

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR MANUFACTURERS & HR LEADERS

The Manufacturer's Guide to Hiring New Americans

How to access New Americans — New Americans, immigrants, and New American workers — the most loyal, motivated, and underutilized talent pool in American manufacturing — including the agencies, incentives, and tools you need to get started.

4%

New American turnover vs.
11% industry average

73%

Of firms report higher
retention with New Americans

\$2,400

WOTC tax credit
per New American hire

1 Why New Americans — And Why Now

American manufacturing is facing a structural workforce crisis that traditional recruiting cannot solve. With 449,000 open positions today and 2.1 million projected unfilled by 2030, manufacturers are competing for a shrinking pool of domestic workers while an eager, authorized, and underutilized workforce sits largely untapped.

1.8 million New American workers entered the U.S. labor force in 2022

Compared to 1.3 million native-born — Bureau of Labor Statistics

New Americans are a distinct category within this workforce — individuals who have been through a rigorous federal vetting process, are fully authorized to work immediately upon arrival, and are actively placed by resettlement agencies that function as de facto recruiting partners. They are not a charity hire. They are a business decision.

4%

New American turnover rate vs.
11% manufacturing average

73%

Of firms report higher retention
among New American employees

13%

Of New Americans are
entrepreneurs vs.
9% of U.S.-born population

\$56B

In U.S. consumer spending power
held by New Americans

Sources: Tent Partnership for New Americans / Fiscal Policy Institute / New American Economy

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

— Head of manufacturing company, Tent Partnership for New Americans study of 26 firms across 4 U.S. regions

What Makes New Americans Different

- Fully work-authorized immediately — no sponsorship required
- Pre-screened and placed by resettlement agencies (free to employers)
- Higher retention driven by community ties and limited job-hopping culture
- Strong motivation — employment is critical to maintaining status and building stability
- Self-sustaining referral pipelines — workers recruit from their own communities

What New Americans Need From You

- Job-specific training materials in their native language
- Onboarding that doesn't assume English literacy
- A structured first 90 days with clear milestones
- Access to HR resources (benefits, schedules, policies) in their language
- A workplace culture that signals "you belong here"

The Single Biggest Barrier — and How to Remove It

The #1 reason manufacturers hesitate to hire New American workers is language. The concern is valid — but the solution is no longer expensive or complicated. TheLanguageGap.com, powered by UnDesked, instantly translates every critical system on your factory floor into any worker's native language. The barrier that held you back is now a solvable problem.

2 The Hiring Playbook — Step by Step

Hiring New Americans is simpler than most manufacturers expect. Resettlement agencies do the heavy lifting on candidate sourcing and initial vetting. Your job is to create the conditions for success once they arrive.

01

Contact Your Local Resettlement Agency

Over 350 resettlement agency offices operate across the U.S. under 9 federally contracted organizations. They maintain active rosters of work-authorized candidates matched to your location and role requirements — at no cost to you.

→ Start with IRC, Church World Service, or your state New American coordinator. See agency list on page 4.

02

Define Your Role Requirements Clearly

Share job descriptions, physical requirements, shift schedules, and any certification needs. The more specific you are, the better the match. Agencies will pre-screen candidates against your criteria before sending referrals.

→ Don't list English fluency as a requirement unless it's genuinely essential. This unnecessarily filters out strong candidates.

03

Prepare Your Language Infrastructure

Before Day 1, ensure safety training, LOTO procedures, onboarding forms, and benefits materials are available in the languages your new hires speak. This is not optional — it's OSHA-required and the single biggest retention driver.

→ UnDesked deploys in under 2 weeks. Workers access everything via tablets, kiosks, or mobile — no company email needed.

04

Structure a Strong First 90 Days

Pair new New American hires with a designated culture guide (not a language interpreter — a colleague who helps them understand workplace norms). Check in weekly. Clear milestones and regular feedback in accessible formats prevent early attrition.

→ The first 30 days determine 90% of retention outcomes. Invest here.

05

Apply for WOTC and OJT Reimbursement

File IRS Form 8850 within 28 days of hire to claim the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Simultaneously apply through your local American Job Center for WIOA on-the-job training reimbursement — up to 50% of wages during the training period.

→ Most manufacturers leave \$2,400–\$9,000 per New American hire on the table by not filing.

06

Build the Referral Pipeline

New American workers recruit from their communities at remarkably high rates when they feel valued. Create a formal employee referral program specifically for your New American workforce — offer a bonus tied to 90-day retention. This is your lowest-cost recruiting channel.

→ One strong hire can generate 3–5 additional candidates from the same community within a year.

The 30-Day Readiness Checklist

- Contact resettlement agency and request candidate pipeline
- Identify culture guides (not interpreters) for each shift
- Set 30/60/90 day check-in schedule with new hires
- Deploy language translation for safety and onboarding materials
- Prepare IRS Form 8850 for WOTC filing within 28 days of hire
- Launch employee referral program with 90-day retention bonus

3 Financial Incentives & Key Resources

Beyond the operational benefits of lower turnover and stronger retention, hiring New Americans comes with direct financial incentives that most manufacturers aren't fully utilizing. These programs are federally funded and require minimal administrative effort to access.

PROGRAM	BENEFIT	HOW TO ACCESS	NOTES
WOTC Tax Credit Work Opportunity Tax Credit	Up to \$2,400 per hire	File IRS Form 8850 with your state workforce agency within 28 days of hire start date	Applies to all New Americans, asylees, and certain immigrants. Long-term TANF recipients may qualify for up to \$9,000.
OJT Reimbursement WIOA On-the-Job Training	Up to 50% of wages	Contact your local American Job Center or state workforce development board	Reimburses employer wages during the training period. Duration varies by role complexity — typically 3–6 months.
New American Employment Support ORR-funded programs	Free placement & support	Work through your local resettlement agency — they access ORR funding on your behalf	May include pre-employment soft skills training, transportation assistance, and case management support for new hires.
Turnover Cost Savings Operational benefit	~\$5,200 per retained worker	No application needed — the savings accrue automatically with lower turnover	Based on average recruiting, onboarding, and training costs. 4% vs. 11% turnover on 100 workers = \$36,400/year saved.

NATIONAL RESETTLEMENT AGENCY PARTNERS — ALL OFFER FREE EMPLOYER SERVICES

- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Church World Service (CWS)
- Catholic Charities
- Lutheran Immigration & New American Service
- World Relief
- Hebrew New American Aid Society (HIAS)
- U.S. Committee for New Americans & Immigrants
- Episcopal Migration Ministries
- Ethiopian Community Development Council



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The Missing Piece: Language Infrastructure

Every step in this guide requires one thing to work: communication in the worker's native language. TheLanguageGap.com, powered by UnDesked, is the platform that makes this possible at scale — instantly translating safety training, compliance documents, HR forms, SOPs, and production instructions into 50+ languages. Deployed on any web-based device — tablets, kiosks, digital signage, and mobile phones embedded via QR codes. No app download, no IT lift, no company email required. OSHA-defensible proof trails generated automatically.

55%

Drop in workers' comp costs

60%

Fewer safety incidents

30%

Faster onboarding

2 wks

Typical deployment timeline

Schedule a Free Discovery Call
TheLanguageGap.com

We'll help you identify your nearest resettlement agency partners, calculate your WOTC eligibility, and show you how quickly language infrastructure can be in place for your first New American hire.

Sources: Tent Partnership for New Americans, Fiscal Policy Institute, New American Economy, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of New American Resettlement, IRS, Deloitte / Manufacturing Institute. This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, tax, or financial advice.