



Ingenuity Plus Investment Creates Innovation

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New talent brings fresh knowledge and energy that helps attract more talent and investment. A serious commitment today to increase and improve Vermont's talent supply will drive innovation long into the future. Innovation is survival in every industry and a shortage of workers hurts innovation. A growing Vermont can reinvigorate great companies and institutions, our towns, and economy.

by Jennifer Stromsten

Ingenuity is creating maple syrup from sap. Investment is purchasing equipment that can tap sap faster. When we make investments in our ingenuity we create innovation-- tools and methods that use less energy to increase output. While tech startups may come to mind when talk about innovation, every business innovates to compete in an evolving world, adapt, and emerge stronger. A factory's new equipment fills orders faster. GPS-enabled dairy farms use efficiency to offset milk prices. Cutting-edge utility grid management reduces Vermont's energy demands. Innovation is survival in every industry.

A shortage of workers hurts innovation. Vermont struggles to adapt to a generational shift, puzzling over millennials and a shriveling talent pool. Some employers are embracing young people and the beneficial attributes they bring to the workplace. One manufacturer with a cohort of freshly-minted engineers described the "buzz" on the factory floor, where new talent works alongside a highly experienced workforce. Their investment in new hires brings fresh knowledge and energy that helps attract more talent and investment.

Innovative solutions to hiring can mitigate the challenges of a dwindling workforce supply. Employers are using creative advertising, new training programs, flexible hours, and new staffing models. Additionally, educational institutions are focusing on demand to train and retrain Vermonters. However, for every success there are unmet needs. We simply need more people to do the work at hand. A growing Vermont can reinvigorate great companies and institutions, our towns, and economy. Let's make a serious commitment today to increase and improve Vermont's talent supply to drive innovation long into the future.

To learn how you can get involved, please visit www.VTFuturesProject.org or email futures@vtfuturesproject.org