

# For Reference Only: 2025 IndustryWeek Best Plants Entry Form

The IW Best Plants entry form is modified each year. This reference model is a version of the 2025 entry form with respect to the information we request, provided solely **for review purposes**. It is not an exact replica of the entry form, which is hosted and completed online.

For more information about the IW Best Plants Awards competition, visit [www.industryweek.com/about-industryweek-best-plants-program](http://www.industryweek.com/about-industryweek-best-plants-program).

---

## **General Plant Information**

Plant Location

Primary Product

Name of parent company (if applicable)

Parent Company Size

Public or Private? Choose one.

Year of plant start-up

Number of days operating per week

Number of shifts

Total square footage

Manufacturing square footage

Number of employees as of January 1, 2025.

Percentage change in number of employees in the past 3 years

Number of production employees (hourly or "touch" labor) as of January 1, 2025

Percentage change in number of production employees in the past 3 years

Anticipated employment change in 2025, as a percentage

Are plant workers represented by a union?

---

## **Supporting Statement**

**General Statement:** Explain why this facility should be considered one of IndustryWeek's Best Plants for 2024. *Word count: 0 / 500*

**History:** Give a brief description of the history and nature of this manufacturing location, specifically. (250)

**Products and Manufacturing Processes:** Describe the products and components manufactured or assembled in this plant. Describe the flow of material through the facility, outlining the various manufacturing processes (i.e. assembly, stamping, welding, full automation) and any unique challenges faced in producing these goods. Such challenges may include government regulation, unique materials, or a host of other options.

*Word count: 0 / 600*

**Achievements:** Describe the key initiatives and programs, and performance results that distinguish this plant as a high-performance, world-class manufacturing operation. Include significant competitive improvements, and other achievements, recognitions, or awards the plant has received.

*Word count: 0 / 600*

**Future Competitiveness:** What are the short- and long-term strategic goals for this operation, and how do they reflect corporate objectives? Describe current improvement projects and near-term plans and explain how they will ensure that your operation remains competitive in the future.

*Word count: 0 / 500*

## **Management Practices**

How does plant management communicate the plant's strategy and objectives among the entire workforce? Word count: 0/300

Provide an example of how plant leadership participates in or encourages a continuous improvement culture within this facility. (0/350)

Please indicate the extent to which the following improvement methodologies have been implemented: *None, Some or Significant*

- Total Quality Management
- Theory of Constraints
- Lean Manufacturing/Toyota Production System
- Six Sigma
- Agile Manufacturing

Number of people in plant exclusively dedicated to improvement programs and projects

Total documented cost savings as a result of specific improvement programs and projects over the most recent calendar year?

Is this plant currently involved, as a defendant, in any product liability, environmental, or employee litigation?

What is plant management's No. 1 indicator of plant performance?

How is that indicator calculated?

How has that indicator changed over the past 3 years?

*Footnotes for Management Practices section, if needed*

# Quality Achievements

Has the plant received ISO 9001:2015 certification?

Please list any additional quality qualifications held by this plant

Which of the following quality techniques have been *extensively* implemented at this facility?

- Six Sigma
- Poka-yoke
- Failure mode effect analysis (FMEA)
- Total Quality Management (TQM)
- Employee problem-solving teams
- Plan/do/check/act or adjust
- Advanced product quality planning (APQP)
- Manual or Computerized SPC
- DOE

Finished product (identify type of product, ex. seatbelt, bearing, etc.)

Current first-pass yield of finished-product, as a percentage

Yield improvement over past three years

First-pass yield for all finished products, as a percentage (use a weighted average that takes into account differences in product volumes or in value-added)

In-plant defect/fallout rate on all components, including products that fail finished product tests (calculate as ppm)

In-plant defect/fallout rate on all components three years ago (calculate as ppm)

Percentage reduction in in-plant defect/fallout rate within past 3 years

Customer reject rate on shipped products (ppm)

Customer reject rate on shipped products (ppm) three years ago

Percentage reduction in customer reject rate within past 3 years

Scrap/rework costs as a percentage of sales

Scrap/rework costs as a percentage of sales three years ago

Percentage reduction in scrap and rework costs within past 3 years

What other measures of quality, if any, do you track across the plant?

*Footnotes for Quality Achievements section, if needed*

## **Employment Practices**

What is the plant's current annual labor turnover rate (include all means of voluntary and involuntary separation: layoff, quit, retirement, buyouts, transfers, etc.)?

How many times per year is employee satisfaction formally measured at this plant?

What percentage of plant's production workforce now participates in empowered or self-directed work teams:

Which of the following responsibilities are handled by work teams, rather than supervisors, on the plant floor? Check all that apply.

- Production scheduling
- Interteam communications
- Skills certification
- Disciplinary actions
- Safety review and compliance
- Environmental compliance
- Quality assurance
- Firing of team members
- Daily job assignments
- Performance reviews (peer evaluations)
- Training
- Hiring of team members
- Vacation/work scheduling
- Materials management

How many improvement suggestions *per employee* did your plant record last year?

How many improvement suggestions *per employee* were implemented last year?

Average annual hours of formal classroom and/or online training per production employee:

Average annual hours of formal on-the-job training per production employee:

Has plant established a training curriculum with a local education institution?

Does plant emphasize cross-training of production employees?

What monetary awards does the plant offer to production employees? Check all that apply.

- Rewards for individual performance
- Rewards for team performance
- Profit sharing
- Gain-sharing
- Pay for knowledge
- Pay for skills

What is the average wage (hourly rate without overtime) of production employees?

What is the average wage of production employees in region?

Does the plant employ temporary or seasonal workers?

Average hours of overtime per week per production employee over the most recent calendar year:

Has the plant recently laid off any employees (January 2024-January 2025)?

*Footnotes for Employment Practices Section, if needed*

## **Safety**

Has plant experienced any work-related fatalities over the past three years?

Has plant been cited for any OSHA violations over the past three years?

For the most recent calendar year, what was the plant's incidence rate for total OSHA-recordable injury and illness cases?

For the most recent calendar year, what was the plant's incidence rate rate for OSHA-recordable injury and illness cases with days away from work, job transfer or restriction (DART)?

What is the average incidence rate for total OSHA-recordable injury and illness cases for your industry as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics?

What is the average incidence rate for OSHA-recordable injury and illness cases with days away from work, job transfer or restriction for your industry as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics?

Percentage change in the plant's incidence rates for total OSHA-recordable injury and illness cases over the past 3 years

Percentage change in the plant's incidence rates for OSHA-recordable injury and illness cases with days away from work, job transfer or restriction over the past three years

Does plant participate in OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program as either a "Star" or "Merit" site?

For plants with state-administered occupational health programs, and those in Canada and Mexico, do you participate in a similar proactive, safety certification program?

As part of your accident prevention program, do you monitor and investigate near misses?

*Footnotes for Safety section, if needed*

## **Supply Chain and Logistics**

Which of the following best describes your site's relationship with suppliers? (Check one only)

- Focused on price
- Focused on total cost
- Focused on delivery
- Focused on capabilities
- Focused on quality
- Other

To what extent has plant adopted JIT/kanban systems with suppliers?

What percentage of key suppliers provide JIT delivery?

What percentage of key suppliers have been formally certified?

Does plant have consignment inventory (owned by on-site suppliers) on site?

Do high-volume suppliers deliver to point-of-use in the plant?

Do major suppliers contribute to cost-reduction and/or quality-improvement efforts in your plant?

When supplier initiatives yield cost savings for the plant, are cost savings shared with the supplier?

What percentage of supplier orders are delivered on-time (by the request date)?

What percentage of purchased materials and components (dollar volume) no longer requires incoming inspection?

Typical leadtime, in days, on class-A (high-cost) purchased materials

Percentage change in average leadtime on class-A (high-cost) purchased materials over past three years

*Footnotes for Supply Chain and Logistics section, if needed*



## **Technology**

In terms of total cost, please list the largest investment in information technology at this facility over the past 3 years? Word count 0/200

In terms of total cost, please list the top investment in production equipment at this facility over the past 3 years? Word count 0/200

Provide an example of how this facility solved a problem or pursued new opportunities with the creative use of a technology or technologies.

Word count: 1 / 300

## **Manufacturing & Flexibility**

To what extent has this plant adopted the following practices? *None, Some or Wide*

- Cellular manufacturing practices
- Focused-factory production systems
- JIT/continuous-flow production methods
- Internal "pull" system with kanban signals
- Standardized work
- 5S
- Level scheduling
- Value-stream mapping

Has this plant emphasized lot-size reduction?

If yes, by how much in the past 3 years?

Have quick-changeover methods been widely adopted?

If yes, by how much in the past 3 years?

Does the plant have access to and use real-time customer demand data to plan production?

How frequently is the master production schedule updated?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- We don't create production schedules; all work is linked directly to customer orders

Manufacturing cycle time for a typical finished product (the time of actual production, from when an order is released to the plant floor through to the final process within the plant, 1 day=24 hours)

By what percentage has manufacturing cycle time been reduced within the past three years?

What is your current standard order-to-shipment leadtime for a typical product (calculate as the time from when a specific order is released to the shop floor until that specific order is shipped to the customer)

By what percentage has standard order-to-shipment leadtime been reduced within the past three years?

Does plant offer just-in-time (JIT) delivery to customers?

On-time delivery rate to customers (% on time)

The above on-time delivery rate is based on (select one): Date customer requested or date promised

Where does this plant directly ship its products? (i.e., retailers; other manufacturers' plants; other company plants, etc.)

*Footnotes for Manufacturing & Flexibility section, if needed*

## **Maintenance**

What is average machine availability rate as a percentage of scheduled uptime?

What percentage of maintenance work is reactive (in response to unexpected machine or equipment breakdown)?

What is the operating equipment efficiency (OEE) for major production lines for the most recent calendar year?

To what extent does the plant practice total productive maintenance (TPM)? None, some, or wide

Do machine operators regularly perform preventive and routine maintenance?

Has plant implemented a computerized maintenance management (CMMS) system?

Describe key elements of maintenance programs and practices, including the use of any predictive maintenance technologies 200 words

Footnotes for Maintenance section, if needed

## **Inventory Management**

Please provide percentage change in total plant unit volume within past three years

Average days of raw-materials inventory:

Percentage change in days of raw materials inventory within past three years:

Average days of work-in-process (WIP) inventory:

Percentage change in days of work-in-process inventory within past three years:

Average days of finished-goods inventory:

Percentage change in days of finished-goods inventory within past three years:

Number of SKUs (stock keeping units) in finished-goods inventory:

*Footnotes for Inventory Management section, if needed*

## **Environmental Stewardship**

Has plant achieved ISO 14001 certification?

Has plant achieved ISO 50001 certification?

Has plant obtained zero waste-to-landfill status?

Have federal or state EPA authorities cited plant for any violations of environmental laws within the past 5 years? If yes, explain violation.

*Footnotes for Environmental Stewardship section, if needed*

## **Competitiveness and Market Results**

By what percentage has productivity changed within the past three years, annual value-added per employee (total employment, not just direct labor)?

By what percentage has productivity changed within the past three years, annual sales per employee (total employment, not just direct labor)?

Approximate percentage manufacturing-cost change per unit of product shipped, excluding purchased-materials costs, within past three years

Approximate percentage cost change per unit of product shipped, including purchased-materials costs, within past three years

Annual percentage change in total plant revenue for 2024 (vs. previous year):

Anticipated annual change in total plant revenue for 2025

What is plant's customer retention rate for the past three years?

What is the plant's return on invested capital (ROIC)\*, as a percentage?

Is plant currently profitable?

What is the percentage change in plant-level profitability (EBIT) over the past three years

*Footnotes for Competitiveness & Market Results, if needed*