

# Crain's Cleveland Business

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December 07, 2021 02:42 PM

## Manufacturers concerned about workforce, but optimistic about 2022, Marcum report says



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More than two-thirds of respondents to New York-based accounting and advisory firm Marcum's new manufacturing survey said recruitment is their biggest concern going into 2022. Forty percent were concerned about workforce training, and about 34% were worried about retirements. Health care costs were also a concern for 37% of respondents, and 31% had their eyes on higher taxes.

But despite challenges, 77% of respondents were optimistic about the coming year, according to the [2021 Marcum National Manufacturing Survey](#). And about 80% were expecting higher revenues.

A little more than half of respondents — about 54% — planned to grow their staff in the next year, the report said. Finding skilled labor ranked in the top three priorities for 72% of respondents. Other top priorities included cutting costs, increasing the use of and investing in technology, and entering new markets.

To attract employees, more than 80% of respondents said they planned to increase wages and/or benefits.

COVID-19 had an impact on manufacturers, with 60% reporting lower revenue in 2020 than in 2019. And about 46% said the pandemic would permanently change how the company managed workforce safety measures. Forty percent said it would change how they manage the workplace environment, and 40% said they'd "do more with less," the report noted.

Respondents also expressed concerns around the supply chain, with 40% noting that controlling costs was a challenge and about 26% saw issues in sourcing raw materials.