Tackling the Skills Shortage

Do we have the Talent to Build and Operate the new wave of Waste to Energy plants in the UK?

Terry Buckel
Managing Director, ASTUTE Technical Recruitment Ltd
E terry@astutetechnical.co.uk
D +44(0)2392 288200
M +44(0)7967 447087

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Understanding the WtE Industry

History

- 1st modern WtE plant – SITA Kirklees in 2000
- UK PFI scheme – led to rapid growth in new projects
- From 2000 to 2017, over 45 large scale WtE/ Biomass plants built
- Construction values typically £50m to £350m
- Construction duration typically 24 to 36 months
- Each plant requires 100 to 500 people to construct
- Each plant requires 20 to 55 staff to operate

Current – new build projects

- 7 Mass Burn Incineration WtE
- 10+ ACT
- 10+ Biomass
Current workforce utilisation - Construction

- 27 plants (average 100 workers) = 2700 total
- Could be in range of 2000 to 4000 actual made up of:
  - Design/ Engineering
  - Project Management & Commercial
  - Construction and M&E trades
  - Commissioning teams
- Above engaged from 1 to 3 years
- Mixture of Permanent employees and Contract workers
- Sites all around the UK
Current workforce utilisation - Operational

- 45 new facilities since 2000 (average 33 staff) = 1485 total
- Could be in the range of 1200 to 2000 actual numbers made up of:
  - Management
  - Shift Operations Teams
  - Maintenance Teams
  - Finance, Admin, Commercial, Weighbridge & Security
- 99% + permanent employees
- Many with a career for life (plant life = 25+ years)
- Sites all around the UK
- 27 new build sites = additional 891 required at 33 per site
Lessons learned - Construction

- Hire key managerial roles with process plant construction experience
- Ensure strong UK understanding of HSE Management
- Many skilled & experienced workers prefer contract/project work – do not rely on finding permanent employees
- Consider offering completion bonus for key workers to ensure retention until the project end
- The best workers are starter completers – not always easy to find
- Understand the different pay rates across industries – cheapest not always best for the project
Lessons learned - Operational

- Plan to hire staff with time to assist in commissioning activities, writing procedures & undertaking training
- Budget for adequate shift plan/shift teams
- Budget for all key skills required
- Understand the salary expectations for Power-Gen staff – these are not MRF/Transfer Station workers
- Understand the skills on offer – differs across Europe
- Understand the likely availability/interest
- Consider location rules for staff – radius/time – don’t be too strict
- Factor in the competition for hiring staff – know your industry and what is happening in your location
Transferrable skills – where from?

- Existing WtE & Biomass plants
- Power Stations – Coal, Gas, Nuclear
- Combined Heat & Power (CHP) plants
- Marine industry/ Royal Navy/ Military
- Steel & Petrochemical industries
- Water Treatment
- Oil & Gas
- Pharmaceutical, FMCG industries

Geographical location is key!!
Planning your Recruitment Strategy

- Timing is crucial
- Understand the skills required and potential to hire them - much greater competition today
- Consider working with an experienced Recruiter
- Get your house in order: -
  - Salary & benefits packages
  - Shift patterns/ Job descriptions
  - Contracts of employment/ offer letters
  - Training plans
- Recruitment open days/ interview & assessment days
- Good communications & feedback
- Be flexible, patient and realistic
Any Questions?

We do have the Talent to Build and Operate the new wave of Waste to Energy plants in the UK

But finding the right people is not easy!

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