



Chief Engineer Research – Job Description

(Job Code and Level: ERES005.2)

Definition:

Research is defined as: Blue sky thinking and research into new technology (10 years before development phase). Systems and methodologies that will improve the vehicle either for the customer and meet future legislation, recognising as well future needs and developments in other areas. For example, integration of new technology which has been developed outside of the automotive industry such as I-Phone technology or looking into future hybridisation strategies, lowering emissions, etc.

Overall Purpose of the Role:

Provide strategic direction for research projects into the latest technologies, processes, devices, materials and techniques and find innovative ways of developing products for customers to continue sustainable company growth. Responsible for the overall research function to include innovative solutions at the cutting edge of technical fields of expertise. Work and act independently, being self-supervising within the expectations of Senior Management with outcomes reviewed at a senior level. Work on multiple major projects providing technical expertise. Decisions and results have a prolonged impact on the current and future direction of the function/ projects and their success. Performance affects the function's image.

Key Responsibilities:

Strategy and Development

- Development technology strategy and product offerings for the business

General and Task Management

- Provide technical lead in developing business opportunities with relevant material and preparing proposals in response to Request For Quotations
- Responsible for the development of proposals (documentation, plans, costing, commercial package) for global customers through to order conversion including successful contract negotiations
- Technical leadership of assigned Vehicle Research projects
- Define technical resource requirements for successful project execution

- Maximise team performance using standard processes
- Lead technical reviews
- Assess cost/benefit trade-off of technical solution and lead decision making process
- Identify areas for technological advancement and whilst maintaining excellent engineering standards
- Working closely with tight deadline to ensure that engineering standards are maintained
- Support the generation of technical papers
- Escalate and manage programme risks and issues
- Attend various meetings and action/communicate instructions
- Produce written reports and make presentations
- Undertake continuous training and development
- Perform root cause analysis and resolve problems
- Identify business improvement opportunities within the organisation
- Ensure an effective interface with other departmental staff is maintained
- Provide technical expertise to the team
- Identify and deploy the technical skill sets, resource levels and systems to deliver projects, including the engagement of external resources as required
- Monitor the completion of tasks and ensure good performance and record on appropriate systems
- Review, implement and update company records e.g. training matrices, performance reviews, risk assessments
- Conduct risk assessments of processes and tasks in the department

People Management

- Mentor key engineers and identify requirements for skills development
- Supervise and work with junior engineers to support, develop and nurture talent
- Ensure the delivery of the People Strategy within area of accountability
- Manage and lead the team, ensuring adequate staffing levels, managing holiday allowances, recruitment, training, development, appraisal, attendance, disciplinary issues and daily supervision to maximise efficient productivity
- Motivate and coach the team to operational success
- Communicate KPIs from the strategic annual plan so that each employee is aware
- Develop, implement and manage key performance indicators (KPIs) for each area of responsibility
- Ensure KPIs are met by working to the overall plan, including management of, and reporting

Financial Budget and Control

- Prepare the annual Research budget and forecasts and all Capital Expenditure proposals as well as ensuring compliance with customer and legal requirements. Manage the budget from identification to completion of projects

- Input and hold responsibility for research budgets
- Produce and monitor budgets for all programme activities

Relationship Management

- Draw on the wider technical expertise across the global organisation to achieve optimal technical performance
- Be the primary technical interface with the client
- Develop and maintain client network and relationships with senior level customer and supplier counterparts (Chief Engineer level and above)
- Support the sales and business development teams by adding technical excellence to proposals and presentations
- Manage the interface between the customer and research engineering and also the internal interfaces between sales, engineering and production
- Communicate with senior management on programme status, risks and issues in an appropriate and timely manner. Ensure regular and timely communication between project team members
- Support the sales and engineering teams with new project cost, time estimates and customer contract development and approval processes
- Work as part of the Management team to share ideas and improve operation, recommending, supporting and implementing continuous improvement activities and process and procedure improvements to optimise results and improve quality of delivery, in line with quality standards requirements delivery in line with Company and Customer requirements
- Consistently promote high standards through personal example and roll out through the team so that each member of the team understands the standards and behaviours expected of them

Self Management

- Support, comply and ensure complicity with Health & Safety regulations, the Company Handbook, Quality and Environmental standards, and all other Company policies and procedures
- Inspire and motivate the team
- Consistently manages performance firmly and fairly
- Knows and develops the team
- Resilient, optimistic and open to change
- Is self aware
- Shows moral courage, openness and honesty in all dealings
- Is confident, assertive and self assured
- Has an Adult:Adult, collaborative approach to others

Skills and Attributes:

- Exceptional leadership and communication skills with the ability to optimise team performance and development
- Excellent relationship management skills with the ability to engage, negotiate and manage key stakeholders and suppliers
- Strong and confident negotiator with the ability to negotiate at all levels

- Excellent analytical and problem solving abilities
- Results orientated with ability to plan and deliver against project deadlines
- Commercially and financially astute with experience of managing budgets
- Resilient, self motivated and able to work well under pressure
- Technical mindset
- An appreciation of and an ability to positively resolve issues arising from different cultures

Qualifications and Experience Levels:

- Educated to degree level (preferably Masters) in a relevant engineering discipline or equivalent NVQ Level 7 qualification.
- Preferably Fellow or Chartered status of an Industry related Professional Body
- Demonstrable experience of leading a engineering function with a proven track record in strategic engineering leadership delivering effective engineering strategies, policies, processes and systems
- Ability to add value, reduce costs and make business improvements
- Proven project management and supplier experience
- Experience of operating and influencing at a strategic level
- Knowledge and technical understanding of automotive processes, components and design techniques

Example roles this job description may cover:

- Engineering Director
- Research Director
- VP Research Engineering