of teaching. What about knowledge?

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Knowledge is picked up from a variety of channels, not all of which are formal. At our National Technical Conference, we have prepared more than 30 sessions to provide your attendees with knowledge in a variety of areas. The knowledge providers will not be limited to speakers, presenters or formal sessions; conversations and networking events will enable your attendees to ask their questions and learn about best practices from other attendees. Here’s a peek of what we have in store to share with the talent that you send to Cleveland:

1. “Embracing Technology, Empowering Teams”
2. “Talent Development at the Crossroads” (NextGen Committee)
3. “Shop Math”
4. “Best Practices for Continuous Improvement”

## Technology

Technology is almost worshipped these days as everyone waits for the release of the latest version of a favorite app or a shinier piece of hardware. There is no dispute that our technology is becoming more intelligent, more capable and more complex. But technology is our servant, not our master. It takes talent, judgement, skill and experience. All of these things are needed to deploy technology in our service. At this conference, we’ll explore a number of aspects of the technology deployed in our shops, including:

1. “Rotary Transfer Technology Overview”
2. “Automation Journey at the Crossroads of Technology”
3. “The Beauty of Cam Machinery”
4. “From Turning to Milling: What I Wish I Knew”

## Talent X Technology

Return on investment. That’s three words, not two. But those three words make a compelling argument, too. Talent plus technology. That’s the state of our normal operations. But by improving the training, the knowledge of our talent multiplies the power of our existing technology, thus, increasing ROI.

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