

5 Tips to Win the Engineering Talent War

Bridge the skills gap and take back control of what's possible.

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Setting the scene. It's heating up.

The war for technical talent is on. And it's a world-wide shortage. Companies globally are struggling to find the technical experts they need when they need them. There are a few driving forces.

The aging population stings. Engineering is a traditional career choice, which skews the average age. Think about the number of engineers over 50 who are nearing the end of their careers. Their leadership, credibility, expertise, mentoring, and technical skills are irreplaceable. Retiring engineers will create a mass exodus of design experience and knowledge called the **brain drain** and the threat is real.

There's a talent vortex. Academic enrolments for STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and math) are on the decline. As a career, engineering has become a less sexy choice. Now we have a dangerously unstable top-heavy pyramid of talent with a shortfall at the bottom. There are not only fewer engineers emerging, but there's a significant experience gap. So it's not about a one-to-one replenishment for an aging population.

Higher demand increases risk. Between the rise of new industries like artificial intelligence, automation, and sustainability, the demand for engineers is growing. And engineers with increasingly specialised training. Demand is at its peak and competition is heating up. Industries are competing against each other and within their own space. They're also up against global companies thanks to connectivity and mobility.

Heavy industries are struggling. Some industries are handling the shortfall better than others. Unfortunately heavy industries are not winning. By 2028, 17% of heavy industry jobs will be left unfilled. This is a huge risk. When key roles go unfilled, innovation, projects, and growth can be stunted.

We know it's tough out there. But building your technical teams is essential to delivering your projects. So we've got 5 hot tips to help you win the talent war and build your dream team. Let's get started.

The Power Of A Great Job Ad

“As the world looks to how technology can simplify how we work, talent sourcing is no different. Sourcing the worlds best talent always starts with a brilliant job ad.”

Samantha Shah,
Chief Marketing Officer

The power of a great job ad

Managing the hiring lifecycle is demanding. There's an intense amount of work involved without any guaranteed payoff. From posting jobs to shifting through applications, it's an administrative headache and there's a lot of competition. A quick glance at job boards shows that everyone is looking for the best engineering talent.

So how can you start off on the right foot? It all comes down to preparation. Conduct a thorough needs assessment for the role. Understand the project requirements and how those align to human requirements to building an accurate job description.

Sure it sounds simple, but that's just the start. Now you have to sell it. That's right. Add some personality and infuse your culture. Help the reader understand why they want to work at a company like yours. You need to stand head and shoulders above the rest.

Once you've created a brilliant job ad, the fun begins. It's time to post it and make it live!

If you've done it right, you'll receive a lot of interest. Check out our pro tips on the right. If you're hearing silence review your job ad. Take the candidate's perspective and see if it grabs attention and inspires action.



PRO TIP #1:

- Choose a job title that matches with the one your experts are using today.
- Infuse personality into the job ad aligned with your company and culture.
- Use a catchy headline to make a good impression.
- Be specific about the role and the requirements.
- Separate the must-haves from the nice-to-haves to widen the net.

Find The Hidden Talent Pool

“Companies all over the world are finding themselves struggling to bring and keep the best talent especially when prospects lie outside of major cities,”

Donatien Bruggeman,
Director - SA + VIC + NT

Find the hidden talent pool

The best talent is never easy to find. It's a combination of timing and luck mixed with gathering and hunting. Sure posting a brilliant job ad is a great start. That's where the gathering begins. Receiving job applications in response to your posting. But sometimes that's not enough to find the perfect candidate.

The hottest talent is in high demand, which means they're likely already working for someone else. In fact, 70% of job seekers are actually passive candidates who are not actively looking for a new role. Although change can happen overnight, leaving your company is a big deal for most people. And that means those decisions usually take time.

If employed candidates aren't looking, it means they're not hanging out on the job boards. So that amazing job ad you created might not even be seen. If they don't have job alerts turned on, they will likely miss the opportunity.

So how do you find these hidden experts?

Welcome to the hunting method. Proactively sourcing the right talent and striking up a conversation. Just like any relationship, this process takes time, effort, and not every fish you catch will be a winner. Check our pro tips on the right.



PRO TIP #2:

- Post your job ad widely. The more posts you put up, the higher the chances it will be seen by the right talent.
- Ask your team if they know anyone who might be a good fit. Employee referrals can be a winner.
- Consider being proactive and identifying the right people, then use a strategic process to win them over to join your team.

Check Out The Softer Side

“Soft skills are important in fostering employee retention, improving leadership, and creating a meaningful culture.”

Emma-Jane Freychet
Head of Human Capital

Check out the softer side

The biggest predictor of success is not technical skills, which can be learned. It's actually the softer skills because engineers work in teams. Skills like communication and collaboration are essential for engineers to interact with their teammates effectively. Emotional intelligence will fuel better working relationships too. Pair these essentials up with a healthy dose of intellectual curiosity and you're well on your way to identifying a star performer.

Proper candidate assessment happens across three levels. Assessing job-fit across technical skills is the first step. Then comes an evaluation of the soft skills. And lastly comes person-organisation fit, which is a strong predictor of success. When values and expectations between a candidate and company are aligned, this is the recipe for long-term happiness. Not to mention superior performance, productivity, and satisfaction.

What is your company culture? What are your key traits? And how does this match with the candidate? This is the essence of compatibility.

Ok, so how do you reveal the softer side?

By asking the right questions. It's just like assessing technical job skills. Level up your soft skills assessment techniques with these pro tips.



PRO TIP #3:

- Use behavioural style interview questions to gain real life examples of candidate behaviours at work.
- Consider using a standardised personality test.
- Have the candidate meet more team members individually to get more feedback.
- Bring HR into the discussion who has a knack for assessing candidates on all 3 levels.

Go Bigger And Cast A Wider Net

“With some tenacity, know-how, and intense collaboration with government bodies global mobility approvals are still possible despite current travel restrictions.”

Jay Ramanah,
Managing Director - Australia

Go bigger and cast a wider net

Sometimes even when you've nailed the job ad and mastered the art of hunting and gathering, it can be hard to find the perfect fit. The hard truth is there is a real skills shortage. That means even following the winning formula can leave you with vacant roles.

So what are the options? Instead of considering downgrading the calibre of candidate you select, why not think bigger? The global talent market is bigger than just your own backyard, city or even country. We live in a digital economy where sharing knowledge and talent has never been easier.

Depending on the type of role you need to fill there are two options to work globally. The first is remote work. Remote teams have exploded in popularity since the pandemic and they're here to stay. Is there a way you can add a remote role to your team?

Remote teams not a fit? No problem. Global mobility is still an option even with travel restrictions.

If you need to assemble your team together in one physical location, remote working doesn't work. So the other option is international relocation. Sure it's a bit more challenging in the current climate with travel restrictions but still achievable if you know what you're doing. In fact, many companies are still relying on global mobility to fill critical technical roles to ensure their projects aren't at risk.



PRO TIP #4:

- Understand your hiring options based on visas + immigration.
- Assess the candidate's eligibility prior to beginning.
- Be patient and start early to allow for processing time.
- Be organised and detail-oriented to avoid delays.
- Consider partnering with a global mobility specialist who knows the process well and can accelerate processing times.

Onboarding For Long-term Success

“Creating a rewarding working environment that brings out the best in individuals while also contributing to achieving business outcomes is the key.”

Zoe Braun,
Content Marketing Specialist

Onboarding for long-term success

Onboarding is how we describe the welcome experience for new team members. It's more than just the greeting committee on their first day though. Sure an orientation is nice and meeting the other team members is a great personal touch, but the onboarding experience covers the first 90 days.

Most new team members show up not knowing what to do even with years of experience behind them. They don't know what's expected and how to do things at your company. From learning the office layout to understanding security protocols, there's a lot to absorb.

In fact, there's a volume of essential information to share. And pacing is essential to avoid inundating new team members with too many papers, videos, and messages. Putting together a structured onboarding program leads to better retention - 69% more likely to stay for 3 years - and a 54% increase in productivity.

And don't forget about building the emotional connection that drives longevity!

After any major decision, there's an immediate vulnerability where people crave confirmation. In this case, they're seeking out validation they made the right decision to say 'I do'. Cover your bases and check out these pro tips to get started on the right foot with your new team members.



PRO TIP #5:

- Take time to train new staff and provide reference materials so they can go back later.
- Organise workspaces in advance with technology and special touches to make a lasting impression.
- Assign new team members a mentor to facilitate a strong relationship and learn by doing.
- Pace the onboarding experience at a realistic speed to avoid overwhelming and to increase engagement.

Ready to win the talent war?

Competition for technical talent is heating up and so now is the time to raise your game. There are many ways to stand out when trying to attract and welcome the best talent. It can be a lot of hard work, but it's always worth it when you finally build your dream team.

When it comes to building the right teams, help is just a call away. At Easy Skill we supercharge technical teams around the world. As technical experts ourselves, we align projects and people to unlock the people power you need to deliver your projects and shape a better future.

Why do we do it? Because with the right people power, anything is possible.

**Ready to build your dream team?
Let's chat.**

getitdone@easy-skill.com



Build
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