

Choosing an Air System Vendor: Technical Competence



What questions should you ask to assess whether your vendor has the technical chops necessary for your project?

This week, the focus is on technical competence. It's important to choose a scrap system vendor staffed by people who know what they're doing. But how can you tell? Many people in the market for an air system simply don't know enough about the subject in order to assess whether a prospective vendor is qualified. Some vendors take advantage of that.

At G.F. Puhl, we believe that knowledge is power. The more you know about what these systems are designed to do, the better your decisions will be.

When you're assessing a prospective vendor, ask these questions.

- What experience do your engineers have designing systems that will be moving material?
- Describe those projects and the challenges you faced. Ask for contact information for those customers so you can contact them to verify the vendor's claims.
- How many engineers on staff have at least bachelor's degrees in an engineering discipline? Ask for a list of employees showing degrees and universities.

In short, technical competence matters. A vendor that doesn't understand the laws of physics as they apply to moving material combined with decades of experience in the field may not be able to design a system that works properly—or at all. Unfortunately, the air-conveyed scrap industry is filled with HVAC and general mechanical contractors who don't fully understand the difference between moving air and moving material with air. Few have degreed engineers on staff that can design a plant-wide system that will keep your operation running reliably and safely to the NFPA and OSHA requirements for systems that handle combustible dust.

When it comes to technical know-how, G.F. Puhl is a world leader. Our degreed engineers have more than 50 years of combined design experience, and our engineering department has over 100 years of design and drafting experience.

If you ask the questions above but still aren't sure whether the vendor has the technical skill to be a good long-term partner, give G.F. Puhl a call or [email us](#). We would be happy to offer a second opinion.