

# Technical Personnel Shortage Survey

Engineering and building companies are increasingly using corporate educational programs to alleviate the current shortage of trained engineers, draftsmen and other technicians. This was revealed by a recent survey of member companies conducted by the National Constructors Association. The Association is composed of leading engineering and building firms engaged in engineering and construction of chemical plants, petroleum refineries, steel mills and power plants.

Among the questions asked of member companies by the NCA survey were:

Is your company experiencing difficulty in securing adequate numbers of qualified engineers?

Is your company experiencing difficulty in securing adequate numbers of qualified draftsmen and other technicians?

If your answer is yes, do you predict this condition will improve in the future?

What efforts are you devoting to educational activities which stimulate an interest in students to pursue engineering or drafting work?

The answers to these and similar questions confirmed the current shortage of qualified personnel and revealed a growing interest in education as a means of combating the shortage. Of twenty member firms responding, all reported a lack of qualified draftsmen and all but two reported a shortage of engineers. Eight-

een companies felt that the condition would not improve in the immediate future.

Responding companies varied greatly in size—the largest employing 1500 engineers in the U. S., the smallest less than 100, with a total of over 14,000 engineers represented. All companies reported current activity in the field of education. This activity ranged from direct grants totaling more than \$50,000 per year to local programs involving teachers, students and employees.

As summarized by the NCA Executive Committee, results of the survey are:

1. Eighty-five (85) per cent of the companies reporting indicate they hire high school teachers, college professors or instructors on a part time basis during vacation periods and at other times during the year. Sixty-five (65) per cent of the companies indicate members of their engineering and technical staffs serve as instructors on a part-time basis for engineering and drafting classes.

2. Seventy (70) per cent of the companies provide financial assistance to employees studying engineering or drafting subjects. Sixty-five (65) per cent provide training of this type in their own organizations.

3. Seventy (70) per cent of the companies reported a total expenditure in excess of \$350,000 per year for educational activities. The remaining companies either did not report or reported no contributions.