

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT



Many job opportunities exist in supply chain management, and they frequently transform as products and the marketplace change. Stay abreast of the field through participation in the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals. The supply chain includes: marketing, product design, suppliers, manufacturing, logistics, customers, and reverse logistics. Jobs exist within all of these functions and processes. Majors in supply chain management, logistics, transportation, and industrial engineering are particularly helpful to gain entry into this functional area.

Information technology, analytical, and quantitative skills are important in supply chain management. Develop flexibility, negotiation skills, and the ability to make sound decisions. Join student professional organizations and seek campus leadership positions. Complete one or more internships to gain related experience. Learn to work well on a team and to work effectively with a wide variety of people. Conduct informational interviews with professionals in jobs of interest to learn more about which functional areas and work environments are most appealing.

Some organizations may not have a "logistics" department. Also look for positions in operations, manufacturing, purchasing, or marketing. Be willing to relocate to have more job opportunities. Develop and utilize a personal network of contacts. Once in a position, find a mentor. Research relevant industry credentials such as the Certified Purchasing Manager (CPM) and Certification in Production and Inventory Management (CPIM). Many professionals start their supply chain management careers as analysts. Consider earning an MBA after gaining a few years of work experience to reach the highest levels.

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

- Planning and forecasting
- Purchasing
- Supplier sourcing
- Operations management
- Materials management
- Inventory management
- Vendor inventory management
- Rate analysis
- Pricing
- Sales
- Marketing
- Customer service
- Account management
- Systems management
- Transportation management

Trucking and moving companies
Air freight and air carriers
Rail freight and rail carriers
Ocean freight carriers
Ship lines
Shipping companies
Transportation companies
Pipeline companies
Banks and financial institutions
Hospitals
Hotels and restaurants
Educational institutions
Department of Defense
Armed Forces
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Department of Transportation

COMMON EMPLOYERS



PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



APICS: American Production and Inventory Control Society
American Trucking Association
Association of American Railroads
Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals
Institute for Supply Chain Management
MHI



STRATEGIES ON ENTERING THE FIELD

- Many entry-level positions as analysts, management trainees, or first line supervisors are available with manufacturers and retailers in particular.
- Develop strong analytical and computer skills and a logical approach to problem solving. Attention to detail is also important in this field.
- Take courses in statistics and computer systems.
- Learn to communicate with different types of people across functional areas.
- Gain experience and build skills through a supply chain internship.
- Get involved in student organizations and professional associations. Seek positions of leadership.
- Obtain proficiency with enterprise resource planning (ERP) software like Oracle or SAP.
- For government positions, maintain a high GPA and participate in a government internship program.
- To work in the armed forces, consider participating in ROTC.
- For global supply chain management positions: Plan to start in domestic positions and work toward international assignments. Learn about import/export laws. Become familiar with how US Customs and other organizations regulate trade. Cultivate foreign language skills and cultural awareness.
- Develop strong technical and analytical skills.
- Learn to work well and communicate with different types of people.
- Gain experience with logistics and transportation through an internship.
- Be willing to start in a hands-on position, such as a loading dock supervisor for a trucking company. This allows employees to learn the business from the bottom up.
- Become familiar with Department of Transportation regulations.
- Understand that you may work long, irregular hours in this field.