



Energy Talks

How Petrofac attracts top talent to the energy sector

Darren Hill (00:04):

Welcome to Energy Talks, the podcast where we speak to the people powering the energy sector. In this episode, my colleague Stefan's been joined by Charla Tekun, Petrofac's Head of Talent Acquisition, and they're going to be talking about recruitment and what it takes to attract the best people to both Petrofac and the energy sector. If you're looking to progress in your career or find a new job in the energy sector, this is the podcast for you. But before we get started, remember to hit that subscribe button to make sure you don't miss another episode.

Stefan Stojadinovic (00:32):

I'm joined today on Energy Talks by Charla Tekun, Petrofac's Head of Talent Acquisition. Charla, we often say that people make Petrofac, that the embodiment of our employer brand is quite literally our employees. So who better to talk to about this topic than the person in charge of bringing the right people to Petrofac? Charla, welcome to Energy Talks.

Charla Tekun (00:53):

Thank you. Thank you, Stefan.

Stefan Stojadinovic (00:55):

Let's start with an easy question. So you're Petrofac's Group Head of Talent Acquisition. How would you describe, in short, what the Head of Talent Acquisition does?

Charla Tekun (01:04):

So, Head of Talent Acquisition heads up the talent acquisition teams across the board, and I drive the global strategy for resourcing for Petrofac.

Stefan Stojadinovic (01:16):

You've been in the industry for more than 15 years, Worley, Haliburton for almost a decade. Different locations, different geographies. Now we're lucky to have you at Petrofac. How have you seen the recruitment space change over the last decade and a half?

Charla Tekun (01:31):

It changed completely. the name changed to start with; we don't call it recruitment anymore. We call it talent acquisition. So if you remember 10 years ago, when you are in an interview, the employer usually used to ask why should we hire you? It's the other way around. Now, it's very much candidate focused. Now the candidates are asking, why should I join you? So it shows that the dynamics have changed. It's more candidate people-focused careers number one now.



Stefan Stojadinovic (02:07):

Yes. So not only has the whole landscape of how you get candidates, which we will talk about in more detail in a bit of like digitalisation of outreach of, you know personalising your, your efforts, but also the mindset changed and shifted from what does a company need to, what do I need as a, as someone who's gonna be joining this company?

Charla Tekun (02:29):

Yeah, absolutely. It's all about people.

Stefan Stojadinovic (02:32):

Okay. So let's, let's talk about people then. So, Petrofac is in a, in a growth period. Now, we've, we've hired hundreds of people since the start of the year. We've been awarded some very exciting projects, some first ever in, in Europe, in North Africa, in the Middle East, our home market. So across new energies, petrochemicals, upstream, oil and gas and we're actively bidding for new work in addition to that. So to me, all of this spells more people to join growing, getting people across the, the geographies. How does this impact your function, the function that you lead? Talent acquisition on a global level.

Charla Tekun (03:15):

Really need to look at our position in the market. How do we attract people? Where are those people? how soon we can get these people on board so we can start delivering? So these are all day-to-day activities that we do. And then it's all about finding people and growing these days.

Stefan Stojadinovic (03:40):

Yeah. And where have we been particularly busy?

Charla Tekun (03:43):

We are primarily hiring engineers, designers. We do have other functions. We do have support functions and some commercial functions, but we are heavily hiring engineers across the board. We do have two engineering hubs, India and United, the Emirates. So the majority of our, our engineers and designers we hire in those countries. But again, as you said, you know we are expanding geographically as well as the type of projects that we win are starting to be different in different areas. So we are looking at new geographies like Africa. We are looking at Southeast Asia, expanding the businesses there. We are again looking at slightly different experiences you know, with the new energies and the, the people that are required for those projects. So that's the variety. The portfolio is growing every day.

Stefan Stojadinovic (04:50):

So just, just to link to that a little bit, you know, engineering is, has been there for, for a long, long, long time. New energies, as the name says, new energies. Are we, is there kind of added level of excitement for people who are joining that? Are we transitioning people from traditional energies to new energies? What are you seeing in terms of, of how, how that's going?



Charla Tekun (05:14):

New things excite people. They always want to be part of it. So there are groups of people in or outside of our company who are excited and want to be part. So we're moving those people there. But then again, in candidate market, there are transferable skills as well. When we hire, we look for people who are flexible, who are adaptable. So the candidate pool grows and then it shows some variety in terms of what they're doing now or what they can and will do in the future as well.

Stefan Stojadinovic (05:50):

Yeah. I'm sure there's an understanding goal so that traditional energies are here to stay for a full long time as well, and know the, the skillset that is out there is, is gonna be needed for much longer. Yeah,

Charla Tekun (06:00):

No, absolutely.

Stefan Stojadinovic (06:02):

So let's, let's talk about the candidates now. So people throw the word crisis around quite a bit. I heard talent crisis being mentioned more, more than once, and for better or for worse, are we in a talent crisis? What's your opinion on that?

Charla Tekun (06:16):

Well, a talent crisis usually means the, the, the talent pools are not growing as fast as the, the demand. So there are a lot of new projects coming. So when you have 10 projects and when you, your talent pool only has four, it creates crisis. However, that's why we're looking at transferable skills. We are looking at different channels where we get candidates from and we are trying to see where we are. What, what is our position in the market? Are we attractive enough? So we're trying to improve in those areas. So we differentiate ourselves from other companies in the market. So we attract more talent. So we don't have talent crisis.

Stefan Stojadinovic (07:08):

We talked about transferable skills, and you mentioned transferable skills and how to transfer people from, you know, whether it's one project to another, whether it's one market to another. Are we only looking outside when it comes to recruitment and when it comes to talent acquisition, is the grass always greener on the other side, or are we looking at our people as well?

Charla Tekun (07:28):

We are looking at both. There are some candidates or requirements that we have that we do not have the capability within the company. So for those, of course, we look at outside external hiring, but we also look at the, the career parts that we create within the company for our employees. So we look at their development, if they, there are any gaps in their development, we kind of help them to improve in those areas so they become transferable candidates. So that's,



then we move those candidates into different positions. So we also look at the people whom we have in the past. You know we've done a few exercises lately that the people who were with us some time ago are still interested to come and join us. So it is a mix and match really. We look at external, we'll look at internal, develop our people, create that career path to our people but then also fill the gaps with others.

Stefan Stojadinovic (08:35):

With external hires. So we often associate the word talent with younger people, people who are at the sunrise part of their careers. They're, you know, just joining the profession, just graduating. But we should not overlook experience that we need to deliver projects safely on time sustainably and be a company that people admire. Can you compare the approaches to hiring talent and hiring experience on the other side?

Charla Tekun (09:02):

Yeah, so we both, we, we hire both groups, but the way that we approach them is different because their expectations are different. The young people, what excites them is the, the exposure, being part of a big company, an international company, the belonging, you know, learning new things, the opportunities, the training. Whereas an experienced candidate is attracted to the, the projects that you, in the, the size of the project, the disciplines, the, again, the variety of the projects by then an experience level. So how they can demonstrate their experience, how they can apply their experience for a, a successful delivery.

Stefan Stojadinovic (09:50):

I guess the question is, who is it harder to attract to Petrofac?

Charla Tekun (09:53):

We have the opportunity to offer the young people the exposure. We have the training and development programmes, so we have that to offer them. Whereas again, for the experienced engineers, we have the variety of the projects. We've got different geographies of where those projects are. So it's all about approach. It's all about what you use when you're talking to them and then it comes to know your audience, right?

Stefan Stojadinovic (10:28):

There's really hardly a better place to be than, than the energy industry for people who want to have an impact, who want to change the, the future. We see people leaving Petrofac and just to then down the line, 2, 5, 10 years later, they, they come back to Petrofac. Why is it important that we, we keep a strong connection with our alumni?

Charla Tekun (10:51):

We need new ideas, we need fresh thinking, and, but at the same time, we are also proud that we are building this company that people are happy to come back to.



Stefan Stojadinovic (11:02):

Finally, let's get into the, the practicalities of getting a job at Petrofac. So if someone was listening to this and hope they are, and thinking I should see what is available at Petrofac, Charla has done a great job selling the company to me. What is the first step?

Charla Tekun (11:17):

The first step is petrofac.com career page. So we follow an online application process. So people should go to Petrofac visit Petrofac page career page. All the jobs are posted there. Simply apply. Click the apply button, click choose the click the apply button. Click the apply, apply button, choose the location, see, look at all the vacancies that we have and apply online.

Stefan Stojadinovic (11:44):

Are we personalising our approach based on the market we're hiring in?

Charla Tekun (11:48):

Absolutely. We need to know our market. We need to know our candidates in those markets. So we look at talent insights. We look at market insights. We look at our competitors. We look at anything and everything in, in that country, and then build our strategy for approach accordingly. The goal is the same, but the approach depends on the market. And then for that, in order to be able to create the right approach, we need to know our market.

Stefan Stojadinovic (12:21):

So looking past the skills and the experience that's necessary to land our role at Petrofac, how are we treating the characteristics and the values that people bring into, into our company?

Charla Tekun (12:33):

We look for flexible and adaptable people, people who can demonstrate their skills as well, and their behaviours are important. As we always say, people make Petrofac. So we've got certain characteristics. So we want people to manage to work with colleagues, stakeholders, customers, and we want them to be excited about our future, share our excitement about future. Then when we hire them, we continue looking at the people, their, not only their skills and experience, but their, their behaviors as well. So we help them improve not only technically.

Stefan Stojadinovic (13:26):

So it's not, it's not only. Getting through the door. Once we get people through the door, yeah. We need, we need to make sure that, that they're happy in their role, that they're accomplished you know, 5, 10 years down the line as well.



Charla Tekun (13:37):

So they, they share our excitement about growing, you know? Absolutely. We grow together.

Stefan Stojadinovic (13:43):

Charla, it was an absolute pleasure to have you on Energy Talks. Thank you for joining me today.

Charla Tekun (13:47):

Thank you for having me.

Darren Hill (13:48):

Thank you so much for listening. And like Charla said, if you're looking, start your career at Petrofac, head to [petrofac.com/careers](https://www.petrofac.com/careers) and just hit apply. Remember to subscribe if you haven't done so already, and leave a review if you enjoyed this episode, and why not go and check out our other episodes right now.