



# THE NAVIGATOR

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2026

## Message from OMEP President Mike Vanier

At OMEP, our mission has always been straightforward. We work side by side with Oregon manufacturers to help build successful businesses. Every day, we see firsthand the challenges manufacturers face as they try to grow, invest, hire, and compete both within Oregon and beyond our borders. From that perspective, I strongly support House Bill 4084, Governor Kotek's economic development package, because it directly addresses the real-world barriers holding manufacturers and the broader business community back.

Manufacturing is foundational to Oregon's economy. The sector employs more than 200,000 Oregonians, represents roughly 14 percent of the state's gross domestic product, and generates nearly 40 billion dollars in annual economic output. These are some of the highest paying jobs in our economy, anchoring communities in every corner of the state. When manufacturing is strong, the benefits extend far beyond factory floors, strengthening supply chains, service industries, and local economies statewide.

House Bill 4084 represents an important shift in how Oregon approaches economic development. Today, too many businesses are standing in the smoke, facing unclear processes, fragmented systems, and unpredictable timelines that discourage investment. This bill is about moving to the other side of the campfire. It is about acknowledging where the system is not working and fixing it so Oregon can compete more effectively with other states for jobs, capital, and innovation.

One of the most impactful components of the bill is FastTrack Permitting. Manufacturers consistently tell us that slow and unpredictable permitting is one of the biggest barriers to expansion. House Bill 4084 establishes a coordinated and accountable approach to permitting for major economic development projects, with clearer timelines and better alignment across state agencies. This is not about cutting corners. It is about clarity, predictability, and responsiveness so businesses can move forward with confidence.

The bill also addresses a long-standing challenge in Oregon: the lack of shovel-ready industrial sites. Without prepared sites and supporting infrastructure, manufacturers often face long delays or are forced to look elsewhere to expand. House Bill 4084 invests in industrial site readiness so communities across the state can compete for manufacturing projects, attract private investment, and create high-quality jobs more quickly.

Another important element is the modernization of Oregon's enterprise zone program. These tools have been effective, but they have not always reflected how manufacturers grow today. House Bill 4084 updates enterprise zones to better support productivity gains, job retention, revenue growth, and more flexible hiring timelines, particularly for small and mid-sized manufacturers and rural communities. This makes the program more accessible and more aligned with modern manufacturing realities.

From OMEP's vantage point, all of these pieces fit together. Strong supply chains start with strong manufacturers. Strong manufacturers require operational excellence, modern technology, and a business environment that supports growth. As workforce shortages continue due to retirements and demographic trends, advanced manufacturing technologies including automation and artificial intelligence are essential to doing more with the workforce we have while creating modern, high-skill, high-paying jobs that attract the next generation. House Bill 4084 helps create the conditions for that future.

If we stay aligned and work together as a statewide business ecosystem, we can move forward out of the smoke and to the other side of the campfire. That is where clarity exists, where decisions get made, and where Oregon can once again compete effectively for jobs, investment, and innovation. House Bill 4084 moves us in that

direction toward a more competitive and prosperous future.

We encourage everyone on the factory floor and across the manufacturing community to contact their state representative and state senator and ask them to support House Bill 4084. Your voice matters, and together we can help ensure Oregon remains a place where manufacturers can invest, grow, and thrive.

## Upcoming Sandler Sales Training Events



Interest in our **Sandler Sales Training** events continues to grow! As a result, we're adding more opportunities for you to learn and master these tried-and-tested sales methods. Check out our upcoming training events and make plans to level up your sales approach with our Sandler-trained consultants:

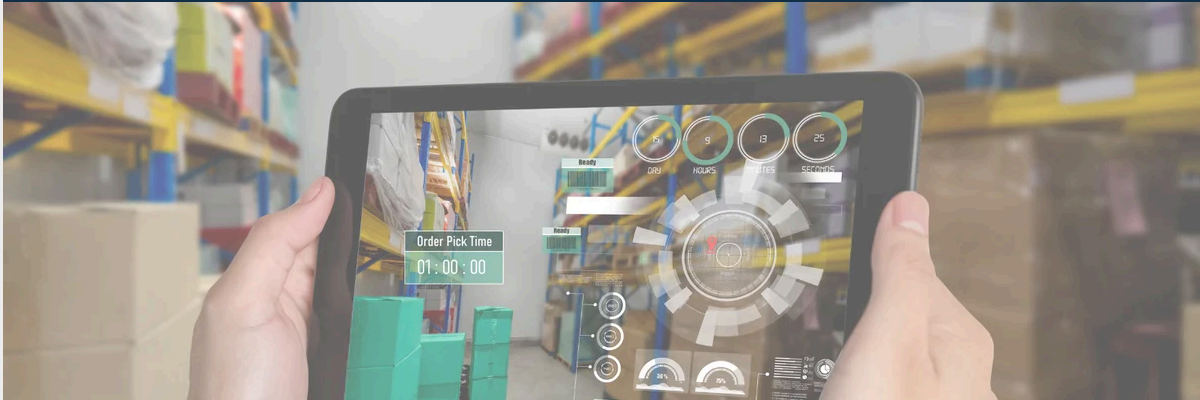
**Webinar: A Better Way to Prospect on March 10th.** Jeff Schneider of Sandler Sales Training will share how to be more confident, focused and effective in your prospecting so you can set more appointments and stop chasing or guessing. [Make plans to join us for this free webinar.](#)

**Sandler Sales Boot Camp in Portland, March 12 & 13.** Join this two-day, in-person event and change the way you sell! Built on the proven Sandler Sales methodology, this program teaches a clear, repeatable approach to leading confident, buyer-focused conversations. Includes a DISC assessment, lunch both days, and a free, one-hour coaching session with an OMEP Sandler Sales trainer. **Future Sandler Boot Camps are coming to Bend on April 23 & 24, Eugene on May 21 & 22, and Salem on June 25 & 26.** These are can't-miss sales training events. [Get more information and sign up to attend the Portland Boot Camp.](#)

**Weekly Virtual Sales Training Cohort starting April 14th.** Our weekly, virtual sessions are designed for **salespeople, managers, and business owners** to equip you and your team with practical techniques to overcome common challenges like long

sales cycles, pricing pressures, and stalled deals. [Seats are filling fast, so grab yours today.](#)

## Rapid Standard Work for Small and Mid-Sized Manufacturers



### Get new hires production-ready faster with standard work built in a week.

Many manufacturers struggle with slow onboarding, inconsistent training, recurring quality issues, and experienced employees pulled away from production to train others. Often, expectations are not documented in a clear and visual way. New hires learn by shadowing, steps are skipped, and valuable institutional knowledge leaves when employees do.

OMEP's **Rapid Standard Work** helps plants with fewer than 200 employees quickly standardize their most critical workflows using proven Training Within Industry (TWI) principles combined with modern technology. In less than a week, companies can standardize their top five workflows and create a foundation for measurable improvement.

#### What Makes It Different

- Visual and interactive, not text-heavy binders
- Uses video, structured Job Breakdown Sheets, and optional AR-enabled guidance
- Mobile-friendly and accessible at the point of work
- Designed so additional standard work can be created in under an hour by line leaders

#### What You Can Expect

- Faster time to production readiness, targeting up to 20 percent improvement
- Better knowledge retention and fewer errors
- Reduced scrap and rework

- Less trainer burden and more consistent execution

Built specifically for small and mid-sized manufacturers, this approach is practical, fast to implement, and designed for long-term sustainment.

If your organization is facing training bottlenecks, high turnover, or underused SOP binders, OMEP can help you take the next step.

**Contact us to learn how Rapid Standard Work can strengthen your workforce and improve performance.**

[Request Your No-Cost Assessment](#)

## Upcoming Industry Events in Oregon



### **AME Portland 2026 Lean Summit Feb 25 & 26, just a few tickets left!**

The Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME) is hosting the **2026 Lean Summit in Portland February 25th & 26th**. Come join the OMEP team for keynote sessions from industry leaders, a facility tour, workshops, and time for connecting with your peers.

**OMEP and AME have partnered to offer a discount for attendees!**

Use code NP-OMEPP26 to get the AME Member rate when registering.

[Feb 25-26: AME Portland 2026 Lean Summit, Radisson Hotel | Portland Airport](#)

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### **OMIC R&D Additive Showcase Event February 25th**

**OMIC R&D** is hosting an in-person panel event showcasing additive manufacturing research and solutions from their Additive Innovation Center.

Sponsored through [Business Oregon's Center of Innovation Excellence \(CIE\) program](#), the event will feature OMIC R&D researchers discussing real-world additive applications and how these technologies are shaping Oregon's manufacturing future.

Local small and mid-sized manufacturers are invited to join OMIC R&D at their headquarters in Scappoose, Oregon and connect with the people and ideas driving innovation in our region.

Date: February 25th

Time: 9:30am - 2pm

Location: 33701 Charles T Parker Way, Scappoose, Oregon 97056

There is no cost to join the event, [click here for a detailed agenda and to register](#).

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## Women in Manufacturing Oregon Chapter Events

**March 12: Women's History Month Ceramic Event** attendees will receive a tour of the Makerspace in Talent, Oregon and participate in a 2-hour ceramic class in celebration of Women's History Month on Thursday, March 12th from 4pm - 7pm.

[WiM Makerspace Tour & Registration Information](#)

**March 18: Facility tour of Micro Systems Engineering, Inc. (MSEI)**, a leading medical microelectronics development & design, system integration, and manufacturing company in Lake Oswego on Wednesday, March 18th from 2pm - 4pm.

[WiM Engineering Tour & Registration Information](#)



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