

New skills needed to manage supply chain distribution

According to Greta Froise, founder of online supply chain training company Bizzco, new routines, structural changes and a massive shift in consumer behaviour since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic have disrupted traditional distribution management systems. Simple linear supply chains have now been replaced by complex consumer-centric networks. New skills sets and new learnings are essential for organisations wanting to thrive in the 'new normal'.



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"The pandemic has really just accelerated trends such as globalisation and increased competition that started over 10 years ago," says Froise. "Over recent months, we have seen many of the current ways of managing supply chains quickly break down. Shortages of products – including essential goods – have shown us just how fragile some of our supply chains are when they encounter disruptions in supply and demand."

Froise says that, while organisations have excelled at getting the basics of supply chain right, there are a whole new set of skills they need to effectively manage distribution in our **Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA)** new world:

- **Planning and forecasting:** Traditional planning and forecasting tools and techniques are simply not enough to manage the unpredictable spikes in supply and demand.

- **Warehouse management:** The surge in demand for same-day, home deliveries and the growth of new distribution channels are developments for which traditional warehousing systems were unprepared.
- **Transport and logistics:** Distributors were largely unprepared for the exponential rise of new distribution models, such as direct delivery to consumers.

"Mastering distribution management is now a key differentiator for organisations," continues Froise. "Our distribution management course, for example, focuses on the distribution network model and its objectives, activities and distribution inventory management decisions."

Endorsed by global professional body the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT), the course is 100% online and covers topics comprising centralised versus decentralised warehousing, distribution management and planning, materials handling, equipment, freight management, dangerous goods, imports and exports, as well as reverse logistics.

"With distribution management skills in short supply, there is a real need for organisations to train and grow the skills they need," concludes Froise.

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