

Relinking the chain in supply chain management

By [Dr Frances Wright](#)

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Globalisation, effected through high speed technological advancement, has put paid to 'business as usual'. In most industries, these changes have been so dramatic that business models have virtually been made redundant. Changing market forces and consumer demands have seen organisations having to look to new models that both exploit the efficiencies offered by technology and leverage their direct and marginal competitors in 'cooperative competition' or co-opetition.



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Given that today's consumer is not only cost conscious, but also well-informed and demanding of customisation and high-speed delivery, it is becoming clear that the traditional point-to-point supply chain model is no longer adequate for meeting consumer needs.

Jaco Barnard, Head of Retail at Wipro, suggests that in order to extract the maximum value from operational environments, organisations need to move towards a collaborative supply chain model that tightly integrates suppliers, assemblers, partners, distributors and end-customers, using technological innovation.

To enhance the efficiency of such collaborative supply chain models, there should also be meaningful partnerships made between the industry and the institutions that provide the skills and training for the industry. Such partnerships would ensure that training and skills development are both closely suited to match the industry's needs, and flexible enough to change as the industry needs.

An example of this is the Institute of Logistics and Supply Chain Management (ILSCM), now in its third year that has started building these collaborative partnerships with larger organisations and professional bodies. Such partnerships endorse the institute's programmes and in turn, the managers trained through these programmes. Furthermore, they also have the

potential to go beyond endorsement and create efficiencies that will be felt at an operational, strategic and tactical level.

The long-term aim of such partnerships is to create a supportive, responsive environment that will ensure that both the ILSCM and the organisations it collaborates with remain at the forefront of change, poised to be a part of it, rather than adapting to it.

Being in touch with large organisations and professional bodies within the industry will ensure that the courses provided by the ILSCM are tailored to the industry's needs and that the managers completing the courses graduate with relevant knowledge.

Professionalisation of the logistics and supply chain management field is slow, but as it gains momentum, so too will the importance of having a learning institution like the ILSCM. Through collaboration with the industry, the ILSCM is responsive to the needs of the industry. For more information, go to www.ilscm.co.za.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Frances Wright is a lecturer for the Institute of Logistics and Supply Chain Management (ILSCM). The ILSCM is a division of the Open Learning Group (OLG). Dr Wright holds a BSc Honours in Technology and Operations Management from the Production Management Institute. She completed her MBA at the North-West University in 2007 and was honoured as top Operations student. She also holds a PhD in Business Administration with a focus on Entrepreneurship from the North-West University. Dr Wright is a business mentor and trainer for Business Partners and for Enablis and also consulted on the eTV show 'Its my Biz' where she supported entrepreneurs who participated on the show.

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