

A GUIDE TO A CAREER IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Comment [r1]: Use hard line breaks to create space is not a "best practice". Hard line breaks are used by different software applications and are interpreted different ways (translation software, e.g.).

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Introduction

If you have ever checked out the local advertisements for appealing deals, gone to the store and bought a favorite item at a incredibly low price, then supply chain managers are the ones to thank for a job well done. Supply chain management (SCM) consists of all the activities needed in order to get a product into consumer's hands - from the selection of raw materials up until when the consumer pulls out their credit card and takes the final product home. Their responsibilities include everything from planning, forecasting, purchasing, product assembly, moving, storing and keeping track of a product as it makes it onto store shelves. Many companies such as, Target, Hyundai, Apple and BP, consider supply chain management as a key factor of their success by making it possible to deliver their product better, faster and cheaper¹.

According to the University of Tennessee's Supply Chain Research Group, Supply chain management is

"The systematic, strategic coordination of the traditional business functions within a particular company and across businesses within the supply chain, for the purposes of improving the long-term performance of the individual companies and the supply chain as a whole. SCM is a management process that deals with inbound and outbound flows from the perspective of the focal organization, its suppliers, and its customers."²

A career in supply chain management offers high salaries, exciting challenges, problem solving, innovation, information system involvement and global opportunities. This field also, creates a satisfying career goal because of the ability to benefit society by improving the standard of living.

Comment [r2]: This is styled as "Normal" but the format is used fairly consistently throughout the paper. It would be better to create or adapt an existing style to this format.

Comment [r3]: Block quote should be indented on left and right both.

Comment [r4]: url in footnote 1 is a broken link.

¹ According to information from careersinsupplychainmanagement.org

² University of Tennessee's Supply Chain Research Group definition as stated on careersinsupplychainmangement.org

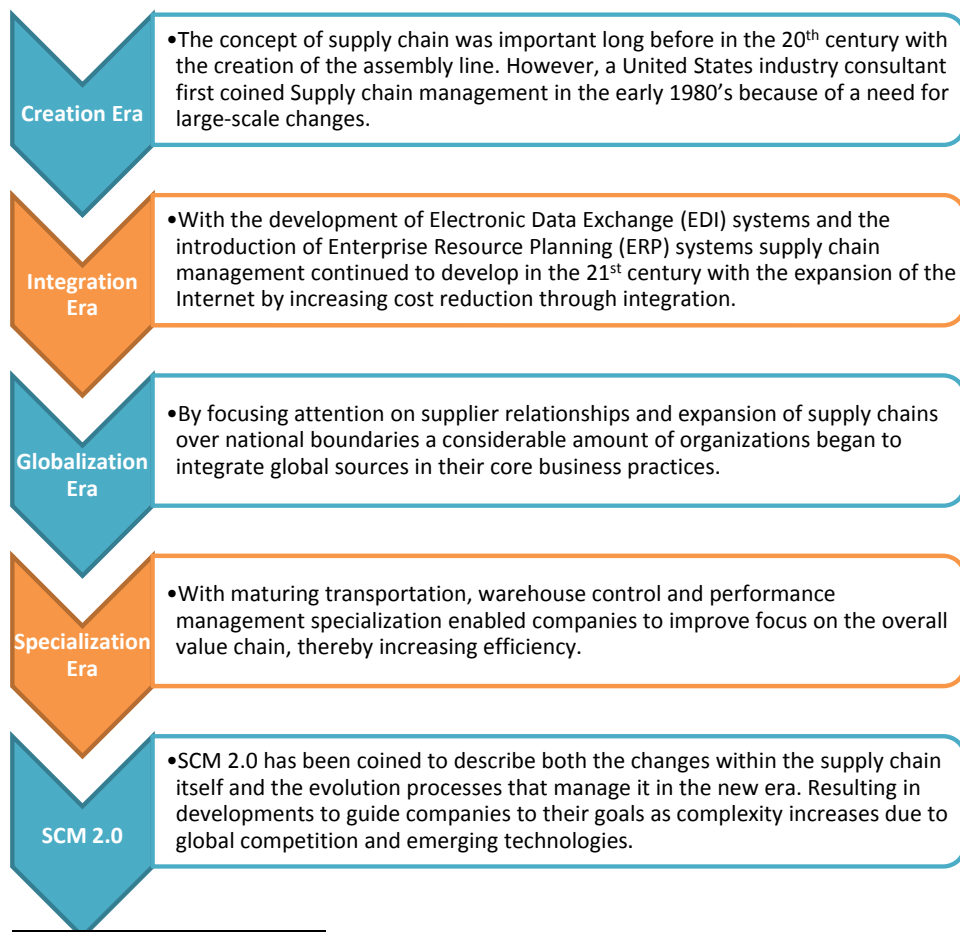
Progression of Supply Chain Management

Comment [r5]: Paper is 1542 words. That is about 542 too many.

Fifty years ago it was evident that once a business produces their product and places it in store that ultimately it would be purchased rather quickly. Fast-forward to 2012 technologies continue to evolve, markets are globalizing and economies stabilize, breaking down previous boundaries. With the world becoming smaller and smaller each day many companies have began to transform certain aspects within. They have to carefully plan, since their items become obsolete quickly, making it important to remain innovative, lean and responsive to the market.

Major movements in Supply Chain Management Evolution³

Comment [r6]: Nice graphic. This heading/title for the graphic should be a caption. Then you could refer the reader to the graphic in the text of your paper.



³ Major Movements in Supply Chain Management Evolution created from data provided on careersinsupplychainmanagement.org showing development over the previous decades

Current Growth and Outlook

Supply chain management is a huge and efficient career path. Supply chain management majors compete for a variety of positions ranging from logistics and transportation to consulting purchasing to planning operations. Growth varies by industry type consisting of manufacturing, retailing, health care, banking, government and a countless number of others.

The functions included by supply chain management are expected to increase and the needs for supply chain management benefits rise. Still in its infancy, businesses have barely touched the surface in terms of the advantages obtained through refined management. Technological innovation has enhanced and will continue to change the way businesses interact with one another. There is an expectancy of increase in the use of enterprise resource planning systems to link all business decision-making to a integrated database. Radio frequency identification (RFID) technology is dramatically changing how products are tracked and secured through the chain. Global positioning systems (GPS) are enabling transportation companies to track their trucks, trains and ships moving goods. Some changes are regulatory in kind such as, the customs trade partnership department against terrorism (C-TPAT), which was initiated, by the United States department of homeland security in order to enhance the security of their supply chains. All resulting in an enormous group of supply chain related jobs that continue to expand.

Comment [r7]: Not sure what is meant by an "efficient career path". To me it implies that there is one clear way to get to a career in supply chain, while I believe there are numerous ways you might be able to get there.

Qualifications for Pursuing Supply Chain Management

Educational Planning⁴

There are a few required qualifications needed to grow within this business. There are many organizations that will accept a high school diploma as enough to start in an entry level positions. In order to climb up the supply chain ladder, obtaining a bachelor's degree program and taking a few business courses is essential and for those top-level jobs a master's may be required.

Recommended Training⁵

Additional training to enhance a resume would be becoming a certified purchasing manager (CPM). By passing the CPM exam with three years experience and a bachelor's degree one can enhance their knowledge, career and earning power over the competition.

⁴ Educational preparation provided by information from Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Organization
Suggested training experience from Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Organization

Essential Skills⁶

- **Analytical skills:** to evaluate suppliers SCM must analyze options and select the best combination of price and quality
- **Decision-making skills:** make informed and timely decisions in choosing products that will sell
- **Math skills:** must possess basic math skills to compare prices from different suppliers and ensure the best deal
- **Negotiating skills:** often must negotiate the terms of a contract with suppliers
- **Interpersonal skills:** have confidence in communicating products in order to obtain a successful deal
- **Intrapersonal skills:** ability to work under pressure and remain flexible to changing demands and schedules
- **Organizational skills:** must be able to multi task and prioritize responsibilities
- **Technology skills:** computer competency enables business in a supply chain to communicate faster and effectively.

Comment [r8]: It would be better to have a brief lead-in statement or paragraph to the list of essential skills.

Working Conditions⁷

Work Environment

The environment of a supply chain manager's work place is similar to an office, well lit and open. Most supply chain managers work full time and overtime is common in this field. According to "", "in 2010 about 30% of purchasing managers and 20% of buyers worked more than forty hours a week.

Daily Responsibilities

Supply chain management jobs involve a combination of planning, purchasing, storing and distributing of products among their stores.

When planning involvement in meetings with sales and finance is done to develop a master production strategy. Having to monitor reports on inventory and ensuring data accuracy is done to maximize the use of their value systems. Resulting in improvement methods in the system and integration of the manufacturing process.

Having to negotiate, implement and maintain agreements with suppliers to ensure effective relationships to develop better purchasing. As well as, influence suppliers on delivery time, quality and cost as defined in the company's set goals.

Managing inventory performance of warehouse operations by evaluating inputs and controls of the ordering process in order to guarantee that inventory levels meet the market's demand. As well as, adjust order quantities to push cost reduction in transport, warehouse and carrying expenses.

⁶ Suggested skills from the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Organization

⁷ Provided from the Bureau of Labor Statistics

At a supervisory level one must carry out duties in agreement with the companies policies. Requiring management related callings such as, interviewing and hiring of new employees, assigning direct work, appraising performance, addressing complaints and solving problems.

Career Development

Potential for Progression

There is an abundance of different job opportunities in almost every industry from health care, energy, retail and government career, advancement is achievable with hard work. This fast-paced, global field offers a tremendously high-demand of employment with a limited supply of potential workers. Conveying motivation, determination and work ethic climbing up the career ladder of supply chain management is much less stressful in relation to other careers feeling pressure of low demand.

Advancement through Levels in Supply Chain Management⁸

Comment [r9]: This should be a table caption.

	Responsibility	Positions	Average Salary
Early Career (0-4 years)	Explain phenomena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply Chain Analyst Purchasing Agent Demand Planner 	\$32,000
Mid Career (5-10 years)	Manage tactical design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager Purchasing Manager Supply Chain Manager 	\$56,200
Peak Career (11+ years)	Lead strategic initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Leader Senior Purchasing Manager Senior Supply Chain Manager 	\$95,100+

⁸ Advancement through Level in Supply Chain Management created from data found on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website conveying a standard version of career development through the supply chain management career path

Nature of Supply Chain Management

While supply chain management is essential to any company success and customer satisfaction it also plays a critical role in society.

Like all companies, the supply chain departments have felt the pressure of criticism from environmentalist groups and cultural organizations.

Current Challenges⁹

- **Environmentally damaging chains:** Disagreements with transportation processes damaging and polluting the world.
- **Emerging economies:** Differences among countries ethics and belief systems creating cross-culture sensitivity.
- **Uncertainty:** Vagueness of strategies failing since not everything works out as planned.

Supply chains have recognized these complications and are creating departments solely focused on alleviating them.

Benefits to Society¹⁰

Since these complications are improving daily, positive outcomes of supply chain management outweigh the negatives. In relation to our society the capabilities and knowledge of this field are used to support medical missions, conduct disaster relief operations and help evolve the quality of our daily lives. For example, when Hurricane Katrina flooded New Orleans, LA a massive rescue operation based on supply chain methods helped distribute millions of necessities to sufferers of the storm.

CONCLUSION

Whether dealing with day-to-day product flows or dealing with an unexpected natural disaster, supply chain experts roll up their sleeves and get busy. They diagnose problems, creatively work around disruptions and figure out how to move essential products to people in need as efficiently possible.

⁹ Information collected from the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Organization on challenges encountered

¹⁰ Data collected about benefits supply chain management has on society from Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Organization

REFERENCES

"Careers in Supply Chain Management." *Careers in Supply Chain Management*. Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2011. Web. 12 Mar. 2012. <<http://www.careersinsupplychain.org/>>.

"Supply Chain Career Information." *Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals*. Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2011. Web. 1 Apr. 2012. <<http://cscmp.org/membership/membership-lp.asp>>.

"U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010. Web. 1 Apr. 2012. <<http://bls.gov/>>.

Comment [r10]: These should be EndNotes created in Word. Whatever the standard format for the citations is used, should be stated in a footnote on the first page of the report where a citation reference is created.