



**Canadian  
Manufacturers &  
Exporters**

**Manufacturiers et  
Exportateurs du  
Canada**

# **Take your MP to work**

**Raising awareness of manufacturing**

**Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters  
launches *Manufacturing our Future* campaign  
October 22, 2009**

A guide to successful plant tours for hosting politicians and their staff

# Take your MP to work

## Raising awareness of manufacturing

A guide to successful plant tours for hosting politicians and their staff

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## Introduction

Manufacturing. If you read headlines of Canadian newspapers on a daily basis, Canada's largest business sector is portrayed as an industry in decline; the latest addition to the endangered species list.

Not true. Undoubtedly manufacturers from coast to coast have been under tremendous pressure the past few years and the Great Recession has been the catalyst of more job losses and plant closures in the past 12 months. Despite this barrage of challenges, the main wealth creation segment of the economy is evolving, not declining.

Looking into the future, manufacturing will be the foundation to any economic recovery strategy that moves Canada into the next decade. As the industry strives to define itself in the new economy, we have to work together to raise awareness about Canada's most innovative industry.

Manufacturing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is high tech, highly skilled, high value and high paying and much more than just assembly. Today, manufacturing encompasses the complete business system that incorporates the life cycle of the project – from design to engineering; marketing to distribution. In the global economy, companies focus more on assembling their world-wide network of supply chains than piecing together products. Welcome to the new reality.

And this new reality; the new age of manufacturing is what Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) is conveying to federal/provincial decision makers during its *Manufacturing our Future* campaign. The campaign will launch October 22, 2009 and will continue to run until February 2, 2010 – the day manufacturers and exporters from coast to coast will meet in Ottawa for CME's Economic Recovery Summit.

The focus of the campaign is on education – open your doors and bring your MP to work. If we want a business climate where manufacturers and exporters can flourish, our policy makers need to understand what the industry is about.

I encourage you to participate in this exciting national initiative by inviting your MP to tour your manufacturing facility. The intention is to raise awareness of manufacturing in Canada and the need to build a world-class business environment in support of manufacturers in this country. The purpose of the visit is to:

- Highlight the importance of manufacturing to local communities and to the Canadian economy as a whole;
- Showcase world-class manufacturing facilities; and,
- Explain why issues such as capital investment, innovation, workforce capabilities and skills development, access to international markets and effective enforcement of trade rules, reliable and cost competitive energy and logistics infrastructure and cost competitive regulations are so important to manufacturers.

I bet almost every MP will be surprised to see first-hand 21<sup>st</sup> century manufacturing in Canada.

Without a vibrant manufacturing sector in Canada, we won't enjoy the same standard of living, plain and simple. Manufacturing matters – to you, to me, to Stephen Harper, to your neighbours and to your community. So it's in the best interest of the economy and of the country to understand the nuts and bolts of Canada's largest business sector.

This guide will help you plan, prepare for and conduct a "Take your MP to work" visit. In this easy-to-use reference, you will find sample invitation letters and a step-by-step checklist for your use. Follow it and you'll build relationships for your company and increase support for a Canadian manufacturing agenda.

Thank you for your support.

Jeff Brownlee  
CME, Vice President, Public Affairs

# Checklist for “Take your MP to work” visit

## Proposed agenda

1. Welcome and introductory presentation (5 minutes)
  - Introductions
  - Background to business and facility
  - Importance of business to local community and economy
  - Emphasis on need to compete on a global basis
  - Focus on world-class capabilities
2. Discussion of key issues for company – Why manufacturing is important (1 hour)
  - What is needed to remain globally competitive?
  - Investment in new technology – *Extend window of eligibility for companies to take advantage of the CCA on manufacturing & processing machinery and equipment*
  - Innovation – *SR&ED Tax Credit (refundable, extend to pre-commercial prototyping & scale-up activities)*
  - Skills and workforce capabilities – *Employers’ training tax credit*
  - Fair trade – *Market access/effective enforcement of trade rules*
  - Infrastructure – *Reliable and cost competitive energy, border, transportation infrastructure*
  - Lean (cost competitive) regulation – *Simplify and lower costs of regulatory compliance*
3. Facility tour (30 minutes)
4. Photo op

## Invitations

When inviting your MP for a visit, be flexible. Allow for several options. When a date is set, be prepared for last-minute alterations that may be due to unpredictable travel delays. (See appendix A for a sample invitation letter.)

To assist with your planning, please note that the parliamentary proceedings will recess between November 9, 2009 to November 13, 2009 and December 14, 2009 to January 25, 2010. During this time your MP will likely be in your riding.

If your visit takes place during an election campaign, consider offering “equal time” to all of the candidates in your riding on different days. The day after the election, you may be dealing with a newly-elected official; therefore, establishing a relationship before the election is valuable.

In deciding who from your company will meet with your MP, don’t be worried about party affiliation. MPs are elected to represent everyone in their riding. Your intent is to develop a good relationship with public officials who may influence the future of your company and our industry. It is best to have strong contacts in all parties; therefore, make friends for manufacturing with as many people as possible.

## Organizing the visit

Set up a small committee to plan your visit. You may want planning assistance and participation from the people that fulfill the roles listed below. To actually conduct the tour, select a spokesperson with complete knowledge of your manufacturing process.

If you need any assistance planning your visit or more information on matters to discuss with your MP, please contact Jeff Brownlee, CME vice president, public affairs at 613-238-8888 ext. 4233.

- **President/Chief Executive Officer.** Always have the most senior executive available to greet your MP and, if possible, accompany him/her through your plant. Let your MP wander from the tour route and, if appropriate, speak with your employees if he or she wants to.
- **Government Relations Representative.** This person should be knowledgeable on the issues that matter to your business and Canadian manufacturing. Share your company's philosophy on government relations with your MP and discuss issues such as capital investment, innovation, workforce capabilities and skills development, access to international markets and effective enforcement of trade rules, reliable and cost competitive energy and logistics infrastructure and cost competitive regulations are so important to manufacturers.
- **Public Relations or Communications Representative.** This person will be helpful in inviting your MP, arranging photo opportunities and publicizing the visit within your company, to the media and to CME.
- **Employee Relations or Office Manager.** This person knows the most about individual employees and may want to recommend some employees that your MP can meet during his/her visit.
- **Plant Safety Supervisor.** Ensure that all safety precautions are observed. Keep your MP and other guests away from hazardous areas.

**For assistance, please contact Jeff Brownlee, CME vice president, public affairs at 613-238-8888 ext. 4233.**

## Getting to know your MP

Do some homework on your MP's biographical, political, business and legislative background so that you can identify areas of common interest. Your MP's bio can be found online at:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Lists/ParliamentarianAge.aspx?Menu=HOC-Bio&Chamber=03d93c58-f843-49b3-9653-84275c23f3fb>

## Plant preparation

Prepare your plant to show its best side. Make it easy to get around and keep hazardous areas well marked. Be sure your MP knows what entrance to use; have people there to welcome him/her; and hand out name badges, hard hats and safety goggles, if necessary, for everyone in the group.

Before the day of the visit, have a briefing with all the people involved.

## Message preparation

Prepare a company one-pager to give to your MP. This is an outline detailing who you are, what you produce and a brief history on the background of your organization.

You can also list your priority manufacturing issues and give the contact information of the people your MP will meet during his/her visit. This one-pager will give your MP a better understanding of what will be seen during the plant tour. (See appendix B for a sample template.)

## Displays/literature

Proudly display your product for your MP to see. A special exhibit, promotional materials and company literature will enhance the visit. Displaying your CME membership plaque will serve as a reminder of your commitment to manufacturing and will help create a united front.

## During the visit

Highlight your operation by showing your MP how your machinery works, how different components are put together, what new technologies are being used and the overall productivity of your workers.

## Talking points

You have an important story to tell – the Canadian manufacturing story – when developing your presentation, work in the following information:

- **Success stories.** Discuss how the plant has improved and contributed to the workers and community. Inform visitors about the history of your company and the plant, including total investment in facilities and equipment. Mention expenditures for modernization and R&D.
- **Manufacturing issues.** Explain why issues such as capital investment, innovation, workforce capabilities and skills development, access to international markets and effective enforcement of trade rules, reliable and cost competitive energy and logistics infrastructure and cost competitive regulations are so important to manufacturers.
- **Products manufactured.** Describe how the products are used and where the products are sold. Be sure to include the value of products you export.
- **Jobs.** Discuss the number of people employed in your plant, and employee health, safety and training programs.
- **Community impact.** Does your company participate in community charities? Do you promote environmental programs? Tell your MP about your active role as a good corporate citizen.

## Media

Attracting media coverage to your visit is important to your MP and is extremely beneficial to your company.

For assistance with attracting media to your event, please contact Jeff Brownlee, CME vice president public affairs at 613-238-8888 ext. 4233 or email [jeff.brownlee@cme-mec.ca](mailto:jeff.brownlee@cme-mec.ca).

Once the date is set, draft an event advisory containing the date, time and location to be sent to business editors at your local media outlets (see appendix C for a sample advisory). Please be sure to note if the tour is open to the media and if your MP will be available for questions and a photo opportunity following the tour. Ensure you send a copy of the event advisory to your MP's office for their approval prior to releasing it to the media.

If space or policy considerations prevent the media from accompanying your MP on the tour, try to set up an area on the factory floor where reporters and photographers can cover one aspect of your MP observing your manufacturing process. If possible this area should be in front of your company's signage or logo.

The day before the tour, send a reminder advisory to your media list.

On the day of the event, have your company one-pager available for members of the media.

If any of your local media outlets cannot attend, send a news release following the event, together with photos of your MP and CEO in your plant.

For assistance with attracting media to your event, please contact Jeff Brownlee, CME vice president public affairs at 613-238-8888 ext. 4233 or email [jeff.brownlee@cme-mec.ca](mailto:jeff.brownlee@cme-mec.ca).

## Photo opportunity

Do not rely on the media alone to take photos, ensure you have your company camera on hand and designate one of your employees to be the official photographer for the day.

Photos of your MP, together with your CEO and employees in your plant with your machinery in the background (try to ensure your logo is visible in the photo) are not only valuable to include in your internal communications but they can be sent to your MP with a thank you letter and to any media outlets that are not available to attend on the day of your visit.

## Follow up after the visit

The intention of your "Take your MP to work" day is to raise awareness of manufacturing in Canada and the need to build a world-class business environment in support of manufacturers in this country. To ensure that your MP remembers your company, follow-up efforts are important, including—

- **Thank you letter.** Write a thank you note reminding your representative of some of the key points you discussed during your visit. Invite your MP to return at any time. The gesture will make your company look open and warm. Ask your staff to generate some personalized thank you notes. Consider inviting your MP to your company's annual picnic, golf tournament, employee recognition or other event.
- **Mementos.** If you have not already presented your MP with a token of appreciation, send one. For instance, a baseball cap or hard hat with your company's name or logo is a good souvenir. Note that MPs are only permitted to accept commemorative gifts or gifts of nominal value.
- **Photos.** Send the photos you took to your MP. Many times they will be used in a newsletter, and, often, they will wind up on the MP's office wall or website.
- **Follow up with CME\*.** Let us know about your visit; share your story, send us your photos. Email [editor@cme-mec.ca](mailto:editor@cme-mec.ca).

### **\*Share your story and you could win a Rogers BlackBerry Bold and be featured in CME's 20/20 magazine**

All companies that participate in "Take your MP to work" visits and share their stories with CME by January 8, 2010 will be entered into a draw for a chance to win a Rogers BlackBerry Bold. CME's 20/20 magazine will also feature the selected recipient's company and "Take your MP to work" experience (700-word article and photo) in the March/April issue of 20/20 magazine. (Note 20/20 magazine will interview the organization; write, edit and layout the article. The selected recipient will be responsible to supply the photo.)

## Appendix A – Sample invitation letter

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, MP

As a manufacturing company in your constituency, I am writing to invite you to visit our facility during Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters' *Manufacturing our Future* campaign. The campaign will launch October 22, 2009 and will continue to run until February 2, 2010 – the day manufacturers and exporters from coast to coast will meet in Ottawa for CME's Economic Recovery Summit.

XXXXXXXXXX is a world-class manufacturer of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. We employ XXXXXXXX in XXXXXXXX. Our customers are located across North America and around the world.

Like other manufacturers across Canada, we face unprecedented challenges in the form of global competition, fast-paced technological change, the rapid appreciation of the Canadian dollar, and escalating energy and commodity costs. We are taking steps to overcome those challenges including investing in new technologies, improving efficiencies to boost productivity, and introducing new and improved products and services for our customers.

But we can't do it alone. We need the help of the federal government to compete and win in the new global economy. That's why we welcome the opportunity to have you tour our facility to demonstrate what 21<sup>st</sup> century manufacturing is all about.

We also want to express that although the business of manufacturing is changing in Canada, our industry is by no means on the endangered species list. The future is one of higher value added activity and higher paying jobs based on more specialized products and services, new technologies, and rapid customer response. Our company will continue to make the changes that we require to compete and win in global markets.

World-class manufacturers also need a world-class business environment in which to operate.

Our growth potential will play an important part in determining the economic future for your constituents. Likewise, the future of manufacturing in this country will be critical in sustaining the prosperity and living standards of all Canadians.

On behalf of all our employees, I look forward to discussing these issues with you. Please let us know if you are able to accept our invitation by contacting XXXXXXXX.

Sincerely,

XXXX  
CEO, XXXXXXXXXXX

## Appendix B - Sample company one-pager

[Company name and logo]

**Address:** XXXX

**Key contacts:** XXXX (list the name(s) and title(s) of all employees assisting with the visit)

**Company Products and Background:** (in this section, discuss the history of your company, what your company produces and what is produced at the plant tour facility)

**Important Issues:** (in this section, discuss the issues that are important to your company and Canadian manufacturing)

## Appendix C - Sample media event advisory

[Company logo]

### Event Advisory

## [City of visit] manufacturer, [Your company name], takes MP [name of MP] to work

**[CITY PLANT IS LOCATED]** – Manufacturing – destined to disappear or redefining itself as the engine driving Canada's economy of the future?

Learning the nuts and bolts of next-generation manufacturing is the purpose of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters' (CME) national *Manufacturing our Future* campaign, which is launching October 22, 2009 and continuing until February 2, 2010 – the day manufacturers and exporters from coast to coast will meet in Ottawa for CME's Economic Recovery Summit.

On [date], MP [name of MP] will visit [company name] in [city] to see first-hand 21<sup>st</sup> century manufacturing as part of CME's "Take your MP to work" days.

"We are opening up our doors to demonstrate that manufacturing today is high tech, highly skilled, high value and high paying as well as the driver of innovation in Canada," says [Name, title, Company name]. "Manufacturing is much more than assembly. It includes the value-added services like design, engineering and marketing. That's the message we need to convey to Canadians."

Consider the facts:

- Manufacturing employs 1.7 million Canadians
- Every dollar in value-added output by manufacturers generates an estimated \$3.05 in total economic activity – the largest economic multiplier of any business sector
- Manufacturing is the source of two-thirds of Canada's goods and services exports and three-quarters of all private sector research and development activity in the country
- Manufacturers account for more than 85% of all new products brought to market in Canada

"Without a vibrant manufacturing sector in Canada, we won't enjoy the same standard of living in [city], plain and simple," says [Name, title, Company name]. "Manufacturing matters – to you, to me, to [name of MP] and to our community. So it's in the best interest of the economy and of the country to understand the nuts and bolts of Canada's largest business sector."

Join [company name] as we take MP [name of MP] into our plant for a tour and discussion of the issues impacting Canadian manufacturing today.

EVENT: Take your MP to work; [name of MP], MP visits [Company name]

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

-30-

For more information, contact [Name of your company contact person],  
[Telephone number] or [email address]