

# NEXT GENERATION MANUFACTURING

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ATLANTA- May 7, 2012- [Next Generation Manufacturing](#), a nonprofit dedicated to the support and growth of manufacturing in the state, and [Shaw Industries](#) recently hosted 65 Georgia manufacturing professionals for a plant tour and educational program featuring Shaw Industries' Vance Bell, CEO; David Wilkerson, Corporate Director, Sustainability and Product Stewardship; Pete Sigmon, VP Innovation; and David Morgan, VP Manufacturing.

During the program, Shaw's leadership team offered a number of insights and takeaways around sustainability, innovation and manufacturing that are relevant to manufacturers across the state and country. The team's top five key takeaways are:

1. Sustainability infrastructure investments are best analyzed in the context of an entire enterprise – as opposed to considering each one individually. Consider each investment's potential value to customers – and how each financially and technologically complements other existing processes and facilities in a complete company portfolio.
2. Energy technology efficiency and waste are interwoven. If equipment breaks down, for example, it depletes energy leading to tangible waste. Technology must always be monitored to the root of any potential or existing problems to mitigate failure. A manufacturing plant's footprint is reduced in the process. **Tip:** Energy treasure hunts provide opportunities to generate impact-reducing ideas and initiatives. Bring together employees from various departments, as well as professionals from other industries to brainstorm and uncover less obvious ideas and steps for improving efficiency. Create a list of and assign names to action items to ensure that next steps are taken.
3. Multiple manufacturing plants across an enterprise require intentional, proactive systems at the corporate level to manage, maintain and monitor quality, safety and sustainability initiatives. Individual plant managers should not be depended upon to create tools and programs to address these initiatives.
4. From the time that an enterprise-wide priority (i.e. safety, quality, sustainability) is undertaken, it may require up to five years to be an ingrained part of a company's DNA. Executive leadership should champion the initiative, with all management levels continuing to keep the initiative at the forefront of all activities.
5. Employing open innovation requires empowering employees to understand that ideas can come from anywhere inside or outside the enterprise. It pushes a company to go and seek innovation – to invite it in.

"Georgia's leading manufacturers are pushing relentlessly to streamline the materials handling and assembly process, empower their workers, attack waste and speed the distribution of product from factory floor to end consumer," said Richard Kopelman, chairman of Next Generation Manufacturing and managing partner-elect at [Habif, Arogeti & Wynne](#), Georgia's largest independent accounting firm.

“Innovation is flowing both from the bottom up—as teams of workers come up with better ways to do their jobs – and from the top down, as managers pull best-practice ideas from across the U.S and the globe.”

**Next Generation Manufacturing’s next plant tour and program will be held on June 26, 2012 at Southeastern Mills, in Rome, GA.** The event is being hosted by Next Generation Manufacturing sponsors, Definity Partners and HPWP Consulting. For a full listing of Next Generation Manufacturing events, visit [www.nextgenerationmfg.org](http://www.nextgenerationmfg.org).

For more information about Next Generation Manufacturing, contact Regina Maddox, Executive Director of Next Generation Manufacturing, at [regina.maddox@hawcpa.com](mailto:regina.maddox@hawcpa.com) or 404-431-6612, or visit [www.nextgenerationmfg.org](http://www.nextgenerationmfg.org).

**About Next Generation Manufacturing:**

Founded in 2011, Next Generation Manufacturing is a non-profit supporting the growth and development of manufacturing in the state of Georgia. The mission of Next Generation Manufacturing is to make Georgia manufacturing companies aware of the breadth of local services available to them, such as the Georgia Institute of Technology, the Technical College System of Georgia, the Georgia Association of Manufacturers and Georgia Quick Start. By utilizing the resources available to them in Georgia, manufacturing companies will be able to realize the key to growth: innovation.

Next Generation Manufacturing’s 2011 inaugural manufacturing event received a very positive response and was a huge success overall with 85 percent of attendees indicating that they were very likely to attend future programs hosted by Next Generation Manufacturing. In addition, 100 percent of attendees rated the overall event as good or excellent. Overall, attendees enjoyed a full day of learning that was well-balanced between listening to speakers and touring Georgia Tech’s Research Centers.