Michael Eure Show Podcast – Episode 53: Supply Chain Project Management

INTRODUCTION: Hello, this is Michael Eure and I'd like to invite you to the Michael your show featuring student hosts and very special guest talking about a variety of interesting topics. You can find us on the Eagle screen YouTube channel.

MICHAEL EURE: Good afternoon, welcome to the Michael Eure Show. We have a very exciting group of guests today and we're gonna start off very quickly and have everyone briefly introduce themselves and we'll start with Jerry Green, and Jerry go ahead.

JERRY GREENE: Hello, my name is Jerry Green. I'm a cyber security major area Wake Tech also I've been I've been participating with these virtual mixers alongside Michael Eure here.

EURE: Alright, Mia.

MIA KENNEDY: Good afternoon and welcome everyone. My name is Mia Kennedy and I'm a career coach in Career Services here at Wake Tech.

EURE: Alright, and Jeff.

JEFF ZIDMAN: Good afternoon, my name is Jeff Sidman. I'm one of the instructors in Supply Chain Management and Logistics and also teach Project Management here at Wake Tech.

EURE: Keith.

KEITH PFEIFER: Good afternoon, I'm Keith Pfeifer, I'm an instructor and the program director for Supply Chain Management here at Wake Tech.

EURE: James.

JAMES DAVIS: I'm James Davis. I am the general manager and logistics manager for GoPa.

EURE: Alright, and we're gonna take a quick moment to just look at a couple of websites, if you don't mind, Sarah's in the background making all this happen, if we can put up the Care Center first.

And this is for students and faculty and staff. We have a Care Center that success coaches are part of and I'm a success coach. But we have emergency funds, we do laptops, we do Wellness Counseling, office of volunteerism, leadership and Pathways Male Mentoring, Fostering Bright Futures for people in foster care. And I just wanted you to know that.

And then this is the direct, the Dean, Mike Coleman and Melanie Henderson is the director of student support programs. LaDelta Williams is the Director of Student Success, and Elaine Hernandez Acosta is the assistant to the Dean. And we're gonna ask Sarah to put that in chat if anybody wants to get in touch with any of us, just click. Thank you, Sarah.

And next, we're going to do, and I could have had her click on Success Coaches, but let's do Career Services very quickly.

So, this is the Career Services link, and for students, alumni and the community they serve all. So, we're gonna just put that in the chat and Mia is gonna talk a little bit about that. Oh, she can talk about it while it's up. Mia?

KENNEDY: Yes. So, this is career services and we're here to support students every step of the way. So, we can help students determine the major, clarify a career goal. We prepare students for job search whether it's cover letter, resume or interviewing tips. Even social media checkups.

And we can help students with your job search strategies, helping you find the right career for them.

So, please schedule an appointment today with our career coach or career specialist and our website is careers.waketech.edu.

EURE: Thank you, Mia.

And next, we're gonna, and I didn't mean to say success coaches, it's successcoach.waketech.edu.

We're gonna do supply chain management now.

Uh, very quickly. I'm gonna let Keith talk about that program for a minute or two, and we're gonna put this in the chat as well.

PFEIFER: Say me? Okay.

EURE: Yes.

We offer Supply Chain Management here at Wake Tech Community College, we do offer a associate degree under supply chain management.

One is Global Logistics Technology, the other one is Distribution Management. We also have five accreditations that you can get to as well, so if you already have degree and want to come to Wake Tech you can apply to one of those.

EURE: Thank you.

And and I would like to get back to that a little bit later and talk about the fact that most of your programs are available online, completely.

So, now we're getting ready to go back to some questions and we're gonna let Jerry start.

And this question is for Jeff, Keith and James Davis. Well, actually, Mia too. Let's start with Mia and then Jeff, Keith and James Davis.

GREENE: Alright.

Can you tell us a little bit more about yourself and how you began and progressed into supply chain and project management? In particular, how did you wind up in your current positions?

Uh, I didn't mean that for you, Mia. I'm sorry, it's for the first three that I talked about, Jeff, Keith and James.

ZIDMAN: Sure that I can go ahead now. Hi Jerry.

And so I've been in supply chain probably about 30 years now. Got started back out of college actually thinking I wanted to be in manufacturing and worked at a factory where they were starting to outsource some of their products and they were looking for technical people to come over to work on the supply-chain side.

So, kind of found my way in that with working with outside vendors that were then supplying us or going to supply this stuff that we are currently doing in-house.

So, a lot of it focused on quality assurance and and you know, manufacturability and then kind of over the years got myself into a lot of different areas. Worked at John Deere for about 13 years. By starting out kind of as a what they call a supply-chain specialist.

You're doing all the day-to-day buying activities and strategic activities with suppliers. Working on cost reduction and things like that. Kind of bounced back between quality assurance and supply chain quite a bit.

They wind up in kind of a cost-management role of we're really looking at how to make improvements in the overall process and really got introduced the global logistics of that point for that time John Deere was sourcing quite a bit of material from all sorts, all parts of the world.

So, one of the things you kind of get out of this is, you know, interacting with a lot of different cultures. The last ten years I've been at different startup companies and there you're wearing every different hat. So, you're you're looking at the how to manage inventory, how to manage, you know, logistics. Really, you know, continuity of supply of material and

and a lot of its system improvements and about three years ago started teaching at Wake Tech in addition to still working full time.

So, I worked at a company called Q Square that does clinical trials and that's kind of how I wound up here. So, kind of giving back some of the stuff that I've learned over the years to the students in the classes.

PFEIFER: I'll go next, I'm Keith Pfeifer.

I started out with a pilot slot and the University of South Carolina had an engineering degree, so I went to the Air Force. But flying wasn't for me, so I was going to fall back on engineering.

But they said the career field was fully manned. What else would you like? I said, alright what do you got? They said manufacturing quality assurance… I said, I'll take that.

They said, good, that's a good fit for your degree.

So, I went into quality, manufacturing quality shirts on the B1B program.

And after that I was on the bass cruise missile to contracting. I was an instructor in the Air Force, back into contracting just get some contingency exercises with logistics from the Air Force, working with our NATO countries, Southwest Asia exercises and performing a lot of logistics.

I do wanna say that nothing happens without logistics. You have to get the movement of materials, you have to plan for it and get them in place. So, we have a plan for getting into country and for a plan for getting out. And the same with even domestic issue, you have to have a plan for logistics where the parts you want to go. Staging and where you want put them.

So, then after the Air Force I got out and I went to John Deere. They were looking for somebody to go into supply chain management. So, I started out as a buyer, working with somebody overseas products which are <inaudible> the engines and transmissions and from then I was a global strategic sourcing manager, sourcing a hydraulic component from all over the world to support the John Deere factories nationwide and some of the other countries where we have factories as well.

And I became a relationship manager so that anytime we have a, work with a particular suppliers who don't make products for John Deere, we start work with them and it's controlling entire gamut.

Everything that they have working with, the differentiating the prices, drawings, everything that keep that supplier going, support the products that we need.

So, after 24 years of John Deere, I've retired from that company. And I said I want to put my skills and expertise experience to use and educate some students. So, here I am at Wake Tech.

EURE: Thank you. James.

DAVIS: Alright, I got my start up right after graduating college, it was the pursuit of stability. Because that was in a great year of 2007, or right as the recession was impacting us.

And one of the most stable fields you'll find is supply chain that because, as you've heard from everybody else on the call, how long they've been in the field, it's been around and will always be around.

So, I got my start as an industrial engineer with UPS. Umm, which revolve more around process improvement, was able to save them a lot of money for that critical thinking of logistically how we approach things internally and externally.

So, I like to joke and say my parents always said that I was a little lazy with certain tasks and as an engineer that's called efficiency, right?

So, let's remove those steps and bottlenecks, right? And get the flow going.

So, I highlighted that to my mom when I got my offer and said, hey, this is what they're paying me to do what you call lazy, right? I'm just minimizing those steps.

So, that's how I got my start. From there on I went to QVC where I managed 200 people. Got on the supply chain side there as well, as I saw opportunity.

Sometimes when you start complaining, people like for you to solve it right? Which is what you get paid for. And there's real world, right?

Anybody can kind of run it up the flag pole, but if you get a collaborative effort and get people to salute it, you'll be successful in it.

So, that's how I got my start, which leads me here to GoPa now where I'll over about 15 locations, still in supply chains as you see as the operations leader. But it allows me to use both sides of the fence, which is by personality and just the analytical skills and approaches and problem solving.

So, with this background of supply chain solution, I always tell people you can be a programmer and you can be a web developer. You can be whatever, because you're problem solver. That's all it is.

So, that kind of sums up my intro into supply chain.

EURE: Alright, thank you.

And Mia, she's gonna be our cohost as well. So, we're gonna see if she can ask the next question.

KENNEDY: Alrighty. Thank you, Michael.

So, this question is for any one of the panelists. Can you explain to our audience what exactly is supply chain management?

EURE: And, if you've already felt like done it, I think you all have done it. But let's get a quick summary for those of us that want it in simple terms.

ZIDMAN: The simplest level, it's really just getting, you know, how do you get stuff from point A to point B and being, efficient and innovative about it. As James said you're a problem solver. That's what you're paid to do. You're there to find better ways to do things more efficiently, lower cost.

And last two years have kind of shown supply chains importance in terms of getting things from place to place.

It was kind of taken for granted that those things just kind of work in the background, but it takes people and skills to make that happen.

EURE: Alright, I'm satisfied unless somebody else wants to chime a little bit.

PFEIFER: OK. I just want to say it is the international and the domestic movement of goods from raw materials through the production process all the way through the distribution and on to the customers. In a nutshell.

EURE: Yeah, I love that y'all are giving us a great lesson today and believe me, this is very timely.

Umm, do you have anything to say, James, or can we go to the next question?

OK, so Jerry can't be the next question.

GREENE: Right.

What is the difference between supply chain management and project management?

That question is for anybody.

DAVIS: I could start with that as Jeff and Keith just explained, the supply chain

management piece of it. I call that supply chain, you're kind of putting the ball on the court, right? As a project manager, you're making sure that that golf ball stays on the turf, right?

That it's in alignment, flowing, following the right process and it's keeping the right trajectory to accomplish the end goal, right?

So, you're literally managing it from beginning to end. See what key players, duration possible contingencies to not derail the project that's going on.

So, that's the, you know, sort of how we've gotta shorten brief overview is that in project management you're more so making sure that everything is succinctly flowing in the proper timeline to accomplish the goal, and not going kind of array off course.

Yeah, I like the only thing I would add to that is you know, you know, to be a good supply chain manager, you, you have to know a little bit about the project management because you're dealing with relationships, you're dealing with external companies and external, you know, departments.

So, having some of those skills is still important, but it, you know it's project manager is really taking that of the larger scale from start to finish for a project where it's supply chain, maybe one leg of that overall project.

EURE: Alright. And I failed to say to the audience, if you have any questions ask them in the chat.

But we already have two questions in the chat, so we're gonna go directly to them.

OK, alright, this is from Dr. Chris O'Riordan-Adjah. He is the head of Wake Tech's engineering department.

So, can you read that Jerry?

GREENE: Dr. Chris asks, are there entrepreneurship opportunities in supply chain? If there are what are some of the small-scale supply-chain examples? Maybe a basic definition for what supply chain is for our students.

EURE: Anybody?

ZIDMAN: Do you want to give it a try, Keith?

PFEIFER: You want to or do you want me to?

ZIDMAN: I can talk it. In the last ten years I've been in smaller startup companies, and I think maybe the thing you you get away from, take away from most is while there's maybe

not an entrepreneurship opportunity, per se, there are a lot of companies that are starting out that don't know how to bring their product to the market.

And so, you know, that's one of the areas where the skills you gain in the supply chain program really helped in terms of understanding what does it take to get the product, you know, brought in, what does it take to export to other countries, you know, what's the transportation or distribution channels you need.

So, it's really what big asset to startup companies to have that that skill which typically they're focused on the development of that product not really the operational side at the early set.

PFEIFER: Yeah, there was a survey taken out of a textbook that says what the CEO's are looking for to be a managers or some companies or entrepreneurship. They're looking for somebody with array of background, with people skills and know what it takes to run the business. And chain management is becoming ever so more important of the business, working with the suppliers, the customers at the other end. All the flow that goes into between you know to go you have to know about the manufacturing processes. You have to know the accounting, the financial issues. You gotta know what it takes to keep that supply chain going.

So, I say somebody with the with this background makes very good candidate, somebody wants to get into entrepreneurship, gives you a good background and experience.

EURE: All right. The next question from Jay S. You got that, uh Mia?

KENNEDY: All right. That's good for our students to know.

What skills do you think an employee needs to be successful in the industry?

DAVIS: And I would take that one, to piggyback on what Keith just mentioned.

It’s the people skills, through and through. True leader, and strong person in this field. You’re going to have to understand people in this field to be a great coach.

Typically you’re partnering, collaboratively, different time zones, different countries as just heard on the call.

So, for you to be collaborative and sometimes be informative, uh, without insulting someone is an art, right? And then not to rub them along way.

Kind of childhood things we were taught that we may overlook as important, but I'm here to tell you it's what has served me well. Um, you have to be a people person on at least understand people.

Know your audience. Kind of watch nonverbal language. Things that you probably have learned at Wake Tech or along your way that someone has spoke to you about. Just take it seriously.

Kind of hone those skills in because that's exactly what they're looking for.

EURE: I think that answer that.

We have this question from Laura Bethea, so would you, and she's from career services. Wonderful. And she does a lot of things that Wake Tech.

Jerry, those Laura, go ahead and read that.

GREENE: Laura Bethea says what have been some of your most challenging moments in supply chain, project management roles, and how did you overcome these conflicts?

PFEIFER: I can that one.

Global strategic sourcing, one challenging roles is, I say for everybody supply chain management, there are basically two main requirements for your job. That is to keep the flow and the production lines going.

The other part of that is to make sure that you reduce cost wherever you can. So two jobs: Keep the line going and then when the lines are in jeopardy, that's when the challenges come in.

So, sometimes the supplier, they don't have the capacity. Back in 2000 and 2009 when we had that big dip then we all came back to work in 2010, the suppliers couldn't keep up with the capacity when we turned the faucets back on, there were all kind of capacity issues.

We were looking, working to make sure that we don't shut down some of those major factories that actually are the big expense for the for the company.

Umm, till you go to these factors, if you like the travel, if you like to work with people, if you like to go into the suppliers and manufacturing processes, take a look at their capacities that they can make a 60,000 pump per day. You're looking at, okay what's the capacity for all your customers? And then are you gonna be able to meet it, and in some cases when you do that, you find out… well, no. Take a look at the 60,000 is all you're capable of, we're going to be need 70 to 80,000 total to support all your customers.

So, what do they do? Do they add more brick and mortar? If that isn't it, and I'm going to find another way to get the sources or actually tell some other customers, like, well, I can't provide you, because I have to move my allocations over to another customer. And unfortunately, that's the way it goes sometimes. But that's your job in supply chain

management to keep your company supported with the parts.

EURE: Okay. Where you going to say something, Jeff?

ZIDMAN: No, I think Keith kind it hit on it. I think it's all about building relationships, when you get into difficult times. The industry I'm in, we buy a lot of commercially off-the-shelf material, so only so much of it to go around. So, when we hit this crunch here in last year and a half, you have to get creative about what are you going to do to bring in that material have in sale and inventory, make alternative arrangements all that.

So, these last couple of years have been trying for most people on supply chain in terms of just sourcing material in general.

EURE: Alright. And Jerry has a really good question for you now, for all three of you really.

GREENE: How does logistics impact your day-to-day life?

DAVIS: I just say it's how we get everything, right? Anything you would use is how logistics would impact your life.

As Jeff and Keith just mentioned though actually have an example when I was at UPS, someone wanted to ship a two-ton demagnetized magnet from Hyderabad, India.

I was in supply chain solutions and our sales team was saying that we couldn't do it. So, there was a typo and some communication that went out and it was about to cost of company a whole lot of money, right? Just one typing error of magnet, magnetized item or demagnetize it wasn't mentioned or worded properly. Come to find out we could do that.

So, of course that it ended up being more profitable for UPS, as a whole. I don't think I did anything special, but then you come to find it out, you being able to allow the team to flow as one body, meaning you know, you be the structure that holds it together and you can speak different languages of all those departments and bring them together. It's exactly like Jeff and Keith were telling, you know, speaking about.

So, that was a big win for the organization, but literally it can be something that's small. You have to remember, the additional staff functions don't live in your world, right? But as far as logistics, everything is your world.

Anything that's in front of you, any software, everything, it's impacted by logistics.

EURE: Great answer.

I am waiting on Keith.

PFEIFER: I want to add to that. Can we bring it down with some basic needs, necessities of life? That that would be food, shelter, and clothing.

You can't get the food in the supermarket, so unless we have transportation to deliver those.

And we've had that problem during COVID. You saw that empty shelves everywhere. Take a look at the markets if you want some new clothes. If you've been wearing the same thing for several years, if those truckers don't store those or retailers the new merchandise, you just won't get them.

And what about the shelters? Talk about the housing, construction. We have supply chain management in that a… degree in… of companies as well, so you can't get the lumber that you need to build the houses. People are waiting on their houses to be built.

Then you see the markup on the prices and so forth as well. Nothing happens without logistics. It's just that important.

ZIDMAN: I was going to add the other thing that's made things interesting too, we call it the Amazon effect. It's the fact that people now expect to see things you're throw an order it and I'll have it tomorrow and logistics to bring something directly from a manufacturer directly to your door, as opposed to going through those traditional distribution channels is much more complex.

But, you know to the end consumer, let's just click a button and so you know it's a new challenge that you know the most supply channel logistics they're seeing. How do you get that, you know, that ability to get stuff there when you need it and make it transparent, people expecting that you know to happen right away.

EURE: Okay.

The next question is, what is the general demographic makeup of the workforce engaged in supply chain, and project management and those types of careers?

And are there recruitment efforts to help get that… to help diversify?

Anybody can answer that.

I know Keith knows the answer.

PFEIFER: I thank you for the preparatory, you asked me about <inaudible>, so I did some looking up.

First of all I wanna clear the source that I'm about to use. That's a zippia.com supply chain management. This particular source and information I am about to give you has been verified by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics.

So, right now, of the 3 million profiles that they've considered in supply chain management career got over 65,000 supply chain managers. You take a look at the men and women they're 24% women, 71% men. The average age of this particular career field is 46.

If I go down and break it down by ethnicity. Then when you take a look at them.

We're looking at about 70% of the white, we're looking at 12% Hispanic are in this career field, 8.2% Asian and 7.1% are African American.

Another good statistic I like to throw out to you is a degree. So, you come to Wake Tech, you get an associate's degree. How important is that? Well, it's very important.

Let me show you what the what's also coming up with this. So, if you have an associate's degree, there's, according to this particular survey, we're looking at the markets, about $97,000. A good pay. Then when you get a bachelor's degree, that's another uptick of $13,000.

If you get a master's degree another get uptick of about $15,000.

Course the highest one is only a small margin between a bachelors and PhD of about $7,000.

So, when you get an associate's degree and one of the important things that you want to do to continue that education to where do you go in to a job pay to get that education and get a bachelor's degree, with an institution of higher learning or university.

With that basic statement, I'll let the other individuals come in and add to it.

PFEIFER: I would say that, you know, in not quoting directly from any statistics here, but you know the field has gotten much more diverse over the years. I mean there are people from pretty much every cultural background, every walk of life going into the logistics and supply chain. I think some of that because right now companies are short on people and trying to hire and so you're getting your foot in the door even without that education, you get some experience and then going on and getting an associate's degree helps that.

Umm you know, people will start out and things like logistic coordinator or a warehouse role or, you know, just a material handler type role and those are entry points into supply chain that can then build your skills to get into those other, you know, managerial roles or project type roles.

So, that there's there's a lot of opportunities that think there's, you know, Wake Tech has Tech has workplace learning that we do within the supply chain role to try to get those apprenticeships as well as, you know, job opportunities for students.

So that there is active recruitment because there is a shortage of people in the field.

EURE: Alright, we have some more questions from the audience.

PFEIFER: Good.

EURE: Laura Bethea again. Do you want to do that one, Mia?

KENNEDY: Sure.

What are the similarities and differences between logistics and supply chain management? And, anyone can answer.

EURE: Maybe we talked about a little bit earlier but may not. Go ahead.

PFEIFER: How to say in a nutshell, I mean there's so much material out there. But, supply chain management sets the strategies and directs the daily logistical activities. Logistics stores and delivers goods and finished goods to the customers.

Then you break that down, logistics is a component of supply chain management and then distribution management, is a component of logistics. That's where you work with the manager that are working warehouse distribution centers, working in all the efforts to cost savings with the people to get the product.

But, Logistics is the entire gamut running from A to B, just like supply chain management.

EURE: Alight. We have another question in chat. Detrick Clark. We know that guy. Believe it or not, Detrick used to be my intern many years ago, but now he works with the project, with Duke Energy and a non-profit for the state of North Carolina and South Carolina.

And I know he's also friends with James.

So, you wanna do that one, Jerry?

GREENE: Yes, uh. Detrick says how do tariffs and sanctions impact logistics and costs for consumers?

DAVIS: That's a great, great question from a stranger, there.

But yeah, I can speak specific examples. Again, I was over the international area with UPS.

That guide was sent out to us daily. I did have an associate before that did not take that information update seriously and we ended up rerouting about 40 grand of packages mid-stream because there was sanction that in that area and we could not deliver to it.

So, that wasn't a happy conference call the next day, but those changes do arise in the supply chain pipeline quite often. So, that's a huge impact, when to speak more locally when you're GlaxsoSmithKline or IBM and you want a large amount of items to go abroad, and now that's not even a possibility.

Sometimes due to risk of the item or what's going on in the temperament and that country or region so that that is a total separate give that to what most people they're soon but a lot of companies would just mitigate the risk and say it all until this is resolved for the next 10 days or 14 days we're not even gonna deliver there.

EURE: Alright. Jeff or Keith?

ZIDMAN: Sure. I mean, I think the big thing you see is just the impact of being able to get products certain in areas or sourcing strategy may change based on tariffs you have.

So, as an example. In the company I worked with, we run clinical trials on all the all the different continents, and so we have facilities on each continent. But yet we can't supply some of the same materials to our facility in China because of tariffs and restrictions there. So, they have to go and find local sources to do some of those same things that would have normally been sourced from over here because it's either cost prohibitive to get the material in the country or restrictive for other government reasons.

So, it does impact your sourcing strategy and where you bring that material in and how you're going to supply, Yep.

EURE: Okay. I think we have another question.

Do want to do that one Mia?

KENNEDY: Sure, I do this.

Some students would enjoy a career path that requires periodic travel. What are the roles in supply chain management and logistics that have a decent amount of stateside or international travel?

EURE: And I would like to, before you answer that, say the name that was, uh, Carla Glover Smith. And this is because some people will not be able to see this, they will be able to hear, but I always like to give credit to the audience for asking such great questions.

Anybody?

PFEIFER: I love to travel; I mean when was in the Air Force I traveled all over the place.

Then I was working with John Deere, I got to travel all over the world. If you like travel suplly chain management is the place to do it.

Jeff had mentioned, if you like cultures, going to Japan, going to Turkey, Brazil, Italy, Europe, you'll learn the different cultural base, have the ways of doing business, how to negotiate in particular countries. The opportunities are there if you want them. I would say, be motivated and go after them.

EURE: That seems like the answer, for everybody.

Alright. So, JS has another question, Jerry?

GREENE: Sure. JS says, has asked, what pros and cons have you each experienced with working in the field versus teaching our students about the industry?

ZIDMAN: That's an interesting question. You know, one of the things that we try to do at Wake Tech, and partially speak on behalf of Keith here, but we have instructors who have plenty of work experience. So, we're trying to bring that into the classroom. So, you may have something in your book and I'll be the first one to tell my students. Yeah, that's what the book says, but here's also what the real-life application of that.

So, you know, I think one of the things we pride ourselves on is that you're not just getting book education, you're getting real education. You're getting examples brought in from industry so that you could share that with the students. And tell them about what things you ran into that day or, you know, last year on your job. So, I'll leave it at that.

EURE: Keith?

PFEIFER: Well, like I said, nothing beats, uh, have you heard the phrase "if you have experience it shows, if you don't have experience it shows?"

So, that's one of the reasons why we're here getting somebody from industry to come in and teach the classes that we have that experience. And can try to teach you some of what's really going on and taking place.

I love it when that Jeff and James brought in saying that they are project management. You know, project manager, they run the project and the Jeff had mentioned supply chain management was just a piece of the pie. When you take a look at all these other functional groups, you'll have engineering, you've got quality, you've got service, parts. You've got finance and accounting, you have marketing. All those fall in underneath the project manager's job. Now we'll still be using those same skills in supply chain management.

So, if you are in supply chain management, you may have like new product introduction. Now, you'll use those same skills to work with your supplier.

If you have heard of start of production you work with that supplier to make sure all the tooling is going to be ready after the tooling is ready, you're gonna have a limited-production build. Make sure that the first tool run off that come up part to come out that tooling… make sure the parts are right. You'll have it inspected with the PPAP, And after that you have limited production builds set up and then a two months after that you have a starter production with all these functions now are ready on their production line and everything is ready to go.

So that's, you got the Project Manager for project and then you have supply chain management, project management skills all the time in on that career field.

EURE: I'm gonna tweak it a little bit for you James because I know you don't teach at Wake Tech, but I know that you are involved in hiring and firing.

So, how do you go about screening people to figure out if they learned something? Like if they're from Wake Tech versus they might have a four-year degree, but associate of applied science might be a better candidate. Do you just go by the degree? How do you…

DAVIS: Not at all, I don't think any organization anymore goes by, you know, the degree, per se.

It's more so about the character that someone's presenting, right?

If you can explain to me how you've solved the problem. How you haven't given up on something. How you been a part of a team or again, have been able to collaborate successfully.

Uh, even if it's a new area to you. A lot of things that you just heard Keith and Jeff speak on are, you know, it's a broad brush you can paint with supply chain solution.

So, there's several sectors, if you were presented an opportunity which you want to take it if it wasn't another country or for example myself, I was on the road for five years when I first started out. Kentucky, Chicago different-like place every week. Flying in and out. So, it's what you're open to.

But definitely all employers are looking at your character. How you present yourself and I guess it's just a gut feeling, you know, that you have when someone's able to answer questions. But it helps how you prove that you can stick with something to problem solve.

And that could be as simple as the interview location is physical and there was construction at the entrance, what other entrance did you take? How did you not give up?

How did you get here? Yeah, we know that elevator isn't working, but did you still get here on time and at this point, or did you have technical difficulties with a virtual interview, right? Did you use your mobile device instead?

Yeah, more so around the character of the individual, is what a me as an employer what I'm looking for in terms of weeding someone out.

I would say be very cautious about the questions that you're asking and keep them, you know, focused on what you apply for.

There's a lot of bright and shiny things, and especially in larger organizations, and if you kind of inquire about things outside of what you apply for, it can show your disposition that you're not really sure what you want do.

And I know I've been in that seat where I've been hungry before as well, and very anxious, but too much interest in other roles can kind of deter somebody from truly thinking you want that. So, I just wanna give that realistic feedback as well.

EURE: Alright. And I have a question for you, Mia… for Career Services, because I know you worked with all the departments and you work with students.

Give us some kind of suggestions you would have for students that are listening of come to career services to get prepared for an interview in supply chain or any other. But I'm particularly talking about project management, management and supply chain.

And do we have internships? And that might be something Keith or Jeff can answer. Can you answer that? Or was I confusing you, Mia?

KENNEDY: No, I think I can answer your question. And please let me know if I do not answer your question.

So, the first part of your question was how can we prepare students for an interview?

I would really suggest students to do their research. Kind of like James was saying, like know the company that you're applying for and the position. That position and not other positions. So, definitely doing your research.

That way, when you come meeting with the career specialists, they can kind of walk you through and prepare you for potential questions in that role.

So, definitely do your research to know more about the position and the company, will definitely put you ahead of the game as far as preparing for that interview.

Your second question was about work-based learning. We do have College Central. So if you visit careers.waketech.edu. There is a link and you, students can create an account with College Central and they can search internships.

There's also they work-based learning site on Wake Tech as well, and so they have different options where they can look for work-based learning opportunities such as internships and apprenticeships.

And Keith and Jeff, please add on anything else in the, in regard to logistics or supply chain management internships or apprenticeships.

PFEIFER: For sure, we do have an apprenticeship with GSK that we currently have two students right now that are part of that program. And they will be graduating so GSK is looking for some new students.

So, for the application and you need to file for that application by the end of this month.

ZIDMAN: And that GSK program is that you're working full time and going to school and GSK is helping you go to school. And then three years basically have the associate degree and three years' work experience. So, it's a great program.

EURE: All of ya'll are very interesting people. So, um, I've enjoyed you, and I'm wanna ask, and I think you kind of alluded to it a little bit, more about the type of learning that takes place at Wake Tech in particular.

This is for Keith and Jeff because I know that most of your classes are online. but if the stupidest come straight out of high school, would that be a good candidate or do you… Because I know a lot of these students, as you say, are going for certifications. They already have degrees.

Just give us a kind of an overview of the kind of students and the kinds of career paths they have.

PFEIFER: Want me to start? Okay, I'll start.

So most of our, about 80 to 90% of our students are already in the job. So, what they're they're pretty busy during the daytime, so that this particular curriculum was set up to be strictly online. It always had been the last nine years, so we teach the online courses.

So, now as supply chain management become ever so more important. It's in the news. You see it all the time, so there's a lot of people are getting, wondering what is it? It's been out there for a long while, but now it's making the headlines more students will be interested.

We're starting to teach this at some of the high schools, so there are some high school seniors that are taking college-level courses in supply chain management, so that's really awesome. We're starting to, teaching them at a younger age.

Now what we'll want to do is to try to build a curriculum where we can start doing some in-seat instructions here at the campus, but that's yet to come.

One other thing that we're looking at will perhaps taking some instructions and going to the high school and teaching them there at their location. I'm excited about that.

Jeff, do you want to…

ZIDMAN: Yeah, like you said, the only instruction right now is s fully online and that does give students flexibility to do that on their time, but it is a bigger time commitment, and you have to be a little bit more self-directed if you're going to take a fully online class.

So, what we have been doing is having some we call synchronous sessions during the semester where you have an opportunity to be face to face.

It's not required because we know everyone's got different schedules. Some people work nights, something work days. But it's an opportunity to have some face-to-face interaction with your classmates, with the, with the instructor and try to give another element of construction there.

Because I think that building relationships and that networking is a very important part of supply chain management. You don't always get that in a fully online instruction.

PFEIFER: Well, I do wanna add this one more thing, Mike though. So, talking about an online course, Gee, how good can it be?

Well, according to Newsweek magazine, of all the universities and colleges that actively teach online courses, Wake Tech Community College rated in the top 150 in that survey.

Well, gee, how many colleges out there did they survey? I Googled this, so it must be true. There's about 2,500 universities and colleges that actively teach online classes.

So, when we think about the percentages in the top 150, you're the top 6% of all of those colleges. And Wake Tech, we're the only community college in North Carolina that made that list.

EURE: And I will add I used to work part time for Wake Tech online, and it was before the pandemic. The number one community college online. The number one in the whole United States. So that's a great thing.

We have some more questions. Well at least one more question.

So, I am going to be quiet and let it come across come across.

GREENE: DJ asks has the migration to a virtual workforce helped or hindered the work you do? What are pros or cons have you seen or experienced?

DAVIS: I'll take that one.

ZIDMAN: Go ahead.

DAVIS: Sorry Jeff. Yeah, I'll take that one.

This is just as recent as like a week and half ago said that typically when people are all working from home, uh, there are certain relaxations that happen, right?

So, one of those points is that someone did not identify utilizing proper time zones.

So, across the network, we started seeing the dip and you know what was received and increasing damages. And, I 'm like what is going on? I know my teams on top of it, so the time for delivery from several of our vendors was off.

So, which meant some of these vendors delivered ice cream, milk, and eggs in a time frame when no one was at a location. This equated to about $60,000 in damaged-out goods across the board. So to say that a hinderance… I wouldn't say there's pros in terms of work-life balance.

But as a whole logistics team, everybody has to keep that focus right? If ESPN, catching your attention in the background and you didn't update that column in the sheet and it impacts us this way, then conversations are gonna be had.

So, I do see it from both sides. It is a luxury but having more of a balance, more of a relaxation. An approach, but as far as your work approach, I think it's just starting to say that everybody shall hold that firm line.

There's one more comment I wanted to piggyback on Mike, Jeff and Keith …that you spoke about about Wake Tech. My wife made me promise to save this when she was selling software for Pearson Education. I would constantly ask her what was her favorite place to go to? Was it Duke? Was it Carolina? Was it NC State? And she would constantly say Wake Tech had the best services, resources of any of them colleges she visited in North Carolina and that Virginia border.

So, I did wanna give that shout out because she was a huge fan. She just couldn't believe it.

She's like they're getting even more resources than Duke and Carolina, I wish I would have known that. And I was thinking the same thing, so I would be remiss if I didn't share that

and just want everybody on the college that's watching to know that you have great resources and the support team around you.

PFEIFER: That deserves a woo hoo.

ZIDMAN: yeah I was going to comment about the whole being virtual. I think one of the challenges is, is that earlier even supply changes all about building relationships and it's hard to do that without being really there, face to face in a lot of cases.

So, you can do so much on a virtual setting like this, but as an example I worked on a project where we're doing and what we call an ERP implementation. So, a new inventory and financial system and we're trying to do that remotely because of COVID, that is not the preferred way to do that. You want to be on site so you can understand those issues and triage that when that happens.

So, there are certain things that are much more difficult for my project management standpoint. That means that's a longer time scale to get to completion. When you when you can't see all in the same room together.

So, while I think it does, you know, as Jim said, it gives you some nice work-life balance it's challenging to operate that way continuously.

EURE: Before we go any further, I do want you to know that we only have one minute, really zero, now 30 seconds left.

But we'll give ourselves a five-minute extension just for everyone to give a little bit of brief information but before we do that part we wanna do the last question, and you may have answered it.

What advice did you have with students interested in pursuing a career and supply chain management and logistics and distribution management?

And I know that they have to bring ya'll back for a part two, we just couldn't get it all in this one time.

Anybody can answer, and I guess Keith, it will probably be you.

PFEIFER: Sure. I'll just start off first. Supply chain management is dynamic. It's multi-faceted, and It's pays well.

EURE: That sounds good.

Well, Jeff or James, either one.

DAVIS: I'll chime in. As Keith said, so those trees in the page this would right like so, but one of the things you can do to stand out and pop out. I would say if make Mia your best friend, like she should know you on first-name basis via email or whatever. I was that kid when I attended college that you were gonna know me in and out, know me in and out.

So, as well as listen to Jeff and Keith, they they know what they're talking about, what they're instructing you. You won't believe how many times I've heard terminology when I first started and said, "we talked about that." Or, I think we discussed something just like this, right?

So, really ask those questions to Keith and Jeff now, that you're inquisitive about and say, well, how does that work? If you have something that's unsolved in your mind, make sure that you specify drafted it up. Write it up and say hey, how is this approach? I just saw this going on current affairs wise. How is that impacting us?

What would you have done differently, because these are likely questions or topics you'd be asked in the interview setting anyway, for the role.

I have a young mentee that he and obtained a supply chain role right out of college. He's now an area manager at 25 for ADIDAS.

So, that's the other thing. There's really no age ceiling on supply chains. It kind of works to your advantage, right?

So, if you're pursuing, this as an opportunity you're probably more willing to travel or do certain things when that is your age frame.

EURE: Alright. And before you answer, Jeff, I did want to say the reason I asked about a person out of high school. I'm embedded in the advisor's suite on the Northern Wake, and an advisor asked me "that they put out today, will it be available later? I said yes, it's going to living on the internet and perpetually. She said "because I had a student today that was interested in supply chain."

And I do want to give the plug and Wake Tech is offering free tuition for the fall semester. Anybody that wants to come, this is a great opportunity to try.

Alright, Jeff, I'll be quiet.

ZIDMAN: Actually, I don't have anything else to add. Between our James and Keith they pretty much said it all.

EURE: Okay. So, we're getting ready to close and I'm gonna let everybody give a closing. And Jerry and just tell us what you thought about it. And then we're gonna do Mia, then Jeff,

then Keith and James… I don't think we got you put your contact information in the private chat, but if we did, we're gonna do you regardless.

Go ahead, Jerry. What did you think about it today?

GREENE: I don't really have much to share. I'm happy to have been here to be a part of the discussion, to learn more about project, but more about supply chain and project management. I'm sorry.

I really enjoyed the discussion that I came in not knowing a lot about it, but I got a lot out of it. A lot of information.

EURE: Thank you. Mia.

KENNEDY: I just wanna say thank you to each of our panelists today. You guys shared so much information. In just opening our students minds up about what exactly is logistics and supply chain and different career paths that they can go in. So, thank you for sharing them your knowledge with our students today.

EURE: Jeff.

ZIDMAN: Thanks for having me on today. I've really enjoyed meeting with the panel here and sharing some thoughts.

And yes, closing thoughts here is you know, if you're in the program or you're interested, you know, feel free to reach out to your instructors. I mean, we're here, not just to teach classes, but coach coach you along, answer questions, doesn't have to be necessarily even about the material. You know, just that's what the resource, and that's beauty of the community college.

We are one community and we're trying to get our students to be a part of that.

EURE: And could you give your contact information? Say it.

ZIDMAN: It's just jzidman@waketech.edu

EURE: Thank you. Keith.

PFEIFER: Well, I love being here and I hope, Mike, that you have us back.

There's so much information that we could give in chain management. It's 15 minutes, wasn't enough, but I've enjoyed it.

So, If you have any questions or things out there, anybody like to ask questions about contact information, kppfeifer@waketech.edu, I'll entertain any questions you have.

EURE: Thank you. Thank you.

Um, James.

DAVIS: Yep, I just encourage everybody to take a good look at the field and the programs Wake Tech offers.

You can reach me at jdavis4631@gmail.com, if you have questions or james.davis@gopa.com.

I did wanna ask a question. Jerry, did you volunteer for this today?

GREENE: No, not exactly.

You know, I'm here, you know?

DAVIS: Yeah, I believe I have some beneficial information for you. I am just joking with you.

So, I will definitely communicate offline.

EURE: Jerry has been consistent and he really quite… he very bash, not bashful, but he doesn't like to brag on himself. But I brag on because I'm his success coach.

DAVIS: Lucky for you, Jerry, I've sent him this staffer in the Virginia area and two of the DoD cyber security project managers live in my neighborhood and my wife now works for Amazon on the cyber security side.

So, lucky you for actually volunteering and being volun-told. So, I believe it's gonna [inaudible].

GREENE: I appreciate that.

EURE: And I appreciate all of you. And now all good things must come to an end.

So, I guess we can wave goodbye.

And please share with folks that this is available for them to look at later.

Have a great day.