



EUROPE

THE LEADING
SWIMMING POOL
AND WELLNESS EVENT



POOL & SPA

AN ATTRACTIVE SECTOR WHICH IS ACTIVELY RECRUITING IN MANY AREAS AND BUILDING THE SKILLSETS OF ITS PROFESSIONALS

The pool and spa sector is booming, and currently facing several significant challenges including recruitment to a wide range of job positions, and building the skills of its workforce in fields such as home automation, digital tech, sustainable development and new sales techniques. Initiatives are being set up to meet these needs and Piscine Global Europe has built a reputation as a place for discussing and finding solutions to assist professionals in this regard.



Significant challenges in recruitment and professional skills development

Like many other manual work sectors, the swimming pool sector suffers from a lack of appeal while also facing significant needs in terms of recruitment and building the skills of its workforce. Jean-Pierre Marcati, a director of the FPP (French Federation for Pool and Spa Professionals) and manager of the PISCINES de France company, shares his specialist insight on this issue.

"A pool technician is an "all-rounder" who has to master several trades such as electricity, plumbing and waterproofing... This is not a job that can be improvised, especially since techniques are developing and becoming more specialised, in fields such as smart home systems and automation, for example. To meet these needs for both basic and ongoing training, the FPP is taking action and setting up more training centres all over France. All professionals are now within a 2-hour drive of a training centre.

Comprehensive programmes are thus proposed via the "Pool Trades" vocational certificate (Brevet Professionnel, or BP), and through continuing education and qualifications for adults who are already working in the sector or changing careers.

The current trend is to make maintenance more sustainable, by fitting and servicing equipment that guarantees greater efficiency in terms of water and electricity consumption, and that uses more environmentally-friendly materials. Technicians must therefore continue to train throughout their careers, to keep up with these changes.

www.piscine-global-europe.com



It should be noted that students who enter any of the training centres to take a course have every chance of being hired at the end of it. There are as many positions as there are candidates, and 80% of these positions are for pool technicians. However, new profiles with more of a focus on computing, programming and electronics - more «geeky» profiles - are in demand for jobs in home automation and digitisation, for example.

These jobs - like all jobs in the industry - have **real appeal**. They combine working as part of a team with a real degree of independence to organise maintenance rounds at customers' homes or premises. These are also jobs with many **possibilities for internal promotion** within companies: a pool technician can then move up to become a team leader, schedule manager or works supervisor. In addition, jobs in the pool industry carry **attractive salaries**, even at entry level.

A technician can count on an average net salary of 2000 euros for a 35-hour week, with possibilities for overtime, bonuses and even use of a company vehicle.

To support its members with their recruitment and training needs, the FPP is developing a range of **communication resources and actions**. These actions include partnerships with training centres, work in conjunction with the French employment agency and chambers of trade, a Job Exchange on the FPP website, and promotional campaigns at regional trade exhibitions, in training forums, in the specialist swimming pool and student press, and on social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)...

Two forces are combining: the strength of the professionals via the FPP, and a favourable reception from the world of education and training (apprentice training centres, high schools, etc.). **There is a real coming-together; a synergy that we can harness to meet our recruitment and training challenges!**



The FPP (French Federation for Pool and Spa Professionals) and the CFA (apprentice training centres), hand in hand

Designing and fitting pools is not a job that can be improvised; it calls on a broad array of specialised skills to achieve the quality standards that consumers expect. That is why the FPP is working in close collaboration with training bodies and companies to strengthen initial training and continuing education within the trade. In particular, the Federation is a partner of the new centre of expertise that was unveiled last year: the "Institut Supérieur Métiers de la Piscine" (ISMP - Institute of Higher Education for the Swimming Pool Trades), featuring some full-scale facilities. It is also collaborating with the nine establishments providing the French "Pool Technician" vocational certificate, and keeping a close eye on the progress made with the plans to open five new training centres. In addition, the FPP runs its own Training Centre, which took in 220 trainees in 2021. And to facilitate recruitment it also hosts a job exchange on its website, propiscines.fr.

Apprenticeship, the springboard to a career in the pool industry

Each year the ISMP (French Institute of Higher Education for the Swimming Pool Trades), located in La Roche-sur-Yon near the west coast of France, trains 60 apprentices for vocational qualifications and nearly 500 employees from companies in the industry. Its director, Thierry Dubin, explains the skills that are developed within its apprenticeship training centre and the added value that hiring an apprentice can generate for a pool specialist.

"Our mission is to **train employees to be capable of fitting and maintaining a swimming pool from A to Z**. The two-year "brevet professionnel" vocational certificate, which follows on from an initial upper secondary-level qualification (CAP, BP, Baccalauréat, etc.), equips trainees with a complete set of skills:

- installation,
- construction of different types of pool: concrete, wood, from kits, fibreglass in-ground, etc.
- waterproofing,
- water treatment including filtration,
- heating,
- ancillary equipment for cleaning, comfort and safety,
- servicing and maintenance,
- electricity,
- home automation and smart objects.



Some of our apprentices already have an initial qualification in electricity or masonry, so they already have those skills under their belt. We also have many youngsters who come from landscaping companies that have decided to branch out into swimming pools, and hence send their apprentices to get trained in the pool trades by obtaining the "BP" vocational certificate. Many of these youngsters are hired as soon as they complete their apprenticeship.

In the space of a few years we have gone from 30 to 60 apprentices, because there is strong demand for pool maintenance and installation combined with favourable market conditions on account of our geographical location (in the Vendée region on the Atlantic coast of France). Youngsters are attracted by the high-end dimension of

swimming pools, and by the wide range of jobs in the industry.

If I had two pieces of advice to give to pool specialists to ensure an apprenticeship goes well, the first would be **to take the time to welcome an apprentice**. Experience of working in a company is vital. To complete their apprenticeships successfully, youngsters need to gain a good understanding of the working environment and the customers. **Tutoring** is also an important aspect: tutors must be committed to their role, and be able to take part in a tutor training course in order to fully understand how they can liaise with the training centre. We need to be consistent in order to move forward together in the best interests of the apprentice".

7 key selling points for recruiting a pool professional

Jobs in the pool sector have appeal, but to attract applicants the right arguments need to be put forward... Several of the hard-hitters are listed below:

- **The wealth and diversity** of careers in the pool industry
- **A flourishing sector** assured of long-term growth
- **Opportunities to develop** and learn through continuing education
- Building a pool helps to build a happy family
- **The importance** of building and maintaining relationships with customers
- **The pleasure** of working outdoors
- **A profession** where you can express your creativity

To find out more, visit the Piscine Global Europe blog.



© ISMP

ATTRACTING CANDIDATES without prior training into the pool trade

While demand is high for pool technicians, all trades are concerned by the need to recruit, from engineers to sales representatives. Opportunities abound in this buoyant sector; both for young people looking for jobs and for people who are already in work and looking for a career change. Building a swimming pool requires a variety of skillsets including construction, waterproofing, urban planning rules, earthworks, plumbing, electricity, water treatment, heating, home automation and safety.

In addition to the initial "Pool Technician" vocational certificate currently available at nine training centres (with five more in the pipeline), the FPP also proposes specific training courses for adults who are changing career paths.

This range of continuing education courses, provided by training establishments and some adult vocational training agencies (AFPA), enables jobseekers and professionals from other sectors to acquire the skills they need to work in the pool trade.

Professionals who are already in the trade can also follow training courses to develop their skills in areas such as pool hydraulics, water treatment and management, electricity, after-sales services, and plant rooms.

Find concrete answers to your recruitment and training questions at Piscine Global Europe 2022

Since staff professionalisation and recruitment are two key issues for the sector, Piscine Global Europe is joining forces with the FPP to organise a first for 2022: a dedicated area within the exhibition called the **Jobs and Training Campus**. This area will bring together initial and continuing training organisations that will be on hand to answer questions from employers, employees, jobseekers, adults making a career change, and young people in education.

Focusing on continuing education, apprenticeship, career opportunities within the trade, and options for recruitment, the programme set up within the exhibition will feature:

- **workshops** providing concrete answers to specific issues: How do you write a job advert? How do you conduct a recruitment interview? And many more besides,
- **advice** for professionals from training and recruitment organisations,
- a job fair **presenting current vacancies in the sector**,
- **talks** on forward-looking and cutting-edge topics, at the Pool Design Arena.

This edition of 2022 Piscine Global Europe will be the opportunity to bring the pool and spa professionals together to meet, discuss and address the future challenges facing their industry.



More information is available on
www.piscine-global-europe.com

Follow the news
 events and the sector
 on

