

Viewpoint:

Tackling the Global Skills Shortage

The UK Warehousing Association (UKWA) recently warned that logistics companies may soon face a serious skills shortage as too little money is currently being spent on the next generation of supply chain workers. With other countries around the world facing similar challenges, Shane D'Aprile, Product Associate at CargoWise looks at the barriers to entry and the opportunities the sector offers to the next generation of workers.

Having worked in the industry for the best part of 15 years, I can say with absolute certainty that the logistics sector is one of the most fascinating and diverse industries that anyone can work in. I started my career in customer service and since then have held a variety of positions in different parts of the supply chain from import/export to freight forwarding and most recently IT software solutions.

Whenever I meet with new recruits I challenge them to look around and find something that hasn't at some point been part of the supply chain – they can't. The point is that logistics impacts every facet of everyday life and as such is a rewarding and challenging industry that offers tremendous career paths for the next generation of workers. Still the problem exists that fewer people see logistics as their sector of choice.



With the right people and a skilled workforce, the logistics sector can continue to grow and drive economics around the world.

“The logistics sector is crucially important to the UK economy as it underpins virtually all economic activity. Essentially, without logistics nothing happens.”

Shane D'Aprile
Product Associate

I completely agree with the UKWA that more funding needs to be introduced to the sector to help support apprentices and alike, but also, as an industry we need to collectively improve the way that we promote ourselves. When you tell someone that you work in the logistics sector, all too often people paint a picture in their mind of lorry driver and nothing more. While there's absolutely nothing wrong with being a lorry driver, the point is that the industry is so much more than that. From sales and marketing to finance and IT, the logistics sector has a range of opportunities for the next generation of workers.

The UK isn't the only country with this issue. The US and many other European countries are suffering similar problems too. In Australia the industry has recognized an emerging skills shortage - with 85% of firms claiming they have increased salaries in an attempt to attract new workers.

As well as offering a range of interesting professions, the logistics sector is one of the few industries that present truly global opportunities for staff. By its very nature of moving goods from one place to another, most firms have offices and opportunities all around the world – something that is of growing appeal to students today.

We are seeing some progress. In the case of the UK, the National Skills Academy for Logistics has confirmed funds up to £3.25m will be available through the Skills Funding Agency and will be matched by employer investment in the Skills Academy. Used correctly, this will go a long way in ensuring that as an industry we start recruiting the best people – but money alone won't solve things. Employers from all parts of the logistics industry have a responsibility to do their bit in educating

potential employees, training new recruits, and creating opportunities for them to learn about the industry and the opportunities it offers. Only then will we start to shift perception and solve the long term issue.

With the right people and a skilled workforce, the logistics sector can continue to grow and drive economies around the world. Perhaps Perry Glading, a member of the employer team at the National Skills Academy for Logistics summed it up best, saying: The logistics sector is crucially important to the UK economy as it underpins virtually all economic activity. Essentially, without logistics nothing happens.”

ABOUT CARGOWISE®

CargoWise is a global leader in logistics technology solutions that improve visibility, efficiency, quality of service and profitability. CargoWise is renowned for its next-generation solutions, including ediEnterprise, the industry's only single integrated platform supply chain logistics management system with truly global capability.

More than 80,000 licenses across a customer community of 4,000 sites in 75+ countries move goods through the global supply chain daily using CargoWise solutions. Its team of more than 230 employees operates worldwide from offices across the U.S., Europe and Asia. For more information visit www.cargowise.com

CargoWise

www.cargowise.com