

Preface

What started as an internal corporate training manual seven years ago, unexpectedly took on a life of its own. Well beyond my expectations, the preceding second edition of this work became a popular desk reference and university text. In light of this broader market, I submit for your reading pleasure the new and expanded third edition of *A Practical Guide to Transportation and Logistics*.

This new edition will retain the look and feel of the previous edition (part of what made it successful), but provide a significantly expanded and updated tool. To date, there is still no other work like this on the market. I didn't want to dramatically alter its focus or approach, but I did want to address some shortcomings and information voids that both the market and I perceived. I hope I'm successful.

What qualifies me to write such a work as this? Well for one, I've been living this business for the past twenty-five plus years. Not only do I practice what is preached in this short work, but I teach the material and regularly write about it as well. Further, I have a B.S. degree in transportation from St. John's University in New York and worked my way through a great technical program offered by what was once called the Academy of Advanced Traffic (now the Institute of Logistical Management of which I am privileged and honored to be a member of its faculty). In addition, I am a member of the faculty of the World Trade Institute of Pace University where I teach international trade and transportation. I am a member of the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP), a certified member of the American Society of Transportation and Logistics (AST&L) and SOLE –

The International Society of Logistics. Finally, I have an M.B.A. in Global Management from the University of Phoenix. This has given me a great background from an overall management standpoint. I hope that answers your question.

Introduction

The original target audience for this work was the front-line supervisor or manager responsible for the day-to-day operation of a shipping department. It has been revised somewhat to accommodate the student new to the concepts of logistics as well. It is presented as a *practical guide*. You won't find any groundbreaking new research presented here. If you are looking for state-of-the-art computer models for running a transportation function, you're in the wrong place. This work is a tool to ground you well in the basics of transportation and logistics. I hope it will help make your life easier.

For those of you in an operational capacity, I have been in the same boat as you for the past 25 or so years. Sometimes it isn't pretty. I've been down that road where you're putting out one fire after another, and all of a sudden, somebody comes up and drops another crisis in your lap. I'd like to think that by providing a guide such as this to you, written in an easy to read format, you'll be able to quickly find the answer you're looking for and then move on to the next problem. For the new student, I hope this familiarizes you with some of the basic concepts of the profession. Too many college texts have neglected the fundamentals that are essential to understanding the real world workings of this business. This work is intended to redress that omission.

I have written this with the understanding that you may have absolutely no background in the field. It may be your first job, you may have been recently transferred from another functional area or you may be a student taking your first logistics class. As such, it is presented on an elementary level. I'll try to keep the

use of industry jargon to a minimum. When technical terms are introduced, I will explain them completely.

For you operational folks, odds are you are working for a relatively small organization with broad responsibilities. These could include shipping & receiving, the warehouse, and overall traffic administration functions. You probably do not have as much of a staff as you feel you need. I'd like to give you the benefit of my years of experience in running a day-to-day operation, which hopefully will make you more effective. Hey, if you can show your boss that you can save the company some money or speed-up the flow of your operation, you may get to be hero of the day. If nothing else, after absorbing what I have here, you can sound like an expert. Sometimes that goes a long way.

The material is presented here in a rather informal manner. I don't want you falling asleep in the middle of it. There is no need to read the whole work from cover to cover. Use it as a reference manual. Of course, if you want to, you certainly can read it from start to finish; I won't mind. You may also notice that the discussion is rather general in most cases. If you need an in-depth treatment of certain topics, there are a good number of excellent books on the market available to you. I will include a section with a recommended reading list.

Additionally, please note that of the five modes of transportation: rail, motor, air, ocean and pipeline, I provide no coverage of pipeline. This is done for a few reasons. First, I have no direct practical experience with it. This is intended as a hands-on guide, so with no direct experience to share, I would only be spouting textbook material to you. That is not the product I want to deliver. Second, most people have limited, if any exposure to pipeline. Unless you work for an oil or gas company, you generally have no need

for the discussion. If this is a shortcoming, my regrets, but I personally don't quite see it as a major omission.

You may notice that the book is U.S.-centric in focus. This is a consequence of my background. As I mentioned before, I want to present a product that I can speak about on a personal level. While I have been directly involved in some initiatives in Europe and Asia, my experience is too limited to for me to speak at length about practical issues outside of the U.S.

One final note, this isn't such a bad profession. I have been in an assortment of operational and administrative positions for more than 25 years and it has provided me with a good living. You definitely could do a lot worse.

