

THE COMPLETE TECHNICAL RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

For Manufacturing & Engineering Companies - Hiring Hard-to-Fill Specialist Roles

Avoid costly hiring mistakes and reduce time-to-hire when recruiting process engineers, quality managers, and technical specialists.

BEFORE YOU START RECRUITING TECHNICAL TALENT

Define the REAL technical requirements

- Document specific technical skills, certifications, and experience levels needed
- Identify process/equipment knowledge essential for your operation
- Determine must-have vs nice-to-have technical competencies
- Research current market rates for technical specialists in your area
- Reality check:** Technical roles often take 12+ weeks to fill - factor this into your planning

Calculate the true cost of vacant technical positions

- Daily production/operational impact of missing specialist
- Overtime costs for existing team covering additional duties
- Consider project delays and quality issues from understaffing
- Remember:** A bad technical hire can cost €50,000+ to replace

Assess your technical hiring capability

- Can your HR team effectively screen process engineers or quality specialists?
- Do you have technical interview expertise for specialist roles?
- How many hours will your operations team spend on recruitment?
- Factor in time away from critical manufacturing activities

CREATING COMPELLING TECHNICAL JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Write technical job descriptions that attract specialists

- Lead with exciting technical challenges and projects
- Specify equipment, processes, and technologies they'll work with
- Highlight growth opportunities in technical career progression
- Mention your manufacturing environment and operational scale
- Include any unique technical aspects of your business

Choose the right channels for technical talent

- IrishJobs.ie and LinkedIn for professional technical roles
- Industry-specific job boards (Engineers Ireland, etc.)
- Technical recruitment agencies with sector expertise
- Employee referrals from your technical team
- Warning:** Generic job boards often generate unsuitable applications

Set realistic timelines for technical recruitment

- Allow 4-6 weeks minimum for specialist applications
- Factor in longer notice periods for experienced technical staff
- Consider seasonal patterns in technical hiring

SCREENING TECHNICAL CANDIDATES EFFECTIVELY

Technical CV screening criteria

- Relevant technical qualifications and certifications
- Experience with similar processes, equipment, or industries
- Problem-solving examples and project achievements
- Career progression in technical roles
- Red flag:** Generic applications showing no understanding of your technical requirements

Technical phone screening checklist

- Ask specific technical questions related to your processes
- Assess understanding of industry regulations and standards
- Gauge problem-solving approach to technical challenges
- Verify hands-on experience claims
- Key question:** "Describe a technical problem you solved and the methodology you used"

Create technical shortlist (maximum 4-5 candidates)

- Score against essential technical competencies
- Consider manufacturing/site experience compatibility
- Balance technical expertise with cultural fit potential

INTERVIEWING TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

Prepare technical interviews

- Develop technical scenarios specific to your operations
- Include practical problem-solving exercises
- Plan site tours to assess operational understanding
- Prepare questions about continuous improvement and efficiency

Essential questions for technical roles:

- "Walk me through how you'd approach troubleshooting [specific to your process]"
- "Describe a time you improved efficiency or quality in a manufacturing environment"
- "How do you stay current with technical developments in this field?"
- "What interests you about working in our specific manufacturing sector?"

Assess operational fit

- Comfort level with manufacturing environment and shift patterns
- Team collaboration in operational settings
- Safety mindset and attention to detail
- Adaptability to changing production demands

MAKING TECHNICAL HIRING DECISIONS

Technical reference checks

- Contact previous technical supervisors or plant managers
- Ask about specific technical contributions and achievements
- Verify problem-solving capabilities and reliability
- Check safety record and compliance awareness

Evaluate long-term technical potential

- Consider growth into senior technical or management roles
- Assess commitment to manufacturing/engineering career path
- Factor in continuous learning and development attitude
- Important: Technical specialists often value career progression over just salary

Competitive technical job offers

- Research current market rates for similar technical roles
- Consider total package (salary, benefits, development opportunities)
- Highlight unique technical challenges and equipment access
- Be prepared for counter-offers from current employers

ONBOARDING TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

Technical orientation program

- Comprehensive site and equipment familiarization
- Safety training specific to your operations
- Introduction to your processes, procedures, and quality systems
- Pairing with experienced technical mentor

90-day technical integration

- Progressive responsibility for technical projects
- Regular technical performance reviews
- Integration with continuous improvement initiatives
- Clear technical competency milestones

RED FLAGS IN TECHNICAL RECRUITMENT

Technical Application Red Flags	Technical Interview Warning Signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Generic applications with no technical specificity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚠ Cannot provide specific examples of technical problem-solving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inability to explain technical achievements in detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚠ Lacks understanding of industry standards and regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Frequent job changes without clear technical progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚠ No questions about your technical processes or equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Exaggerated or unverifiable technical claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚠ Poor grasp of safety requirements in manufacturing

WHEN YOUR TECHNICAL RECRUITMENT BECOMES OVERWHELMING

You might need specialist recruitment support if:

- ✔ Your HR team lacks technical expertise to screen candidates effectively
- ✔ You're spending 40+ hours per technical hire with poor results
- ✔ You've recently made expensive technical hiring mistakes
- ✔ Critical operations are suffering while positions remain vacant
- ✔ You're competing for scarce technical talent in specialized fields
- ✔ Your team is too busy with production to focus on quality recruitment

Benefits of technical recruitment specialists:

- ✔ Access to pre-screened pools of technical professionals
- ✔ Technical interview expertise for process engineers, quality managers, etc.
- ✔ Understanding of manufacturing environments and operational requirements
- ✔ Reduced time-to-hire from 12+ weeks to 4-6 weeks
- ✔ Lower risk of costly technical hiring mistakes
- ✔ Market insights on technical salaries and candidate availability

THE COST OF DIY TECHNICAL RECRUITMENT

Hidden costs you might not have considered:

-  **Time drain:** Operations managers spending weeks screening unsuitable CVs
-  **Bad hire impact:** €50,000+ cost when technical hires don't work out
-  **Retention issues:** Technical specialists leaving due to poor cultural fit
-  **Opportunity cost:** Delayed projects while positions remain unfilled
-  **Competitive disadvantage:** Losing good candidates to faster hiring processes

This checklist was created by Harmonics People Change - trusted partners of Irish manufacturing and engineering companies for recruiting hard-to-fill technical roles quickly and cost-effectively.

Struggling with technical recruitment?

We specialize in manufacturing, engineering, and food/beverage technical roles.

 +353 (0)61 336 136

 info@harmonics.ie

 www.harmonics.ie

***Free Technical Recruitment Health Check Available*