

Careers in Supply Chain Management & Operations

Operations and supply chain managers/consultants typically work with manufacturers, retailers, and transportation service providers as they advise these companies on matters such as understanding and planning for product demand, managing company inventory, planning production, and scheduling delivery.

Overview:

Supply Chain Management and Operations is a fast-paced, global field that offers tremendous employment opportunities. Supply chain managers are in high demand but in limited supply, meaning that you'll have wide-ranging supply chain management career options and advancement prospects.

Logistics/supply chain jobs vary - at one end of the spectrum are **operations-focused positions**. These action-oriented roles involve the day-to-day management of people and product flows and are usually located in a distribution facility, port, terminal, or operations center.

At the other end of the spectrum are **planning-oriented positions**. These office-based positions focus on supply management, demand forecasting, inventory control, performance analysis, or troubleshooting customer problems.

Supply chain managers have a tremendous impact on the success of an organization. These managers are engaged in every facet of the business process – planning, purchasing, production, transportation, storage & distribution, marketing, customer service, and more. Their performance helps organizations control expenses, boost sales, and maximize profits.

Sample Supply Chain Job Titles:

Supply Chain Manager	Production Analyst	Logistics Analyst
Production Planner	Account Specialist	Warehouse Operations Manager
Buyer/Purchasing Agent	Operations Research Analyst	Inventory Manager
Global Sourcing Coordinator	Customer Order Manager	Logistics Manager
Procurement Assistant	Inventory Control Supervisor	Product Buyer
Operations Manager	Transportation Analyst	Freight Coordinator
Estimator	Distribution Manager	Supply Chain Analyst
Supply Chain Planner	Supply Chain Engineer	Receiving Inspector
Procurement Manager	Receiving Coordinator	Receiving Supervisor

AMR's 2010 Top Supply Chains

1. Apple
2. Procter & Gamble
3. Cisco Systems
4. Wal-Mart Stores
5. Dell
6. PepsiCo
7. Samsung Electronics
8. IBM
9. Research In Motion
10. Amazon.com
11. McDonald's
12. Microsoft
13. The Coca-Cola Co.
14. Johnson & Johnson
15. HP
16. Nike
17. Colgate Palmolive
18. Intel
19. Nokia
20. Tesco
21. Unilever
22. Lockheed Martin
23. Inditex
24. Best Buy
25. Schlumberger

Key Skills:

- Critical reasoning skills
- Work well in teams
- Attention to detail
- Project management skills
- Strong writing and presentation abilities
- Ability to “think outside the box”
- Time management/Ability to meet deadlines
- Work well in a diverse workforce
- Proficient in financial and statistical analysis
- Strong interpersonal skills, inquisitive, and persuasive
- Well organized and flexible

The keys to a Successful Career Include:

- Building transferable skills that will serve you well in multiple positions
- Learning to be a strong decision maker and accountable for your actions
- Being a team player and a good colleague (i.e., people want to work for/with you)
- Having some fun in the process...

(you'll burn out quickly if you don't enjoy what you do!)

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Career Paths in Supply Chain:

Supply chain management career paths can take a variety of directions. Recent college graduates, depending on experience and skills, can be hired directly into a supply chain manager role or may start as a junior buyer and move into a supply chain position. Supply chain managers can move laterally into other positions both within and outside of procurement or they can move up into management positions.

Career Paths in Operations:

Traditionally, operations management was considered to be plant management at a manufacturing organization. This is no longer true. Operations jobs are not limited to managing a production line in a factory. As organizations are developing complex and global supply chains, challenging and exciting opportunities in supply chain management are opening up. Additionally, there has been a marked increase in the number of operations people employed in the service sector, and many recent graduates have found jobs in consulting.

Interview Process:

- Situational questions are quite popular in supply chain/operations interviews
- The hiring manager decides whether interviews are one-on-one or in a group format
- Show genuine enthusiasm about the position and the company; Many qualified candidates get passed over for jobs because they do not convey their interest in the position well

Potential Entry-Level Salaries for those in Supply Chain Management/ Future Earnings:

In 2010, AU SCMN graduates on average were offered starting salaries of \$41,976, the national starting salary for college grads in distribution, logistics, operations management and supply chain management in spring 2010 was \$49,280.

Location	Pay Period	2009				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$23.35	\$31.78	\$44.52	\$59.22	\$74.41
	Yearly	\$48,600	\$66,100	\$92,600	\$123,200	\$154,800
Alabama	Hourly	\$22.64	\$30.67	\$41.48	\$52.49	\$62.64
	Yearly	\$47,100	\$63,800	\$86,300	\$109,200	\$130,300

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Survey, Alabama Wage Information

Working Conditions in Supply Chain/Operations Management:

- Accuracy or being exact in the job is considered very important
- Most of the workday is spent indoors
- Operations management assignments are often at manufacturing plant facilities; Upward promotion may require relocation to other plants throughout a career
- Supply chain positions exist both at headquarters and the manufacturing facility

Common Mistakes Made in the Job Search Process:

- Overestimate job availability
- Spend all time networking with 2 or 3 companies, Cast a wider net!
- Ignore company culture/fit
- Don't embrace past experience for leverage
- Don't tailor/customize their resume for each job

Websites:

- www.supplychainjobs.com
- www.jobsinlogistics.com
- www.cscmp.org
- <http://supply.chain.jobs.topusajobs.com>
- www.manufacturing.net
- www.dice.com

Professional Associations:

- Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (www.cscmp.org)
- Supply Chain Council (www.supply-chain.org)
- The Association for Operations Management (www.apics.org)
- The Logistic and Supply Chain Management Society (www.lscms.org)
- American Production Inventory Control Society (www.APICS.org)
- Institute of Supply Management (www.ISM.ws/)