

# Career Profile

A weekly series devoted to providing information on career exploration

## Do You Like

- Providing information to supervisors, co-workers, and subordinates by telephone, in written form, e-mail, or in person?
- Analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solution and solve problems?
- Observing, receiving, and otherwise obtaining information from all relevant sources?
- Developing specific goals and plans to prioritize, organize, and accomplish your work?
- Encouraging and building mutual trust, respect, and cooperation among team members?
- Scheduling events, programs, and activities, as well as the work of others?

**Then This Could Be The Career For You!**

## The Type of Work

- Enforce safety and sanitation regulations.
- Direct and coordinate the activities of employees engaged in the production or processing of goods, such as inspectors, machine setters, and fabricators.
- Read and analyze charts, work orders, production schedules, and other records and reports to determine production requirements and to evaluate current production estimates and outputs.
- Confer with other supervisors to coordinate operations and activities within or between departments.
- Plan and establish work schedules, assignments, and production sequences to meet production goals.
- Inspect materials, products, or equipment to detect defects or malfunctions.
- Demonstrate equipment operations and work and safety procedures to new employees, or assign employees to experienced workers for training.
- Observe work and monitor gauges, dials, and other indicators to ensure that operators conform to production or processing standards.
- Confer with management or subordinates to resolve worker problems, complaints, or grievances.
- Interpret specifications, blueprints, job orders, and company policies and procedures for workers.

## Pathways to Success

Many industrial production managers have a college degree in business administration, management, industrial technology, or industrial engineering. However, although employers may prefer candidates with a business or engineering background, some companies will hire well-rounded graduates from other fields who are willing to spend time in a production-related job, because experience in some aspect of production operations is needed before one advances to upper management positions.

Some industrial production managers enter the occupation after working their way up through the ranks, starting as production workers and then advancing to supervisory positions before being selected for management. These workers already have an intimate knowledge of the production process and the firm's organization. To increase one's chances of promotion, workers can expand their skills by obtaining a college degree, demonstrating leadership qualities, or taking company-sponsored courses to learn the additional skills needed in management positions.

## What Employers Look For

### Individuals who possess knowledge of:

- Production and Processing - raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.
- Administration and Management - business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
- Mathematics - arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
- Mechanical - machines and tools, including their designs, uses, repair, and maintenance.
- Customer and Personal Service - principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- Personnel and Human Resources - principles and procedures for personnel recruitment, selection, training, compensation and benefits, labor relations and negotiation, and personnel information systems.
- Education and Training - principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
- English Language - structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

## Job Outlook

Employment of industrial production managers is expected to decline moderately by 8 percent over the 2008-18 decade. Overall manufacturing employment is expected to decline as the production process becomes more automated. However, because industrial production managers coordinate the use of both workers and machines in the production process, they will not be as affected as other occupations by automation. Nevertheless, the employment decline will result from improved productivity and increased imports of manufactured goods.

Efforts to increase efficiency at the management level have led companies to ask production managers to assume more responsibilities, particularly as computers and production management software allow managers to coordinate scheduling, planning, and communication more easily among departments. In addition, more emphasis on quality in the production process has redistributed some of the production manager's oversight responsibilities to supervisors and workers on the production line. However, most of the decision making work of production managers cannot be automated, a factor that will limit the decline in their employment.

# PLANT MANAGER

**Name:** Robert Benton

**Job Title:** Plant Manager

**Company:**  
Quality Blow Molding, Inc.

**Location:** Elyria, Ohio



### DEFINITION:

Supervise and coordinate the activities of production and operating workers, such as inspectors, precision workers, machine setters and operators, assemblers, fabricators, and plant and system operators.

### Q. How did you become interested in your particular field?

**A.** For the most part, my career chose me. Initially, management was not my career of choice. However, after my first promotion to department supervisor, I realized that I had effective managerial skills and wanted to continue in this profession.

### Q. What is your educational background?

**A.** Associates Degree in Design Engineering Technology

### Q. How did you get to where you are today?

**A.** Early in my career, I was given a chance to manage a department at a printing company. Simultaneously, I was attending Stark State College for engineering. Upon my graduation, I sought and obtained an engineering position. Shortly thereafter, I was approached to consult at another printing company. After getting that company back on track, they offered me a position as their plant manager; I remained there for over a decade. Three years ago, opportunity knocked again. Quality Blow Molding offered me a position as their plant manager and I have been there ever since.

### Q. What skills or certifications do you think are needed to be successful in this field?

**A.** Earning an Organizational Behavior Degree, combined with a strong knowledge in the particular industry you will be managing, will be most helpful. Ultimately, however, management of personnel is an on-the-job learned skill. Good people skills, patience, understanding and fairness are critical skills for any manager. A 21st century manager must be able to lead, motivate, nurture, facilitate, and quickly adapt to an ever changing global business environment and a diverse workforce.

### Q. What is the best part of your job?

**A.** Running a successful business and seeing how that business positively affects the people who are employed.

### Q. Do you have any words of advice for someone considering a career in your field?

**A.** To be successful, you must aspire to work with people. In addition, strive to be fiscally responsible and ethical in your business practices.



## Earnings Potential

Location	Year	Pay Period	Low	Median	High
United States	2009	Yearly	\$31,800	\$52,100	\$83,600
Ohio	2009	Yearly	\$32,600	\$51,200	\$79,000
Cleveland Elyria-Mentor, OH MSA	2009	Yearly	\$33,200	\$53,700	\$82,300

O\*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>.

Sources: Occupational Information Network, O\*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>; \*U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, <http://stats.bls.gov/oco>