

2016 industry trends

for engineering talent

What trends can engineering managers expect to see through 2016? While details may vary between specific industry verticals, a number of key issues will remain important, and possibly increase in significance throughout most industry segments.

Kelly® is pleased to provide this brief outlook on significant workforce trends that are expected to impact talent in the engineering industry for 2016. Through our ongoing discussions with leading firms and corporate clients, we are able to offer a unique perspective on the engineering talent market for the year to come—and beyond.

Efficiency

The trends we see in engineering have a common thread: efficiency improvement and waste reduction. Automation, quality, sustainability, rapid technologies, and re-shoring created significant demand for engineering work in 2015, and solutions for related technical talent will remain in demand through 2016.

Automation

The tremendous improvement in worker productivity and the talent gap in manufacturing can be attributed—at least in part—to the widespread adoption and recent improvements in industrial automation and plant automation systems. As a

result, there will be significant competition in 2016 for talented professionals such as instrumentation and controls technicians, automation engineers, and industrial control systems designers.

The Hollywood model and open innovation

Modern research and development practices involve collaboration between the sponsoring organization (manufacturer or other project underwriter), suppliers, consultants, engineering services firms, and free agent engineers. These project teams, which integrate regular employees as well as external engineers, are assembled and brought together for the life of the project, similar to the way movie studios now produce films—as opposed to decades ago, when actors were direct employees of the movie studios.

The result is the practice of **open innovation**—the involvement of contributors beyond the regular employees of the sponsoring organization in the discovery and creation process—and the end of the so-called “not invented here” syndrome.

Quality engineering

Quality engineering will remain in very high demand throughout most industrial segments in 2016. A strong percentage of hiring in the industrial engineering standard occupational classification (SOC) category can be attributed to demand for quality engineers. The prevalence of Lean Six Sigma® and the universal importance of product and process quality throughout most industries will only continue to drive a need for quality engineers well into the future.

Sustainability

Sustainability projects that involve energy conservation, emissions control, renewable energy systems, or waste reduction all require engineering work to be performed by electrical engineers, environmental engineers, and energy engineers. The lightweighting of products and packaging is another area within technical sustainability work that should continue to expand.

Additive manufacturing

3D printing, which uses a variety of technologies and materials, has already revolutionized prototyping—and adoption is quickly accelerating for production applications. Some of the largest manufacturers in the world are investing heavily in rapid technologies, which will lead to growth in demand for engineers and technologists who are talented in both developing new applications and incorporating the technologies into production environments.

Staffing partnership

As demand increases for a talented workforce, engineering firms and corporations are reaffirming their need to partner with trusted recruiting and staffing agencies or project services firms. These valuable partnerships can directly contribute to a firm's success, especially in the face of ongoing talent shortages.

Do you have a trusted advisor?

It's not enough for a workforce solutions provider to say they are a trusted advisor to the engineering industry. They need to demonstrate that they understand engineering-related business needs, as well as the technical side of the practice of engineering. Take the time to verify that your staffing provider is well positioned to supply the talent you demand, and can point you to additional cost-saving workforce solutions.

We hope that you find our 2016 update informative, and will consider Kelly when making your engineering staffing decisions this year. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this information and ways that we can help you succeed.



Contract | Contract to Hire | Direct Hire | Project Services | On-site Management | Payroll Services | Outsourcing & Consulting Solutions

Contact us

Kelly has been supplying engineering solutions for 50 years. You can trust Kelly for reliable workforce support and leading recruitment practices. Visit kellyservices.us/engineering today to learn more or find the office nearest you.