

Outsourcing brings new challenges to engineers

by NewsUSA

For some American engineers, their jobs may be making a commute without them.

The outsourcing of jobs to foreign countries is changing the face of many American industries, and the engineering field is no exception. In fact, according to a recent survey conducted by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, commonly known as ASME, close to 75 percent of surveyed engineers said that they had wage pressures due to foreign labor competition.

But even with growing use of offshore labor, the United States still represents one of the best places in the world for engineers to find work. Even so, it's important for engineers at any stage of their careers, particularly early-career engineers, to do as much as possible to make themselves marketable to potential employers.

In today's competitive market, it's important for engineers to have polished social skills as well as an adequate knowledge of a variety of topics. Modern engineers are faced with a wide range of tasks, all of which may connect with their speciality, but may also involve aspects of human relations, economics or marketing.

In keeping a leg up on the competition, some early-career engineers also find it necessary to pursue official certification and become licensed professional engineers, a title that grants them the authority to seal engineering documents and take legal responsibility for them. Because more than three-quarters of people who work for engineering firms are not licensed professional engineers, gaining licensure gives many young professionals an advantage.

Joining professional organizations like ASME often helps many early-career engineers stay educated about the latest industry developments and find ways to bolster their skills and marketability. Such organizations promote the interests of their members and frequently offer networking opportunities that can help engineers of all levels find jobs or stay on their desired career path.