

BOOK REVIEW

The Quintessence of Supply Chain Management: What You Really Need to Know to Manage Your Processes in Procurement, Manufacturing, Warehousing and Logistics

Rolf G. Poluha

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Reviewed by: Alexander Franco

Faculty of the Graduate School of Business, Stamford International University

Email: alexander.franco@stamford.edu

The past ten years has witnessed a remarkable transformation in the study of logistics, as logistical processes have evolved from being seen as faddish or esoteric into a subject matter of increasing importance and focus within businesses. The transformation has manifested itself, in part, in the proliferation of professional certifications in supply chain management as well as many magazines and journals addressing that subject. In the business world, executive positions such as *Supply Chain President* and *Chief Supply Chain Officer* (CSCO) have been introduced to deal with logistical considerations.

This book was written with the intention of conveying potentially difficult material on supply chain management in a clear and concise fashion without dropping the substance. The author, Dr. Rolf G. Poluha, was well-suited for this task due to his prior practical experiences in supply chain management in the diverse fields of telecommunications, manufacturing, defense, aerospace, consumer goods, and other industries.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first defines what is meant by supply chain management and presents an evolution of its development. Within this section, the author provides practical examples of supply chain logistics by highlighting companies, as case studies, Lucent Technologies (for lack of adaptability), Cisco (for lack of consideration for interests of supply chain partners), and Hewlett-Packard (for insufficient responsiveness).

The second part of the book looks at managerial, planning, and internal controls regarding procurement, manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics. It provides a discussion on how to measure supply chain performance and also provides an examination of the Supply Chain Reference Model (SCOR). This is followed by practical examples of how to analyze and optimize material flows.

The third section of the book deals with innovative concepts for designing and optimizing supply chains. The innovative approaches look at making supply chains more adaptable, reducing cost, improving quality through business process optimization, and examining trendsetting supply chains concepts that focus on performance benchmarking and best practices.

There is a short but extremely valuable and well-written conclusion that ties in the main points of this work. The author points out two balancing acts involved in supply chain management. The first is a balance of stock, production, and transportation capacity (the supply side) with the needs of customers (the demand side). This balancing act results in a dynamic and evolutionary process. The same also is true for balancing between standardization and customization to improve and expand one's competitive position. Continuous adaptation and changeability are parts of a proactive, ongoing analysis involving the synchronization of customer demand with supply chain competencies.

The author needs to be commended for refreshingly clear writing and for the well-thought-out organization of the book. Throughout this work, the author presented shaded boxes of text to provide further elaboration of principles, laws, and other items referenced in the general text. An example is the *compensation law of planning*, found in Chapter One. The shaded boxes are definitional in focus and each one provided bibliographical references for the reader to pursue more information. Poluha's book would be ideal as a textbook for an introductory class. The combination of thematic material and the practicality of case studies provide a good balance toward mastering, analyzing, and applying the material.