



# The Competitive Edge:: Research Priorities for U.S. Manufacturing

*Commission on Engineering and Technical Systems, Committee on Analysis of Research Directions and Needs in U.S. Manufacturing, National Research Council, Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences, Board on Manufacturing and Engineering Design*

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To maintain competitiveness in the emerging global economy, U.S. manufacturing must rise to new standards of product quality, responsiveness to customers, and process flexibility. This volume presents a concise and well-organized analysis of new research directions to achieve these goals.

Five critical areas receive in-depth analysis of present practices, needed improvement, and research priorities:

- Advanced engineered materials that offer the prospect of better life-cycle performance and other gains.
- Equipment reliability and maintenance practices for better returns on capital investment.
- Rapid product realization techniques to speed delivery to the marketplace.
- Intelligent manufacturing control for improved reliability and greater precision.
- Building a workforce with the multidisciplinary skills needed for competitiveness.

This sound and accessible analysis will be useful to manufacturing engineers and researchers, business executives, and economic and policy analysts.

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