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Sustainability in **Global Logistics**



- ➔ Is air cargo sustainable?
- ➔ **Pharma delivery – taking it seriously**
- ➔ Networks: what's in a name?
- ➔ **Preparing for post-Panamax**



VIEWPOINT

“War of Talents” to intensify

Many employers, airlines included, place great emphasis on training and continued education of their employees. They have learned over the years that improved quality and enhanced company performance is only achievable by having highly qualified employees. Hence, a company’s competitive edge is directly related to the level of sophistication and qualifications of its human resources.

Successful enterprises actively influence their future by succession planning for managers including early identification of candidates and outlining a plan to prepare them for those higher positions. Some companies even place them in talent pools / environments to allow for open free flow of ideas and innovations to facilitate their preparation and development.

But what constitutes talent? There are many definitions, details, and attributes but some of the fundamental ones are in-depth subject matter knowledge, integrity, reliability, and tempered self-confidence along with the need to understand the context and complexity of the global business community.

In general these trainees shoulder the burden of a career triathlon consisting of a higher academic education, and practical training, while working in the environment for which they are being prepared to manage one day. Oftentimes they start out working in “invisible” positions where they can gain invaluable experience in a variety of subjects that will prepare them to know the basic aspects of company / business strategies and the ever increasing global challenges.

The following five points are relevant not only for future logistics managers but those of most other companies as well:

- ➔ Leadership must be continuously and patiently nurtured by giving guidance and structure;
- ➔ Strategic thinking and a clear

understanding and appreciation of existing organizational cultures is necessary;

- ➔ Personal development and support have to be offered at very high, professional levels;
- ➔ An open, unbiased view of the world, its societies, and customs of people from all walks of life must be acquired with an eye on leadership in diverse settings;
- ➔ Establishing and continuously expanding a personal network of contacts, colleagues, business associates, and friends across international borders.

Finally, subject matter expertise and qualifications have to be gained via studying and on the job training. As already mentioned, this is a triathlon and not a 100-metre dash. This is a grinding exercise during which the future manager will acquire:

- ➔ Qualifications via academic and/or on the job training;
- ➔ Professional experience and most importantly social competencies;
- ➔ Learn to make use of these two items along with utilizing the personal network the future manager has built in the process.

It should be obvious by now that the successful future manager will need endurance, self –discipline and the ability to recognize dangers and pitfalls along the career.

Oh and did I mention common sense?

These attributes combined with a clear view and understanding of

the complex and ever more global environment along with characteristics such as trust worthiness, integrity, mobility, objectivity, and openness will round out the leaders of the next generation.

The logistics market is a growing business and so is the airline industry. The need for top managers will increase and the “War of Talents” will intensify. However by investing in great talent the interests of future managers and those of air cargo companies can be aligned nicely. Airlines and their business partners need to start early to attract the new generation and show them an enticing career path - which in return will generate maximum engagement from the potential leaders of the future.

There has always been a next generation of leaders and there will be another one again, that I am sure of. For the airline industry to excel however, it will need to be proactive and smart about attracting those prospects before others do.

Helmut Berchtold is a co-founder, president & CEO of adi Management Consult, a human resource and M&A consulting network. His consulting career began with Brussels-based Metra Proudfoot where he was subsequently responsible for saving clients a total of US\$40 million. His logistics experience includes 12 years as CIO for DB Schenker in New York. More recently he enabled the successful relocation of an Internet software company from South Africa to San Jose, California. ■