

It's still an employee's market out there

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Demand for staff with specific technical skills and experience in the Irish market is on the increase, and for employees with the right qualifications and attitude, now is the time to consider a well-timed job or career move. This is according to Celyn Fenwick from Sigmar Recruitment's engineering team, who believes that today's labour market is heavily in favour of well qualified employee, who is largely able to pick and choose their job, employer and, to a large extent, salary level.

"The labour market for industries such as engineering is wide open, with hundreds of jobs and employers willing to pay a premium for well qualified staff, " he said.

"In particular, niche markets such as the expanding oil and gas sectors desperately require staff with specialised skills."

Sigmar Recruitment's technical department has seen an increase in companies requiring employees with specialised qualifications and skills. Last month for example, it received more new jobs listings than ever for engineers in specialised roles such as HVAC and refrigeration, as well as oil and gas.

"This represents a noticeable shift away from manufacturing-related vacancies with an increase in demand for more service-related ones, " said Fenwick. "Having said this manufacturing is still relatively buoyant, with larger organisations seeking to consolidate operations and reduce their cost-base rather than migrating lock, stock and barrel."

For the immediate future, Fenwick points to the fact that employees in Ireland are predicted to receive pay rises of 4.5% in 2008, while inflation is forecast to be 2.5% - still above the UK and many other developed countries in Europe.

"With this market confidence, and suitably qualified employees in demand it is the ideal time for them to become established in a company and industry with an eye for the future, " he said. "Many applicants are taking the opportunity to work for a progressive and stable company with greater long-term sustainability, rather than simply following the largest basic salary. This trend is being replicated throughout the market where candidates are seeking a better worklife balance and focus on their own long term development.