

DEWALT® Releases Survey About How Next Generation of Workers Perceive Skilled Careers

- *DEWALT® surveys 500 WorldSkills competitors across 60+ countries and regions on the future of skilled careers, workforce readiness and training*
- *Survey identified gap between improving perception of skilled trades and their contribution to the economy and encouragement to enter vocational careers*
- *President and CEO of Stanley Black & Decker, Chris Nelson, to discuss the essential role skilled tradespeople play in today's economy and how to support next generation of skilled trades at WorldSkills Shanghai Competition 2026*

TOWSON, Md., Sept. 22, 2026 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Ahead of WorldSkills Shanghai 2026, the world's premier skilled trades competition, DEWALT®, a Stanley Black & Decker (NYSE: SWK) brand, surveyed over 500 WorldSkills competitors representing more than 60 countries and regions about the future of skilled careers, workforce readiness and training.

The survey revealed that the next generation of trades professionals recognize their importance and contributions to the global economy, but simultaneously also perceive a disconnect between the importance of their work and the pathways available to enter the field. According to the survey results, 76% of respondents say technical and vocational skills are increasingly important to the global economy, yet 51% believe too few young people are entering the trades. 71% of respondents also noted that while the public image of technical and vocational careers has improved, 52% were still encouraged toward more traditional academic paths, compared to just 14% who were encouraged toward technical and vocational careers.

"The real economy runs on skilled labor - across housing, transportation, manufacturing, energy, and digital infrastructure - and global demand for these professionals continues to rise. As an industry, we have a responsibility not only to celebrate the people who power these essential sectors, but also to invest in creating pathways into the skilled trades," said Chris Nelson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Stanley Black & Decker. "Through DEWALT's Grow the Trades program and partnerships with organizations like WorldSkills, we are working to raise awareness of these rewarding careers and expand access for the next generation of skilled tradespeople."

Key Survey Takeaways

- **The future is being built by skilled workers.** Three-quarters (76%) of respondents say technical and vocational skills are increasingly important to the global economy, yet 51% believe too few young people are entering the trades. Respondents point to barriers that begin early: 45% say young people are not exposed to skilled career opportunities soon enough, while 53% say they felt pressure to pursue a university or traditional academic career.
- **The perception of skilled careers is improving, but the pathways into the trades have not caught up.** While 71% said the public image of technical and vocational careers has improved, 52% were still encouraged toward more traditional academic paths, compared to just 14% who were encouraged toward technical and vocational careers.
- **Growing the pipeline starts with earlier exposure and more accessible routes in** When asked how to encourage more young people to pursue skilled careers, 45% selected more opportunities to try skilled work firsthand and 38% selected more paid apprenticeships or earn-while-you-learn pathways. Additionally, 88% of respondents said financial assistance is important to making technical or vocational education more attainable.

"Skilled careers are the engine of economies everywhere, and this generation of competitors understands that. They are not waiting to be told trades matter – they are proving it, with new technology as one more set of tools in their hands," said David Hoey, CEO of WorldSkills International.

Supporting American Skilled Trades at WorldSkills Shanghai 2026

As a premium partner and tools sponsor for [WorldSkills International](#), and platinum sponsor of WorldSkills Shanghai 2026, DEWALT is proud to support its mission to equip the next generation of skilled professionals with the training, experience and opportunities needed to succeed.

DEWALT is [sponsoring two Team USA competitors](#) at WorldSkills Shanghai 2026, Charles "Charlie" Goede, a 19-year-old plumbing apprentice from Connecticut, and Tristan Coates, a 22-year-old business owner and residential builder from Florida. DEWALT has provided both young professionals with tools and resources throughout their training as they prepare to compete on the global stage. This sponsorship complements DEWALT's [Grow the Trades](#) program which is focused on recruiting more people into the trades and by increasing awareness and pathways into the skilled trades, and making vocational careers more accessible.

Chris Nelson, President and CEO of Stanley Black & Decker, will also participate in a fireside chat at the event, where he will discuss the critical role skilled trade workers play in driving innovation, growth and progress around the world.

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Follow DEWALT on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#) for updates on WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 taking place between September 22 – 27, 2026.

About DEWALT

DEWALT, a Stanley Black & Decker brand, is a leader in total jobsite solutions. For more than 100 years, DEWALT has been powering the future of construction with tools and technologies that have been designed, built and tested to help deliver safety and productivity on every jobsite. For more information, visit www.dewalt.com or follow DEWALT on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About Stanley Black & Decker

Founded in 1843 and headquartered in the USA, Stanley Black & Decker (NYSE: SWK) is a worldwide leader in Tools and Outdoor, operating manufacturing facilities globally. The Company's approximately 43,500 employees produce innovative end-user inspired power tools, hand tools, storage, digital jobsite solutions, outdoor and lifestyle products, and engineered fasteners to support the world's builders, tradespeople and DIYers. The Company's world class portfolio of trusted brands includes DEWALT®, CRAFTSMAN®, STANLEY®, BLACK+DECKER®, and Cub Cadet®. To learn more, visit www.stanleyblackanddecker.com or follow Stanley Black & Decker on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

About WorldSkills

Since 1950, WorldSkills has come to symbolize the pinnacle of excellence in vocational training. It provides a unique means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. The continued growth of WorldSkills attests to the fact that traditional trade and craft skills, along with newer technology's multi-skilled occupations, make an essential contribution to the economic and social well-being of people everywhere. For more information, go to: www.worldskills.org.

Methodology

DEWALT conducted an online survey of WorldSkills competitors from August 18–28, 2026. The survey was distributed to more than 1,000 competitors, with $n=534$ respondents participating across 60+ countries and regions. Base sizes vary by question, as not all respondents answered every question.

SOURCE DEWALT

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