



CriticalTalentMatch™ Analysis | Fit-Out Construction Manager

Vantage Data Centers: Phoenix Market

Candidate: Ben Solem

COMPETENCY AREA	CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT
Data Center Fit-Out Construction Management	OUTSTANDING: Exceptional 22-year track record with 11 years specializing in large-scale, critical infrastructure projects. Direct experience managing Apple Mesa Data Center retrofit and commissioning operations, Intel Chandler fabrication site under high-security clearances, and Aligned/Edgecore data center fit-out projects. Proven expertise managing teams of 70+ personnel through full project lifecycles from shell handover through commissioning and customer turnover. Experience with Fortune 500 clients including Apple, Google, Intel, and Edgecore demonstrates ability to meet customer-specific needs.
MEP Systems Installation & Oversight	OUTSTANDING: Comprehensive MEP expertise including installation oversight of switchgear, power distribution, medium voltage cable installations, ultra-pure water systems, and mechanical systems. Direct experience with complex grounding systems, energized equipment work, and multi-disciplinary team coordination. Core competencies explicitly include MEP & Electrical Systems oversight, commissioning, and integration across hyperscale environments. Experience with Hitachi Energy equipment, advanced power distribution systems, and critical infrastructure MEP coordination.
Project Schedule & Budget Management	EXCELLENT: Demonstrated project scheduling capabilities through management of aggressive timelines and multi-phase project coordination. Experience with project scheduling software, workflow optimization, and critical path management. Union leadership role provides experience coordinating multiple simultaneous projects and workforce allocation. Gap: Limited direct experience with large-scale project budget management and pay application review, but strong foundation through union financial oversight and project coordination experience.
Safety Management & OSHA Compliance	OUTSTANDING: Exceptional safety credentials including OSHA 30-Hour Construction Safety, MSHA Part 48 Certification, NFPA 70E Arc Flash Training, and BLS/CPR certification. As IBEW President, advanced comprehensive safety and wellness initiatives achieving measurable reductions in workplace injuries. Direct experience with Lockout-Tagout (LOTO) procedures, Method of Procedures (MOPs), and Risk Assessments. Experience with high-risk electrical scopes, complex grounding systems, and energized equipment work in mission-critical environments.
Quality Assurance/Quality Control Program Management	OUTSTANDING: Demonstrated QA/QC leadership with comprehensive protocol development and implementation. Experience maintaining 99.9%+ reliability through systematic root-cause analysis and corrective action implementation. Developed 20 detailed Method of Procedures (MOPs) for Apple data center project. Strong focus on safety culture, technical excellence, and regulatory compliance (NEC, OSHA, QA/QC protocols). Proven track record of zero-defect delivery standards and rigorous quality assurance program management.
Commissioning (Cx) Process Management: Levels 1-5	EXCELLENT: Direct commissioning experience through Apple Mesa Data Center comprehensive retrofit and commissioning operations, plus medium voltage cable installation projects with full commissioning processes. Experience with startup supervision, system testing oversight, and operational readiness preparation. Collaboration with equipment manufacturers like Vertiv and Hitachi Energy for seamless power distribution integration. Gap: No documented experience with formal Levels 1-5 commissioning protocols, but strong foundation in system testing and integrated commissioning processes.
Critical MEP Infrastructure Expertise	OUTSTANDING: Deep technical expertise in critical data center infrastructure including electrical distribution, power systems, fire/life-safety systems (Fire Alarm, FIKE), and mechanical systems coordination. Comprehensive understanding of switchgear, UPS systems, generators, and backup power systems through direct installation and commissioning experience. Experience with ultra-pure water systems, semiconductor-grade installations, and mission-critical infrastructure requiring 99.9%+ uptime standards.
Construction Drawing & Specification Interpretation	OUTSTANDING: Extensive experience with blueprint & schematic interpretation, specification implementation, and technical documentation review. Comprehensive understanding of NEC, NFPA, BOCA, and OSHA standards. Experience with construction documentation, change orders, and technical reviews aligned with industry standards. Strong foundation in preventive maintenance protocols and advanced troubleshooting capabilities for complex technical systems.
Contractor & Vendor Management	OUTSTANDING: Proven ability to coordinate multiple contractor teams simultaneously, including management of 70+ personnel across complex data center builds. Experience coordinating union staffing for hyperscale and colocation data centers, ensuring timely project delivery and full labor compliance. Direct experience managing relationships with general contractors, subcontractors, IT teams, engineers, and specialized vendors. Strong track record as primary on-site point of contact for contractor coordination.
Stakeholder Communication & Reporting	EXCELLENT: Outstanding stakeholder management through direct collaboration with Fortune 500 client engineering teams, union member representation, and cross-functional team coordination. Experience facilitating communication between contractors, municipalities, workforce development boards, and technical teams. Strong presentation and negotiation skills through union leadership representing 4,800 electricians. Gap: Limited experience with formal customer reporting and senior management presentations, but strong communication foundation.
Construction Management Software Proficiency	EXCELLENT: Comprehensive software proficiency including Procore Project Management, Bluebeam Document Management, project scheduling & reporting software, and documentation/reporting/QA/QC platforms. Strong technical foundation with advanced troubleshooting capabilities. Gap: No documented experience with Primavera P6 scheduling software, but has experience with project scheduling software and strong technical foundation for rapid adoption.
Submittal, RFI & Change Order Process Management	EXCELLENT: Strong change management experience through construction documentation, technical reviews, and contract administration. Union leadership provides experience with multi-year agreement modifications and complex dispute resolution. Experience coordinating changes across multiple contractor teams and maintaining project continuity. Developed comprehensive construction documentation and change order processes aligned with industry standards.
Risk Management & Critical Path Analysis	EXCELLENT: Strong problem-solving track record through systematic root-cause analysis, corrective action implementation, and dispute resolution as union leader. Experience managing high-risk electrical work, complex technical challenges, and emergency response protocols. Proven ability to maintain workforce stability and ensure uninterrupted project continuity during critical system installations and commissioning phases. Union leadership provides experience identifying and mitigating risks across multiple simultaneous projects.
Customer Handover & Closeout Documentation	EXCELLENT: Experience with comprehensive project closeout through Apple Mesa Data Center commissioning and turnover processes. Strong documentation capabilities through construction documentation, technical reviews, and compliance tracking. Experience preparing as-built documentation and system handover procedures. Gap: Limited experience with formal customer training and operations team handover, but strong foundation in project closeout and documentation management.
Mission-Critical Facility Experience	EXCELLENT: Direct experience with mission-critical facilities including data centers, semiconductor fabrication facilities (Intel Chandler), and high-security installations requiring 99.9%+ uptime standards. Understanding of mission-critical operational requirements, redundancy systems, and critical path considerations. Experience with hyperscale and colocation data center projects across Arizona's expanding tech sector.
Leadership & Team Management	OUTSTANDING: Proven leadership track record as IBEW Local 640 President managing 4,800 electricians and coordinating union operations. Experience managing teams of 70+ personnel through full project lifecycles. Strong team development capabilities with measurable safety improvements and workforce development success. Exceptional ability to manage diverse teams and stakeholders effectively in high-pressure, fast-paced environments.
Fast-Paced, High-Pressure Environment Experience	OUTSTANDING: Extensive experience managing multiple simultaneous projects in high-pressure environments through union leadership and complex data center builds. Proven ability to maintain quality and safety standards while meeting aggressive timelines. Experience coordinating emergency response protocols and maintaining project continuity under challenging conditions. Strong track record of delivering mission-critical projects on time.
Bachelor's Degree in Relevant Field	NO: Candidate does not have a formal Bachelor's degree in Construction Management, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or related field. However, has extensive technical education through IBEW Apprenticeship Program and specialized technical training that provides equivalent competency.
5-7 Years Construction Management Experience	OUTSTANDING: Exceeds requirement with 22 years total experience including 11 years specializing in large-scale, critical infrastructure projects. Demonstrates significantly more experience than minimum requirement with proven track record in data center and mission-critical facility construction management.
3+ Years Data Center/Mission-Critical Experience	OUTSTANDING: Exceeds requirement with 11 years of direct experience in critical infrastructure projects including data centers, semiconductor facilities, and mission-critical installations. Direct experience with hyperscale data centers and Fortune 500 client requirements demonstrates deep expertise in mission-critical facility construction.



Qualifying Criteria Reference

QUALIFYING CRITERIA	QUANTIFYING SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF QUALIFYING CRITERIA
Outstanding	11	EXCEEDS CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS: Demonstrated mastery and leadership in complex contexts AND has the Majority of Preferred and Beneficial Capabilities
Excellent	10	MEETS CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS: Fully capable with consistent high performance AND has Several of the Preferred and Beneficial Capabilities
Strong	9	MEETS MOST CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS: Competent with occasional gaps or developing areas AND/OR Several of the Preferred and Beneficial Capabilities
Moderate	8	MEETS SOME CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS: Demonstrated exposure but not full ownership AND/OR has Several of the Preferred and Beneficial Capabilities
Basic	5	LIMITED CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS EXPERIENCE: Familiar with concepts or tools but lacks direct application AND/OR has Direct Experience with Preferred and Beneficial Capabilities in Similar Systems or Job Functions
Yes	10	CONFIRMED: Certification, training, or clear experience is verifiably present
No	0	NOT CONFIRMED: Certification or relevant experience not indicated

CriticalTalentMatch™ Summary

CRITICALTALENTMATCH™ RATING: ★★★★★ (5 out of 5 Stars)

CRITICALTALENTMATCH™ GRADE: 98 (100-Point Scale)

Overall Assessment Summary

STRENGTHS:

- OUTSTANDING qualifications in 10 competency areas: Data Center Fit-Out Management, MEP Systems Installation, Safety Management, QA/QC Program Management, Critical MEP Infrastructure Expertise, Construction Drawing Interpretation, Contractor Management, Leadership & Team Management, Fast-Paced Environment Experience, and Experience Requirements (exceeds 5-7 years and 3+ years requirements)
- EXCELLENT capabilities in 7 areas including Project Schedule Management, Commissioning Process Management, Stakeholder Communication, Software Proficiency, and Mission-Critical Facility Experience
- DIRECT DATA CENTER FIT-OUT EXPERIENCE documented on Fortune 500 client projects including Apple, Google, Intel, and Edgecore
- COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY CERTIFICATIONS including OSHA 30, MSHA Part 48, NFPA 70E, with proven track record of safety culture development
- EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE LEVEL with 22 years total and 11 years in critical infrastructure: significantly exceeds minimum requirements
- PROVEN LEADERSHIP IN HIGH-PRESSURE ENVIRONMENTS managing 70+ personnel teams and 4,800 union electricians

REMAINING DEVELOPMENT AREAS:

- Bachelor's degree requirement: lacks formal degree but has extensive equivalent technical education and certifications
- Primavera P6 proficiency: has project scheduling experience but needs specific software training
- Formal customer reporting experience: strong communication skills but needs development in customer presentation and reporting
- Levels 1-5 commissioning protocols: has commissioning experience but needs formal process training

RECOMMENDATION:

EXCEPTIONALLY QUALIFIED - IMMEDIATE HIRE RECOMMENDATION:

Ben Solem represents an outstanding match for the Vantage Data Centers Fit-Out Construction Manager role.

His combination of:

- Direct hyperscale data center fit-out experience with Fortune 500 clients
- Comprehensive MEP systems installation and oversight expertise
- Exceptional safety management and QA/QC program development capabilities
- Proven leadership managing large teams (70+ personnel) in mission-critical environments
- Outstanding technical competencies in critical data center infrastructure
- Experience significantly exceeding minimum requirements (22 vs. 5-7 years)

Creates a compelling profile that exceeds expectations for this role. The candidate's extensive practical experience and technical expertise more than compensate for the formal degree gap.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

- Immediate placement with accelerated onboarding focused on Vantage-specific processes and customer reporting protocols
- Leverage exceptional technical expertise immediately while providing Primavera P6 training
- Utilize proven leadership capabilities for contractor management and team coordination
- Provide focused training in formal Levels 1-5 commissioning protocols and customer presentation skills
- Consider for senior/lead roles given exceptional background and proven ability to exceed requirements

COMPREHENSIVE GAP ANALYSIS

Critical Gaps:

- 1. **Bachelor's degree requirement:** Lacks formal degree but extensive technical education provides equivalent competency
- 2. **Primavera P6 proficiency:** Has project scheduling experience but needs specific software training

Moderate Gaps:

- 1. **Formal customer reporting protocols:** Strong communication foundation but needs development in customer presentation formats
- 2. **Levels 1-5 commissioning process:** Has practical commissioning experience but needs formal process training

Minor Gaps:

- 1. **Large-scale budget management:** Strong foundation but could benefit from formal financial controls training
- 2. **Pay application review processes:** Good financial background but needs specific construction payment procedures training

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESUME & LINKED IN ENHANCEMENT

Resume Improvements:

- 1. **Emphasize data center fit-out specifics:** Highlight shell-to-customer-ready project experience and turnover processes
- 2. **Quantify MEP project scope:** Add specific details about switchgear, UPS systems, generators, and CRAH units managed
- 3. **Highlight commissioning leadership:** Detail system testing, startup supervision, and integrated systems commissioning experience
- 4. **Add budget management scope:** Quantify project values, change orders managed, and financial oversight responsibilities
- 5. **Emphasize customer-facing experience:** Detail direct client collaboration and Fortune 500 customer relationship management
- 6. **Include risk management examples:** Provide specific examples of critical path protection and risk mitigation strategies

LinkedIn Profile Enhancements:

- 1. **Create data center fit-out portfolio:** showcasing specific MEP installations and commissioning achievements
- 2. **Develop technical thought leadership:** around mission-critical facility construction and safety management
- 3. **Highlight Vantage-relevant keywords:** including "fit-out," "commissioning," "MEP systems," and "mission-critical"
- 4. **Showcase safety achievements:** with specific metrics and safety culture development examples
- 5. **Build connections:** with Vantage employees, data center industry professionals, and Fortune 500 contacts
- 6. **Add customer testimonials:** from Apple, Intel, and other Fortune 500 engineering teams

VALIDATION QUESTIONS FOR INTRODUCTORY CALL

- 1. "Describe your experience managing a complete data center fit-out project from shell handover through customer turnover. Walk me through your process for coordinating MEP installations, commissioning, and final handover documentation."
- 2. "Tell me about your most complex MEP coordination challenge involving switchgear, UPS systems, and cooling infrastructure. How did you manage the installation sequence and ensure system integration while maintaining schedule compliance?"
- 3. "How do you implement and manage a comprehensive QA/QC program for mission-critical MEP installations? Can you provide an example of how your QA/QC processes prevented a critical issue or ensured zero-defect delivery?"
- 4. "Describe your approach to managing the commissioning process for critical data center systems. How do you coordinate factory witness testing, startup procedures, and integrated systems testing with multiple stakeholders?"
- 5. "Walk me through your experience managing project budgets, pay applications, and change orders. How do you ensure financial controls while maintaining aggressive project timelines?"
- 6. "Tell me about a time when you had to protect the critical path on a data center project. What risks did you identify, and what mitigation strategies did you implement to keep the project on schedule?"
- 7. "How do you ensure safety compliance and enforce LOTO, MOPs, and risk assessment procedures with multiple contractors working on energized systems in a mission-critical environment?"
- 8. "Describe your experience coordinating with design and engineering teams to resolve constructability issues during the fit-out phase. Can you provide an example of a technical challenge you solved?"
- 9. "How do you manage customer expectations and communicate project status to both internal stakeholders and external customers? What reporting formats and communication protocols do you use?"
- 10. "Tell me about your experience managing teams in fast-paced, high-pressure environments where multiple projects are running simultaneously. How do you maintain quality and safety standards while meeting aggressive deadlines?"