



Machining

Better MRO Top 10 of 2019: Job Salary Guides, OSHA Violations and More

Vanessa Jo Roberts | Dec 03, 2019

With 2019 just about in the books, we take a look back at the past year to highlight the stories that matter to manufacturing shops big and small.

It's the time of year when we all tend to take stock, looking back at key moments as well as ahead to what's on the horizon. We decided to share a Better MRO top 10 list—featuring content that drew the most clicks, kept eyes on the page the longest, sparked the most conversations and was shared frequently.

The list, intriguingly, offers a fairly well-rounded mix of the issues affecting manufacturing today—from the skills gap and tariff fallout to innovation in tooling and meeting safety requirements. No doubt some articles on the list won't surprise you (our manufacturing salary guide, for instance). But some probably will (first-aid kits, anyone?).

Take a look through our list. We'll be interested to know if you agree with the masses or if you had a particular favorite or helpful topic that *didn't* make the cut. We want to hear from you so we can bring you more of what you want in 2020.

And now for the list.

No. 10: What's in Your Industrial First-Aid Kit?

Our industrial *first-aid kit checklist* is simple and straightforward, offering the basics that a shop will want to have on hand to stay in sync with the ANSI/ISEA Z308.1-2015 standard for *kits*.

The article also offers some helpful tips on how to keep your first-aid supplies fresh and well stocked.

No. 9: 5 Metal-Cutting Tips for Nickel-Based High-Temp Alloys

Cutting pieces often are popular on Better MRO, but this *tips article* about working with nickel and nickel-based alloys really drew interest. It's not surprising since nickel is such an important metal given

its durability and corrosion resistance.

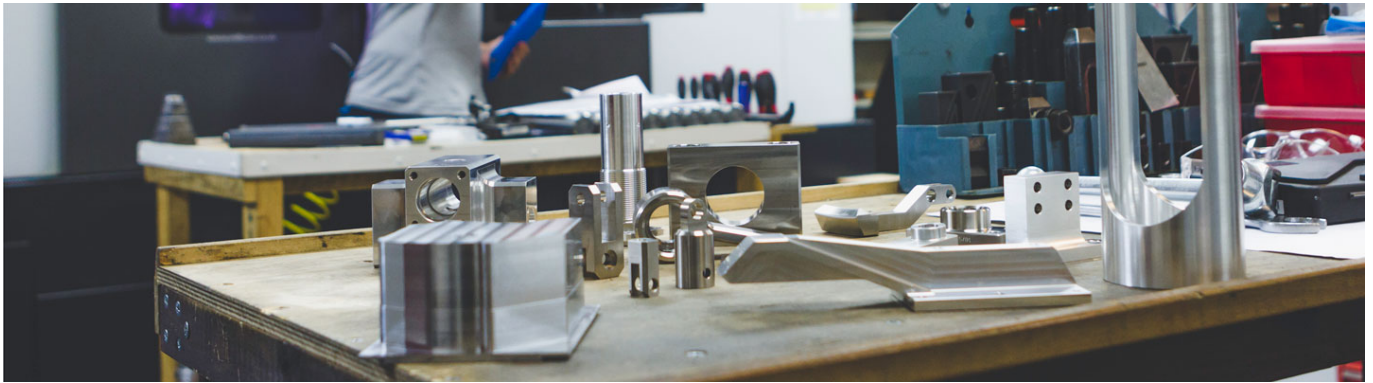
The piece offers both pointers on how to manage work hardening common with nickel and its alloys as well as cutting techniques and appropriate speeds and feeds.

LEARN MORE: Is your shop hard over on hard metals? Here's another article that might be of interest, "[*Working with Ti-5553: Optimizing Tool Life and Cutting Speeds.*](#)"

No. 8: Machine Programming Languages: G-Code Commands vs. M-Codes

Who doesn't love a good code-off?

Our [*CNC G-code versus M-code article*](#) is a helpful explainer about how the use of these programming languages is changing as shops increasingly rely on computer-aided manufacturing software to run 3-axis and 5-axis *CNC machines*. It provides insights on the role of each code type and on the evolution of CAM on the shop floor.



LEARN MORE: If your machinists increasingly require programming skills because of your business's workloads, [*read more*](#) about how the future of machine automation will change metalworking. (And [*find out*](#) why manual machining still has value too.)

No. 7: 5 Reasons to Keep Machining Coolant Clean

Productivity is the key to profits—a fact not lost on managers on shop floors everywhere. This [*tactical advice article*](#) provides pointers on how to get longer life from your machines through smart coolant use.

Equally important: Clean *coolants* create fewer health concerns for your workers.



LEARN MORE: What about water-based coolants? Find out if they might be right for your shop in our

guide to machine lubrication.

No. 6: Impact Gloves vs. Vibration-Resistant Gloves: What's the Difference?

Gloves really do put the “personal” in personal protective equipment. This *detailed article* explains the difference between impact and vibration-resistant *gloves* and when to select one PPE type over the other based on the protection needs.

There's a reason that the Bureau of Labor Statistics data cites hand injuries as second only to back and neck injuries for lost workdays. If a glove doesn't fit or isn't right for the job at hand, it may well go unused or misused.



No. 5: A Guide to Safety Professional Salaries and Certifications

The desire to drive a culture of safety in manufacturing has expanded the role of safety teams. We take a look at the different team roles and also the average pay for those jobs in our *article on safety pros' salaries and certifications*.

While certifications are common in manufacturing, they are even more prevalent in safety—and one certification can drive up wages by as much as \$10,000.

LEARN MORE: Get additional job advancement tips in “*The Path to Becoming a Safety Professional: Certifications and Steps.*”

No. 4: Fall Protection No. 1, as 2019's Top 10 OSHA Violations See 15% Drop

A perennial favorite, our *top 10 OSHA violations article* this year gave context to the shift of a couple of items on the list, as well as shared expert advice from an MSC safety specialist about how to improve fall protection.

For the ninth consecutive year, fall protection led the list—with 6,010 violations cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Even so, the increased emphasis on safety in manufacturing led to a drop in violations for every standard on the list.

LEARN MORE: Get helpful tips for each of the *top violations affecting manufacturing* in this related article.

Wondering how your business is doing relative to the competition on injury rate? Use our TCR/DART calculator now to find out.

No. 3: The Effect of Tariffs on U.S. Manufacturing

The fallout of the trade wars is a concern to businesses across the manufacturing industry. In this *in-depth tariff piece*, Better MRO shares an update on the impact of tariffs as well as advice from management consultants about risk-planning best practices.



LEARN MORE: You can find more advice from experts in "[*How to Future-Proof Your Business from Tariff Fallout.*](#)"

No. 2: How to Start a CNC Shop: Everything You Need to Know

To offer pointers about what it takes to launch a successful CNC machining business today, we talked at length with the 24-year-old founder of Rocket Machining & Design, Duane Spurling.

The resulting *article* goes deep on the business acumen, tools and just plain guts needed to get a *machine shop* off the ground. Spurling also shares some failures and mistakes that ultimately helped him build a better business.



LEARN MORE: Read another real-life CNC launch story and get more startup tips in "[*From the Shop Floor to the Top Floor.*](#)"

No. 1: The State of Salaries and Hourly Pay in Manufacturing

The skills gap continues to be a focus of machine shops nationwide. Given that, it's not surprising that *our guide to the salaries and pay rates for manufacturing jobs* was the No. 1 story in 2019.

It gives context to the challenges posed by the skills gap as well as details the upward swing in pay for jobs across the manufacturing industry.

LEARN MORE: Discover how to recruit and retain the next generation of workers in "[*Charting*](#)

Manufacturing Career Pathways for Gen Z and Beyond."

Tell us what you want to learn more about in manufacturing—whether it's related to one of our top stories from 2019 or is a topic that didn't make this year's list.

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