

A career in logistics: thought about it?

Many school, college or even university leavers may have already decided on their career. Stephen Maskell wonders if logistics was in the mix



Like any industry, new talent is imperative in order to keep the discipline flowing, and none more so than the logistics sector.

Attracting the right people to our industry is paramount, and even more so now, with the pressures of “green” and “lean” or “agile” operating being required to stay competitive.

Yet to attract new talent, we need to quantify logistics and place its market relevance into perspective.

The world of tangible trading would not be able to operate without the ability to exchange goods for revenue, and therefore the importance of effective and slick logistics networks is high. Many companies are now using the logistical element of the supply chain to gain significant competitive advantage.

The on-shelf price of goods is still important within business positioning, however, a business with a lean and agile logistics set-up will perform well within a highly competitive world. Therefore, having the right people within our sector is imperative.

That said, when asking a school, college or university student what path they would like their careers to follow, would logistics be in there? Probably not, so we need to do something about it.

I, (like many other logisticians) have “fallen” into the industry from grass roots level and worked hard to gain senior status. How can the industry attract a vital new generation of logistics leaders?

Logistics needs to be exiting to attract young people, yet to position our sector effectively to students or individuals wishing to make a career change, we need to actually understand what makes people attracted to a role or sector. Is it the salary, surroundings,

international travel, scope for progression?

Logistics offers opportunities for all these, so the question is: are we marketing logistics correctly? The marketing needs to start at the careers guidance services in schools and colleges across the UK. Logistics needs to be pushed into their programme of “headline opportunities”, along with medicine, law, finance and business and so on.

Academia also needs to provide a support function for people wishing to take the route into logistics. As I have experienced, over the past decade there has been positive development within the field, with certificate, diploma and degree-level qualifications now available through not only independent organisations, but, quite rightly, our universities.

Over the coming years, the process of attracting the right people into the logistics sector will be an increasingly hot topic. The future could be to interface the industry further upstream, in our schools and colleges, which should place our industry in with the headline career opportunities.

Clearly, logistics is expanding further, not only to move increasing volumes of current and new commodities, but in light of the pressures of green logistics, the use of road, rail, ocean, air and also inland waterways. This will present a range of opportunities for new and innovative logisticians.

The importance of attracting new people to a career in logistics is vital to the world of trade, as the new age of logisticians will be those who lead not only our industry, but a significant segment of the business world onwards.

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