

Information for Members of the  
Warehousing Education and Research Council

## Green Roundup

**From intermodal to retailing initiatives, the logistics industry is finding ways to reduce its carbon footprint.**

**T**he green movement has moved beyond trendy to become an integral part of how most companies do business today. As the logistics industry embraces ways to improve operations in an environmentally friendly manner, innovative solutions are emerging.

One of the latest efforts to reduce the industry's environmental impact can be found in Enviromodal, a brand-neutral, financial and environmental-focused transportation initiative. Based in Jacksonville, FL, and founded by EIS Logistics and Integrated Rail Group, Enviromodal was formed with the idea of improving the environment by reducing the impact of "empty miles" found in domestic surplus capacity.

"We took a look at the cost of empty miles, which adds up to wasted fuel and a negative long-term environmental impact," explains Doug Baland, program director. "We figured that if we could reduce the empty miles, we could have a positive impact on the environment by consuming fewer fossil fuels and lowering air pollutants."

The Enviromodal model is set up to allow the company to manage, market and sell domestic surplus transportation capacity. The company is providing intermodal, railcar, and marine-shared assets to fulfill transportation needs using either Enviromodal's negotiated rate contracts or the shipper's.

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Doug Baland

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## Career Change: Look Before You Leap

**When you're in the market for a new career, there's much to consider.**

**W**hile career change can be unsettling, in the field of warehousing and distribution, it's almost a given. As part of the much larger umbrella of supply chain management, most professionals in the warehousing and distribution industry are going to make a change at some point in their careers—the odds, in fact, favor that you will move around multiple times.

David Durtsche, senior partner at Tranzact Technologies, Inc., based in Elmhurst, Ill., is familiar with this road. Over the years, he's worked in many different environments, from consulting to corporate management and just about everything in between. "Each opportunity has brought a different new culture, which has been beneficial to me," he says.

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## Career Change *continued from page 1*

"In the logistics industry, there are a multitude of different functions available; however, it is most rewarding when you can manage them on an integrated basis."

Paul Newbourne, vice president and general manager at Leveraged Execution Providers (LXP), Pittsburgh, agrees. "It is somewhat expected that you move from one position to another in order to gain a broad background in logistics and supply chain management," he says. "It is not realistic to expect you can learn everything you would need to be a well-rounded logistics or supply chain professional without a cross-section of experience. Often, to get a certain type of experience, you have to make a move to a different company, one that offers the experience opportunity that will help you round out your logistics and supply chain management skill set."

Like Durtsche, Newbourne has made moves over the years to broaden his experience. "Personally, I have held numerous positions within companies as well as worked for multiple companies in order to provide myself the necessary experience and skill set that helped me land my current position," he says. "These changes were part of my long-term career plan to make sure I had a broad base of logistics and supply chain management experience."

## Time to change?

At some time or another, everyone will feel job dissatisfaction; however, that doesn't mean it's time for a career change. Before taking that major step, it's important to evaluate your objectives and determine where you want to go with your career.

Both Durtsche and Newbourne recommend working with a career plan to guide you. "Ideally, you have established a career plan for yourself and have mapped out a plan to secure the kind of experience you believe you will need to attain your ultimate career objective," says Newbourne. "To this end, the time to move would be when you feel you have 'mastered' the particular skill or secured sufficient experience from your current position. Generally I would say this would be two to four years, depending on the job, its corresponding complexity and your learning ability."

## Plan Ahead

Durtsche encourages everyone to set up a plan that lays out where you would like to be in three, five and 10 years down the road. "Figure out what it takes to get there," he says. "Get grounded in a function and then seek out ways to conquer the next set of functions."

He cautions, however, that in a slow economy like today's, you must closely track that function and its performance within your company. "Is that function running well, or is it something your company might cut?" asks Durtsche. "Don't wait until you are in a position where you have to leave to make your career change."

Your career plan should be flexible and include options. It also should help guide you in acquiring the necessary skills to make the next move. "That may require some education or the position you need might be outside of logistics," Durtsche says. "Craft your skills and seek accomplishment."

If you are not pursuing a particular career objective, Newbourne says that you should consider making a move when you no longer feel challenged or are bored with a job's routine. "In order to keep yourself at the top of the logistics game, you need to constantly be learning and an effective way to do this is to move to a new position that offers you a new experience in logistics or supply chain management."

## Your next move

Once you've decided that it is time to make a move, you need to determine where you'd like to go. "I'd go back to the career plan that you hopefully have developed for yourself," says Newbourne. "Advancing your logistics and supply chain management knowledge can be viewed as steps with each one building on the previous one to bring you closer to your career objective."

Ideally, you want to look two or three steps ahead and ask "How will this job help position me for these future roles?"

You also want to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses. "A well-rounded 360-degree evaluation can provide valuable insight in regard to how others perceive you," says Newbourne. "These perceptions offer you the opportunity to examine whether you need to change certain aspects of your behavior. When received as constructive criticism, the results of a 360 evaluation can help you focus on behavioral traits that may help you succeed in the future."

Durtsche says that having an open discussion with peers and managers is a good way to gain valuable feedback. "Get a 360 from others and see how well you work with the team," he recommends. "Find out what skills you need for the next job and what you need to do to develop those skills. Balance your need for those skills with your current duties."

## Moving on

Feedback in hand, you need to quantify what you've done and what you are capable of doing. "The best way to sell yourself is to be able to demonstrate or articulate measurable success from your professional and personal life," says Newbourne. "Business is about results and our industry is no different. If you are able to measure results in a fact-based environment, it is a great 'closer' for your best sales pitch."

Durtsche adds that "If you can put your accomplishments into economic terms, that helps. In all of your activities, keep in mind what impact they have had and demonstrate it."

Of course, everyone also has weaknesses and it's important to deal with those properly. "I'm a big fan of acknowledging your weaknesses and having a definitive plan to improve them," says Newbourne. "If you are able to point to a past weakness and show how you've overcome it, then you have another 'closing point' to make to a prospective employer."

Durtsche recommends looking at how you can improve on those weaknesses. "What would this look like if you got candid input and figured out how to improve upon it?" he asks. "Take some time and give it some thought."

And there will be obstacles along the path to making a career change. "The most common that come to mind are title change (it may not be the title you want), money, location, and position responsibility (it may not be as challenging as you want)," says Newbourne. "The key is to focus on the immediate opportunity and relate it back to how it will help you fill your longer-term career plan objective."

"If you relate all of these issues to that pursuit, then you can determine how much you're willing to compromise any one consideration."

At times your lack of experience or qualifications might pose an obstacle to making a change. "Look at the requirements of the position you want and be thoughtful—'here's what I've done and what is missing,'" says Durtsche. "Communicate your willingness to learn."

## Overcome obstacles

Newbourne says that you can overcome most of the obstacles that you might face. For instance, he points out that, early in your career, the title you have is less relevant than the experience that you will gain. "Consequently, the focus should be on the role and responsibility of the job, not the title," he explains.

### SIDEBAR:


## Do's and Don'ts of Career Change

When it comes to changing your career, a few simple rules will smooth the path:

- **DO** have a well-developed plan.
- **DO** have a well-thought out strategy.
- **DON'T** worry if you feel a bit insecure or unsure about making a career change; these are normal feelings.
- **DO** expect to put in a great deal of time and effort to your career change, but don't get discouraged if the pace moves slowly.
- **DO** take time to examine the activities that you like and dislike.
- **DO** look for careers that take advantage of your skills and interests.
- **DO** take advantage of all your networking potential.
- **DO** gain experience in your new career field, ideally while you are still working in your current job.
- **DO** brush up on all aspects of job hunting.
- **DO** take advantage of the career change advice in career change books.
- **Above all else, do be flexible.**

Source: Dr. Randall S. Hansen, founder of Quintessential Careers; contact him at [randall@quintcareers.com](mailto:randall@quintcareers.com).

"A related consideration is what the potential upside for earnings is further down the road with the hiring company. Visit the area that you will be working and living in—if you have family, take them with you. Carefully evaluate what an area has to offer with first-hand knowledge before making a decision."

Finally, when that new opportunity does open up, "Consider the fit of the position with your long-term career plan objective—will the job help you get to where you ultimately want to be? Do you think you will enjoy the new job?" asks Newbourne. "Look carefully at the company's culture and management philosophy—does the culture match your beliefs and does the management style fit with your style? Will the compensation package satisfy your ego and near-term financial needs? Will you want to 'jump out of bed' in the morning to start your work day? These are important questions that you have to answer to your own satisfaction." 

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