

Production Managers

These workers oversee production and operations workers throughout the manufacturing process. Production Managers directly supervise machine operators, plan and coordinate work activities, and direct resources necessary for manufacturing products in accordance with cost, quality, and quantity specifications. Target Production Management Occupations include:

- First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers
- Industrial Production Managers
- First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers
- General and Operations Managers

There are many entry points to becoming a production manager. Some follow a career path preceding their role as a production manager, some obtain the role by achieving industry credentials, and others become production managers as a starting point after a bachelor's degree.



Is this job for you?

A person who thrives in this position typically fits the following description:

- Is thorough, with **strong attention to detail**
- Has **integrity** and is committed to making honest and ethical decisions
- **Willing to lead**, offer opinions, and give direction
- Is **dependable**, reliable, and can fulfill obligations
- Is **flexible and adaptable**, open to both positive and negative change, and can roll with variety in the everyday workplace
- Is **cooperative, maintains composure**, and keeps emotions in check during difficult situations.

Unsure but want to learn more? [Click here.](#)

Career Pathway

There are multiple entry points to becoming a Production Manager. While most job postings require a 4-year degree, typically in engineering, there are other entry points. For example, around 5 years of experience as a production technician with some leadership experience may be considered in place of an engineering degree. First-line supervisor jobs may require apprenticeships in lieu of college education.



Production Managers

There are many types of production managers.

As a first step, this job will often take the form of a line supervisor/team lead, which entails managing a team of production workers. For example, this person will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a production line, among other tasks. After this initial role, there are many paths an **individual can take in their career as a production manager**, depending on their interests, experience, and unique skills. This could include titles like Business Leader, Supply Chain Manager, Director of Operations, or even potentially Plant Manager.



Occupation Characteristics



What is a Production Manager?

Sample Job Description: Plan, direct, or coordinate work activities and resources necessary for manufacturing products. Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of production and operating workers.

Top Job Titles: Plant Manager | Manufacturing Manager | Product Line Manager | Mechanical Supervisor | Manufacturing Supervisor | Quality Manager

Work Activities:

- Making Decisions and Solving Problems
- Working with Computers
- Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates
- Monitoring Processes, Materials, or Surroundings
- Inspecting Equipment, Structures, or Materials

Source: O*NET

Skills

- Active listening
- Management of personnel resources
- Decision making
- Time management
- Coordination
- Critical thinking

Knowledge

- Production and processing
- Administration and management
- Personnel and human resources
- Mathematics
- Training methods

Work Environment

- Email
- Face-to-Face discussions
- Wear common PPE
- Typical work week >40 hours
- Fast-paced
- Freedom to determine tasks, priorities, and goals

Related Occupations

The following occupations have comparable skills to Production Managers based on the levels and importance of knowledge, skills, and abilities. This means workers in these occupations could more easily transfer their competencies to work in the manufacturing sector.

- First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trade Workers
- Facilities Managers
- Life Science Technicians
- Industrial Engineering Technicians
- Process Engineers
- Machine Operators

Sample Opportunities in Maine

- Front Line Supervisor, Outside Machinist | Bath Iron Works
- Production Supervisor Manager | GE Vernova
- Area Maintenance Supervisor – Mechanical | Sappi
- Operations Manager | Tanbark

This list is for illustrative purposes.

Production Managers

**Current Jobs
in Maine in
Manufacturing
(2023)**



**Max. Projected
Workforce Gap in
Manufacturing
(2023 -28)**



**Median Hourly
Wages across
all sectors
(2023)**



Typical Entry Points

Often, Associate or Bachelor's degree (typically in engineering) is required for this occupation. Some roles may require vocational training or significant on-the-job experience in place of a degree.

Career & Tech. Education

- Manufacturing Technology
- Machining/Machine Tool Technology
- Heavy Equipment Operation

Associate or Bachelor's Degree

- Engineering Technology
- Engineering
- Manufacturing Technology

Experience in Related Occupations

- Long-time production technician
- Machine operator
- Engineering technician
- Entry-level engineer
- Military leadership

Career Progression

Career progression can take multiple forms depending on the worker's interests, prior experience, and skill attainment. To advance, workers need several years of experience and to demonstrate leadership, experience, and capabilities in one or more of the following areas.



Specialization

- Materials
- Environmental, Health, and Safety
- Quality Assurance
- Electronics
- Mechanical



Management

- Team Lead
- Supervisor
- Business Leader



Cross Training

- Product Management
- Quality Assurance
- Supply Chain and Materials Management

Training Opportunities



The programs listed here are for illustrative purposes. There are dozens of programs available for workers with any level of previous training or experience. [Click here](#) to learn more and find additional Maine-based training opportunities near you.

Maine-based institutions offer a range of training opportunities to learn more about Production Management.

Career and Technical Education

Audience and Outcome | These programs are typically available to high school students and provide an entry point into manufacturing. With an additional 2-5 years of experience, graduates of CTE programs may be eligible to become Production Managers.

- Manufacturing Technology | Biddeford Regional Center of Technology (York County)
- Precision Machining Technology | Lewiston Regional Tech Center (Androscoggin County)
- Engineering Technology | Presque Isle Tech Center (Aroostook County)

Associate's Degree Programs

Audience and Outcome | These programs are for adults and typically require a 2-year time commitment. Graduates are ready to start manufacturing work and, after some entry-level experience, may be eligible to become Production Managers.

- Machining Technology | Central Maine Community College (Androscoggin County)
- Electrical Technology | Southern Maine Community College (Cumberland County)
- Automation Technology | Eastern Maine Community College (Penobscot County)
- Not interested in a 2-year degree? Many community colleges also offer certificate programs.

University Degree Programs

Audience and Outcome | A Bachelor's degree or higher typically enables graduates to start their careers as Production Managers.

- Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering | University of Maine
- Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering | University of Southern Maine

Apprenticeship Programs

Audience and Outcome | Apprenticeships are typically offered by Maine-based employers. They combine an academic curriculum with on-the-job training.

- General Dynamics, Bath Iron Works (Sagadahoc County)
- Pratt & Whitney (York County)

Relevant Industry Credentials

Audience and Outcome | These credentials support advancement into supervisory roles. Certifications like Lean Six Sigma demonstrate expertise in quality, efficiency, and operations.

- Lean Six Sigma
- Certified in Production and Inventory Management (CPIM) – Assoc. for Supply Chain Management