
Supply Chain Coaching

Supply Chain Visions is a specialized consulting firm dedicated to assisting companies with supply chain strategy development, implementation and education. Our expert advice and collaborative approach help clients develop solutions that are strategic as well as practical, cost effective and focused on driving measurable performance improvements.

Our Approach

The Supply Chain Visions philosophy is to “teach a company to fish” rather than bring in herds of consultants, costing thousands of dollars, which generally wind up as “Vinyl Binder” studies that sit on a book shelf. For that reason – we typically do not staff more than two people on an engagement and instead work with your employees/teams through the projects they are tackling by embedding our consultants as part of the client team, serving an educational role as much as a consulting role. This unique approach leaves the client team better able to enact genuine and enduring change in the organization in support of strategic objectives.

While many companies like to augment their teams with subject matter expert consultants, we have found that some of our clients like a more “hands-off” approach where Supply Chain Visions plays more of a “coaching” role than in physically developing project deliverables. As such, we offer Supply Chain Coaching as one of our service offerings.

Unlike consulting, supply chain coaching takes more of an advisory role in helping you and your team members solve their own supply chain problems. Your team is responsible for the primary creation of all project deliverables. Supply Chain Visions will work with your team to help them assess the current state of the supply chain and to build a supply chain vision for the future and support the improvement efforts. A typical supply chain coaching project will consist of the following three phases.

Assessment

Supply Chain Visions begins a coaching engagement by helping you clearly define the business problem your company is seeking to solve. We do this through one on one dialogs and/or by facilitating meetings with your team. From there we typically will mentor your team through a supply chain assessment where the relevant people within your organization will self assess and document your current businesses processes and the IT infrastructure in the supply chain areas that needs to be addressed. Lastly, we work with your team to examine the metrics your firm currently employs to track your performance and, if appropriate, we explore other possible metrics that might prove valuable going forward.

Supply Chain Visioning

Once the Supply Chain Visions consultants have had an opportunity to understand the business problem and your company’s current approach to addressing it, the consultants will work with your team, through a facilitated workshop, to develop a vision for your supply chain that is

aligned to your strategic goals, objectives and plans. It is critical that the team has a single vision of the future supply chain, based on your firm's restrictions and requirements, (these could be financial, technological, personnel-related etc.). From the supply chain vision a *Roadmap* is typically co-developed with the consultant and your team members. The Supply Chain Visions consulting team provides subject matter expertise to guide your team through developing an optimal solution. This joint approach to developing your organization's Roadmap is critical because it ensures that the new processes/solutions developed will have user buy-in.

From here, Supply Chain Visions will assist your team in documenting how the envisioned improvements will be put into practice. We often refer to this as the *Blueprint for Success*. This step normally involves establishing and deploying new or revised business processes and altering or making different/better use of the technologies available to your firm. A key part of the Blueprint Planning Phase is an iterative review with your company's management to be certain that the envisioned solution meets your firm's requirements and constraints.

Implementation Coaching

Once the Blueprint is completed and approved/funded, the team will typically move into implementation. Under a coaching arrangement, Supply Chain Visions consultants will be readily available as a resource both on an "ad hoc basis" (to answer immediate questions etc.) and to attend meetings/conference calls as required. The *Implementation Coaching Phase* can be delivered all on-site, all remote, or a combination of the two and is often part time in nature. For example, one company relied on coaching services 2 days a week – with on site coaching one week a month. This greatly reduced the cost of maintaining the Supply Chain Visions consultant as a key resource and enabled the company to fund Subject Matter Expert support for the entire duration of the project – and not just during the strategy/planning phases.

How is Coaching Different from Consulting?

Coaching is different than consulting in two key ways:

- 1) The amount of time spent by the consultant actively engaged in creating project "deliverables" is greatly reduced because your team creates the deliverables (and as a result the cost of project for consulting support is reduced). However, they are guided through the process by their coach on the team who is a subject matter expert in the field.
- 2) Coaching dramatically increases the likelihood that new methods or processes will be explored and remains in practice. Because your employees are intimately involved in the identification of current process shortcomings and desired changes, those employees make a significant contribution to the design of any improved approaches. The goal is for your firm's employees to actively drive the required changes.

In some cases, companies have utilized coaching for one or all of the typical phases in their supply chain management projects. For example, one Fortune 50 company almost always has Supply Chain Visions play an active consulting role in process redesign efforts – but then converts to a coaching relationship during implementation.

Because each Supply Chain coaching engagement is slightly different, please feel free to contact Supply Chain Visions to discuss your requirements or email us at info@scvisions.com.