

## Industry Outlook: Education Drives Progress

Written by Tribby Warfield, President, North America Commercial, Gates Corporation  
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When we ask children what they want to be when they grow up, they never say “an engineer.” The chances of meeting a teenager who’s even uttered the words “improved efficiency” or “production uptime,” much less “power transmission,” are slim. These terms simply aren’t part of the vernacular like “doctor,” “pilot” and “teacher” are. While some might see this as a problem, I see an opportunity for business leaders and educators to bring about change.

Without an education system that elevates math, science and engineering, we won’t raise generations that aspire to innovate in these fields, and without an ongoing commitment to fostering technical skills, we can’t adapt to the demands of the modern world.

In his 2011 State of the Union Address, President Obama acknowledged, “Revolutions in technology have transformed the way we live, work and do business.” He noted that nations like China and India are adapting, educating their children earlier, longer and with greater emphasis on math and science. The U.S. isn’t keeping up. We need to train teachers in these subjects—*teachers who not only spark interest but inspire new ways of thinking.*

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Because Gates Corporation sees education as a critical lever in innovation and advancement, we support the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition. Inventor Dean Kamen founded the program to help students from all over the world experience the excitement of science, technology, engineering and math and discover the potential rewards a career in these fields can offer. As a Crown Supplier for the FRC, we provide volunteers to counsel teams on technical challenges and donate over \$500,000 worth of power-transmission products. It’s exciting for us to see the next generation of engineers mix technology with a hands-on approach to learning. After all, at Gates we have a passion for

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education, and our value proposition is built upon a 100-year foundation of advancing the science of motion performance.

A key way we show our commitment to the ongoing development of technical skills is through the instructive resources we offer customers and end-users. We know that every engineer and maintenance manager has a unique way of learning and is under pressure to evolve an increasingly broad skill set. Our objective is to deliver support that efficiently meets these needs, and we use a variety of media to accomplish it.

Our product application engineers are available to help—*onsite or off*—and can be reached easily via email, telephone and online chat. They provide invaluable support as companies look for solutions that are energy efficient, increase productivity and eliminate machinery downtime. Furthermore, we're always launching new educational materials using industry publications and Websites, video, onsite training sessions, e-Learning Webinars, conferences, tradeshow, even virtual tradeshow. As one example, we offer a Preventive Maintenance Kit complete with DVD-based tutorials, maintenance manuals and practical tools like tension testers and sheave gauges, all of which help end-users keep belt drives running efficiently. In addition, our social media channels and engineering blog create new avenues for direct communication with Gates, while providing quick hits of information for today's busy end-users.

Even when resources are spread thin and time is a premium, we know education drives progress. Yes, it has to start early. And no, it can't ever stop. **MT**

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