Automation Engineer

Job Information

Recruiter
Planet Pharma

Job ID
1607304

Industry
Other (Manufacturing)

Company Type
Large Company (more than 300 employees) - International Company

Non-Japanese Ratio
Majority Japanese

Job Type
Permanent Full-time

Location
Yamagata Prefecture, Yamagata-shi

Salary
5 million yen ~ 13 million yen

Work Hours
40 hours

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General Requirements

Minimum Experience Level
Over 3 years

Career Level
Mid Career

Minimum English Level
Business Level

Minimum Japanese Level
Business Level

Minimum Education Level
Bachelor's Degree

Visa Status
No permission to work in Japan required

Job Description

Basic purpose of the job
Mission:
Perform Automation Projects implementation and manage corrective and preventive maintenance for Factory Automation Systems, aiming to achieve its strategic goals and objectives.

Accountabilities

- Implement Automation Systems, process control, Supervision Systems that provide management information in real time, using current and market tools, through analysis of processes and future projects.
- Perform corrective, emergency and preventive maintenance of Automation Systems, with direct corrective actions with the systems and/or their respective suppliers.
- Define and implement, together with management, a viable and appropriate strategy for Automation Systems in the factory, focusing on reducing complexity, system reliability, data and occurrence traceability and making information available on processes that support decision-making by management, quickly and accurately.
- Assess the level of obsolescence in Automation Systems at the factory depending on the evolution and availability of technologies, implemented and future, proposing measures aimed at avoiding unforeseen stops in production for this

reason.
- Implement and control Automation Procedures and OT Cyber Security measures for Automation Systems according to Global BI Requirements.
- Control and custody of backups and disaster recovery of the factory's Automation Systems, ensuring restoration and return of data and operation in case of occurrences.
- Monitor Cost Expenses related to Automation area to accomplish with expected yearly budget.
- Create and establish strong relationship among internal customers, stakeholders, interface partners and global teams to assure the implementation and execution of Automation initiatives and activities.

Regulatory and / or Organisational Requirements

- Accomplish with Japanese Regulation requirements.
- Secure local and global company standards and policies implementation

Job Complexity
Scope & Breadth:

- Owns end-to-end lifecycle of factory Automation Systems: design/selection ? implementation ? operations ? maintenance ? lifecycle management ? disaster recovery. Covers multiple system layers (OT + interface to IT): PLCs/DCS, SCADA/HMI, MES, historians, supervision systems, edge gateways, industrial networks, and data integrations to business systems.
- Decision-Making & Autonomy:
- Defines factory-wide automation strategy with management, balancing reliability, traceability, data availability, and complexity reduction. Prioritizes investments and maintenance actions across legacy and new technologies to minimize obsolescence risk and unplanned downtime. Chooses vendors, tools, architectures, and cybersecurity controls aligned to Global BI/OT requirements.
- Problem-Solving & Ambiguity:
- Troubleshoots complex, multi-cause failures across controls, networks, software, and supplier components—often in real-time production conditions. Designs pragmatic DR/backup regimes and restoration procedures that meet RPO/RTO targets for critical OT systems. Resolves conflicts among stakeholders (production, quality, maintenance, IT, safety, global teams) with competing objectives.
- Operational Pressure
- Balances corrective/emergency maintenance with preventive programs without disrupting production targets. Manages yearly automation budget and cost controls amid unforeseen events. Coordinates cross-functional execution for initiatives with high change impact, while keeping compliance and safety intact.
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Interfaces
External: Regulatory Agencies, Suppliers, Entities
Internal: Yamagata departments and Global GFE Automation Network

Job Expertise
Technical Expertise (OT/Automation):

- - Controls & Systems: PLC/DCS programming and commissioning; SCADA/HMI configuration; MES/workflow; data historians; OPC UA/MQTT/Modbus; alarm management; batch/process control. Industrial Networking: Ethernet/IP, Profinet, industrial VLAN segmentation, firewalls, remote access, DMZ architectures, time sync (NTP/PTP). Data & Integration: Real-time data collection, event/occurrence traceability, KPI pipelines to management dashboards; interface with BI/IT systems. Reliability & Lifecycle: Preventive/predictive maintenance design, spares/firmware management, obsolescence audits, migration planning, cutover strategies. Backup & DR: Backup regimes, test restorations, failover/runbooks; defining RPO/RTO and validating recovery procedures. OT Cybersecurity: Asset inventory, risk assessment, network zoning, least privilege, patching, vulnerability management, incident response aligned to Global BI/OT policies.
- Methodologies & Standards:
- - Familiarity with ISA/IEC 62443 (OT security), ISA-95 (enterprise/plant integration), ISA-88 (batch control), alarm management standards, change management, and management of change (MoC).
- Leadership & Business Skills:
- - Strategy formulation for automation roadmap and complexity reduction. Vendor management and contract/SLA negotiation. Budgeting, cost tracking, and value realization (OEE, downtime, MTBF/MTTR improvements). Cross-functional communication, stakeholder alignment, training/enablement for operators/maintenance teams.

Job Impact
Operational Reliability & Continuity:

- - Reduces unplanned downtime via robust preventive programs, rapid corrective actions, and DR readiness. Improves mean time to repair (MTTR) and extends mean time between failures (MTBF) through standardization and lifecycle management.
- Data-Driven Decision-Making: Enables accurate, real-time management information (production, quality, energy, alarms) for fast decisions. Strengthens traceability of events, batches, deviations, and interventions—supporting audits and continuous improvement.
- Cyber Risk Reduction:
- - Lowers likelihood and impact of OT cyber incidents with proper zoning, hardening, access control, monitoring, and incident response adherence to global requirements.
- Financial Performance: Optimizes automation spend (capex/opex) through vendor strategy, migration timing, and reuse/standardization. Protects revenue by avoiding production stops due to obsolescence and by faster recovery from incidents.
- Scalability & Standardization:
- - Reduces system complexity, enabling easier support, faster onboarding, and consistent practices across lines/plants. Creates reusable automation patterns and governance (local and global) that scale with future projects

and technologies.
- People & Collaboration:
- - Builds strong relationships with internal customers and global teams, accelerating initiative adoption and reducing change friction. Elevates plant capabilities through training, documentation, and clear procedures.

Required Skills

Minimum Education/Degree Requirements
Degree/Education:
Bachelor's degree
Focus:
Control and Automation, Electro-Electronic or Electrical Engineer Or Information Technology Analyst

Required Capabilities (Skills, Experience, Competencies)
Language:

- - English: Advance level (read, write and speak).
- - Japanese: Advance level (read, write and speak).

Work Experience:

- - Over 1 year of Automation Experience
- - Pharmaceutical knowledge is desirable.
- - Experience on international collaboration and project execution is desirable.

Hard Skills:

- - Knowledge on PLCs, Controllers, Frequency Invertors, etc
- - Knowledge on Sensors and Instruments
- - Field Bus and Ethernet Network Concept
- - Cyber Security Concept (Firewall, Antivirus, Physical Structure, etc)
- - OPC UA Server, Scada Systems (eg.: Copadate, Siemens, etc), BMS/EMS, MES, WMS, LIMS, ERP, Cloud Solution Concept
- - IT Concept (Operation System, Database, Server, Active Directory, Remote Access, etc

Soft Skills:

- - Teamwork
- - Proactive and Creative
- - Communication and Good Relationship
- - Focus on Customer
- - Ownership
- - Resilience
- - Organization
- - Analytical Thought

Company Description