Reality Check: What We Learned in Denver about Women’s Supply Chain Leadership

Insights and Observations from AWESOME Events in conjunction with the CSCMP Global Conference Denver · October 2013
INTRODUCTION

The AWESOME Executive Forum, held on October 20, 2013, in conjunction with the Global Conference of CSCMP (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals), was the second gathering of leading supply chain women since the AWESOME initiative was launched in January 2013.

The first AWESOME event, a one-day leadership Symposium, took place on May 9, 2013, in Chicago and involved nearly 200 women executives from supply chain management and other fields.

The official report from the May 9 Symposium — *Reality Check: What We Now Know* — featuring insights and observations about women’s supply chain leadership collected at that event, was first distributed at AWESOME events in Denver. It is available in both printed and electronic format. To receive a printed copy please email mary.cline@awesomeleaders.org with your request. Or download the electronic version at www.awesomeleaders.org.

This report — *Volume Two – Reality Check: What We Learned in Denver about Women’s Supply Chain Leadership* — captures highlights from presentations and discussions in October. In addition to summaries of key points, direct quotes – which are part of the “listening-based” record of up-to-date thinking of senior supply chain women – are included as “Words of Wisdom.”
Women’s Leadership Events in Denver – 2013

October 20
AWESOME Executive Forum
• Industry Alive: Harnessing the Potential of Collaboration
• The Next Leap for Women Leaders

CSCMP Women at Work Panel and Reception
• 21st Century Leadership: The Female Quotient

CSCMP Welcome Reception

AWESOME Tapas and Chocolate Event

October 21
CSCMP Opening Session

CSCMP Session: Women in Logistics and Supply Chain Management
• Results of Annual Survey: “Career Perspectives of Women in Logistics and Supply Chain Management”
• Presentation of Collected Wisdom from AWESOME Symposium
• Discussion: Supply Chain Redesign

Additional Event hosted by DSC Logistics, including presentation of “Thinkers & Movers” Award
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary ...........................................5

Executive Forum

Opening Remarks .............................................8

Topic 1 ..................................................12

Topic 2 ..................................................18

Women at Work .............................................24

Tapas and Chocolate Event ..................................30

Women in Logistics and Supply Chain Management (CSCMP Session)

“Thinkers and Movers” Award ..........................38
(Presented by DSC Logistics)

The AWESOME Excellence in Education Scholarships .................40

The AWESOME Directory ................................43

Next Steps for AWESOME .................................43
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Discussions at AWESOME events in October 2013 both confirmed and expanded the thinking related to women’s supply chain leadership.

Logistics has a long history as a primarily tactical function, for the most part excluded from what companies considered their key strategies. With the development of a more strategic focus and a broader role for supply chain management, intellectual capabilities became as important as operations capabilities, and women’s strengths have become increasingly relevant to supply chain leadership. Participants throughout discussions point to collaboration as being essential for successful supply chain management. Women’s desire and ability to eliminate barriers and silos, to work cooperatively with colleagues, and to see both the big picture and the small details are named as qualities women bring to leadership.

Another key observation is that one of the main obstacles hindering women from achieving their full potential as supply chain leaders is that the industry was structured by men for men. Up to the present, women have generally not had the advantages men have had in terms of networking, role models, mentoring and general openness to women as leaders. If companies are to utilize the full potential of women, it is felt they have some work to do in the areas of recognizing subtle forms of discrimination; fostering diversity; attracting, hiring and developing young women as leaders; and rethinking hierarchies, structures, work environments and leadership criteria.

The primary area of interest identified at the Symposium, at the Executive Forum and in other discussions is developing, expanding and, then, leveraging a strong network of women supply chain executives. Women are eager to become involved in this network as a means of brainstorming together and learning from each other on issues that range from helping their company’s senior management gain a better understanding of the supply chain... to sharing innovative ideas and best practices...to exploring the potential of intra-company collaborations and ventures...to building their own careers.
It has been repeatedly emphasized that women need to own their own career development. Discussions around strategies have focused on encouraging women to build their skills, step up to opportunities, be willing to take risks, and find mentors and peers who can support their growth and development.

Participants feel there is also a need for successful women to develop women in the pipeline through mentoring, sponsorships, internships, scholarships and other means. Discussions also pointed out the need to involve and educate men in programs to build women’s leadership, the goal being to raise the overall excellence of leadership and the ability of teams and colleagues to work well together.
Opening Remarks — Executive Forum

Ann Drake, Founder of AWESOME
Chairman and CEO, DSC Logistics

Welcome to our first ever AWESOME Executive Forum for leading supply chain women.

It’s always great to be part of the groundbreaking beginning of something totally new. So today, you are. Today marks the continuation of a new drive for Women’s Supply Chain Leadership.

We have a common interest, which is expanding and improving opportunities for success for women throughout our industry.

We have the enthusiastic support of CSCMP.

We have momentum.

And we are building a critical mass of outstanding women leaders.

Last January, when we launched AWESOME, we chose the name very carefully, because each of the letters in that name stands for something important: Achieving Women’s Excellence in Supply Chain Operations, Management, and Education.

As you see, the A in AWESOME is for Achieving. When we first started the initiative, we thought the A would stand for Advancing. But then, because of the response of leaders throughout the industry, we became bolder. We have been “advancing” slowly for years — much too slowly! With the energy and enthusiasm behind this initiative, it’s time to achieve, not just advance.

The W in AWESOME is for Women, of course — the most under-utilized resource in the industry.

The first E is for Excellence. And today, this forum is all about excellence, because when we share ideas, when we learn from each other, and when we gain a better grasp of our supply chain environment, we increase our ability to excel. And we’re doing it together.

S-O-M-E… Supply Chain Operations, Management and Education. We wanted to include the very broadest range of leadership roles, so we reached out to leading women at manufacturers and consulting firms, logistics companies, government agencies, retail businesses, transportation enterprises, universities, aerospace entities, military establishments, technology firms and industry organizations.
Ann Drake, Founder of AWESOME and Chairman and CEO of DSC Logistics, with Sandy Evett, AWESOME Executive Consultant
I even received a letter from a woman who runs a transportation company in Mongolia. She had heard about AWESOME, and she wanted to know if she could join. Clearly, there’s almost no limit to how far this can go.

Within months after starting AWESOME, we found nearly 400 women in supply chain leadership roles. But they didn’t know each other. They’ve been too busy navigating their way through a man’s world.

It’s sometimes said that it’s lonely at the top. Well, it can be lonely getting to the top, too. But it doesn’t have to be lonely anymore. Together, we’re going to find out what we can build and grow and inspire and change and transform!

So, let’s get started!
AWESOME Executive Forum
October 20, 2013

Topic 1: Industry Alive!
Harnessing the Potential of Collaboration
Opening Remarks — Topic One

Kate Vitasek
Founder, Supply Chain Visions

Action vs Traction
(Excerpts)

“We sometimes miss the boat on collaboration, because there are really two ways you should think about collaboration. There’s action and there’s traction.

“Action is like a rat on a treadmill. You’re just going and going and going and you’re networking and you’re saying ‘I’d like to collaborate.’

“Traction is doing something meaningful and significant that’ll help me achieve my goals and whoever I’m collaborating with achieve their goals.

“So when we see each other at conferences and events, why don’t we talk about our goals? Why don’t we cut to the chase? This is a safe environment – so why don’t we use it to make our companies better?

“In this room, we capture the entire supply chain. We’ve got buyers, suppliers, consultants. Why can’t we change the world in supply chain management with collaborations that start right here in this room?”

Discussion:

Following opening remarks, forum attendees participated in small group discussions on the following questions:

1. Are you taking enough ACTION?
2. What role should AWESOME play in helping companies take ACTION to drive collaboration?
3. What topics are of greatest interest for cross-company collaboration?
4. Are you getting enough TRACTION?
5. Which of the tips shared today can you use to help you build collaborative relationships?
6. What role should AWESOME plan in helping companies get TRACTION to drive collaboration?
Participants expressed agreement that Action and Traction are different. Finding partners with whom effective collaboration can take place was compared to the process of dating leading toward marriage: It requires meeting and getting to know people (and companies) before the right match can be made. During this early phase, it helps to have a way to qualify people so that time spent can be most effective. Then the ability to move toward true collaboration depends on several factors – including compatibility of company cultures, alignment of goals, and willingness to develop a relationship built on communication and trust.

In addition to the benefits of cross-company collaboration for joint business ventures and projects, participants talked about mentoring as one area of collaboration that can lead to improvements. The discussion included sharing observations about mentoring programs participants have experienced.

**Key Points from Small Group Discussions:**

What are barriers to collaboration – what keeps us from getting “Traction”?

- Global positions make it challenging to attend conferences.
- Leadership responsibilities often pose time constraints and sometimes the “window of opportunity” is lost.
- A day-to-day focus is more common than opportunities to think long-term or collaboratively.
- Many companies still do not recognize the importance of collaboration; in fact, they may discourage or prohibit collaboration across companies.
- Women leaders are not effectively using networks to achieve goals. They need to reach out and connect with each other to explore many types of collaborative possibilities.
WORDS OF WISDOM:

“When I come to an event like this, I really look forward to meeting new people and getting to know other people better and building bridges. But I always look for at least one area that I could really take away and get some traction on.”

“Before collaboration can be achieved, we need to take action to assess viability of interaction to decide if it’s worth the investment of time to get traction.”

“We need to have more collaborations and partnerships. We should be ‘marrying’ more people in the business profession, and the business profession should not be monogamous.”

“Credibility and ‘credentialization’—that’s something we get from AWESOME. AWESOME allows us to come into this room and know that people do have the credibility and they do have the credentials, and it’s a safe place to start that action so we can decide if there’s potential for traction.”

“Some of us in the room have had great opportunities with wonderful mentoring programs – and mentoring doesn’t always have to be with women – right? At the Symposium in Chicago in early May, there were men who were great mentors in that session.”

“Words of Wisdom” are comments from participants in the AWESOME presentations and discussions — part of the “listening-based” record of the up-to-date thinking from senior supply chain women.
What are some of the elements needed for cross-company collaboration?

- Joint ownership and shared goals
- Chemistry and trust
- Focus on a burning question that is a priority for both companies
- Willingness to “break down the walls” and reset expectations with openness and communication
- A structure, including goals and objectives and alignment on those goals, between partners

What role can AWESOME play in helping companies collaborate?

- Provide networking opportunities
- Help pre-qualify people with credentials and credibility to become potential partners
- Share insights about what has worked well for others
- Develop a list of issues and people who can be contacted as resources

What areas hold greatest potential for cross-company collaboration?

- Best Practices sharing
- Benchmarking
- Talent and Leadership Development
AWESOME Executive Forum
October 20, 2013

Topic 2:
The Next Leap for Women Leaders
Opening Remarks — Topic 2

Shari Boston
Vice President, Global Supply Chain, Convatec

Joann Michalik
Director, Deloitte Consulting
Supply Chain & Manufacturing Operations Practice

Shari:

“I grew up in the deep South – and women truly are perceived different in the South than they are in the North. There’s a bias before you even hit the workplace.

“After graduating with a major in computer information systems where I was one of two women, I went to work for a foundry. What I learned very quickly was just how much bias there was against women. And the result was that there were misperceptions and contradictory messages. My passion for what I was doing was seen as overbearing.

“My dad, always asked me, ‘Are you CEO yet?’ And I’d say, ‘Not yet, Dad. But I’m working on it.’ His whole thing was that you can do anything. You’ve got to have the drive and identify who you are as an individual. Know what your purpose is and not what people perceive it as being.”

Joann:

“I went to an engineering school, Rensselaer, which was seven percent women. Glad to say that school is now 40 percent women, but when I went through it, it was seven percent. I joined the manufacturing/management training program at General Electric the same month the company settled with the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) because they had been discriminating.”
“Being a consultant – and going in and out of companies day in and day out for five years all around the world — I quickly learned that you have to have someone in your organization that you can depend on. You have to have a safety net.”

“When I was working in the manufacturing field, there were women but they were in certain pigeon-holed roles. How do we as women understand this? How do we educate men on the second gender bias that still exists, even in big companies?”

“Sometimes you go through some pain, but there’s some reward after that.”

“Sometimes how you’re perceived is typically how you perceive yourself.”

“Words of Wisdom” are comments from participants in the AWESOME presentations and discussions — part of the “listening-based” record of the up-to-date thinking from senior supply chain women.
“Early in my career I didn’t want to admit there was a problem. I wanted to say, ‘My effort, my work ethic, what I do on the job will make a difference.’ I didn’t want to believe that I needed help but I learned that I did.

“Sometimes women don’t think or believe they’re fully valued. We’ve done surveys at Deloitte several times and found that even our women leaders, even very successful women, will say, ‘I was just lucky.’”

Discussion:

The starting point for this discussion was an article published in the September 2013 issue of Harvard Business Review. The publication featured a series of articles under the umbrella “Bossy...Emotional...Too Nice: The biases that still hold women leaders back – and how to overcome them.” The AWESOME Forum discussion focused on some of the key observations included in the article, “Women Rising: The Unseen Barriers,” by Herminia Ibarra, Robin Ely and Deborah Kolb.

Small groups were asked to focus on these four questions:

1. Describe pivotal moments in your career when you took risks that were affirmed and created a positive cycle of experimentation, success and recognition.

2. Has there been someone in your career who has believed in you and supported or sponsored you? How can we do that for other emerging leaders?

3. Have you found yourself the recipient of contradictory feedback? How did you clarify interpretation and modify behavior?

4. What tactics and strategies have you used to shed comfortable and previously effective identities and develop new, more fitting ones?
“What the article (Harvard Business Review) suggests is that you need reinforcement in order to take risk. When you take risk and somebody says, ‘That’s cool, keep going,’ you keep going.”

“You’ve got to take the risks – and don’t hesitate to ask for them.”

“You need to identify your leadership purpose. When you can anchor yourself in that, it helps you through the tough times.”

“Self-promoting – a lot of us don’t do that very well. So, get out there. Close your laptop, have lunch, talk about your work and your projects.”

“Early in your career, you might have been told, ‘Don’t go in and try to tell the people what to do and don’t be kind of happy, bouncy, whatever.’ Then, later in your career, it was, ‘Okay. Now you need to go in and tell people what to do.’”

“Emerging leaders often simply need someone to believe in them.”

“Discover your strengths and then let’s change the conversation about ourselves. So when someone gives me contradictory feedback and says ‘You are too passionate,’ I can turn to them and say, ‘You’re right, because one of my number one strengths is being passionate, and I’m happy about that it, and I’m making it be more positive.”

**Book recommendation**

*Work With Me: How Gender Intelligence can help you succeed in work and in life* by Barbara Annis and John Gray

“Words of Wisdom” are comments from participants in the AWESOME presentations and discussions — part of the “listening-based” record of the up-to-date thinking from senior supply chain women.
Key Points from Small Group Discussions:

- In the early-to-mid stages of a career, there is more access to mentors. But that often ends when a person reaches a certain level.

- One strategy at that point is to look laterally for mentors – look for peers from whom you can learn.

- Some have experienced situations where cultural dynamics impose barriers – for example, doing business in a country where a woman selling a product or pitching an idea would have less chance of success.

- That sort of cultural drawback also applies to global students and mentoring those students to understand how some of their cultural perceptions are no longer appropriate.

- It’s important to hold people accountable for what they’re saying that’s contradictory – talk it through. If there’s some truth to it, it can then be addressed.

- The culture of your company has a major impact – it’s very positive if the culture permits flexibility and recognizes different types of leadership styles.
CSCMP Session
October 20, 2013

Women at Work
21st Century Leadership:
The Female Quotient
Chair: Michelle VanderMeer  
Senior Director, Logistics, Whirlpool Corporation

Moderator: Susan Purdum  
Faculty Instructor, Smeal College of Business,  
The Pennsylvania State University

Panelists: Mary Boettcher  
President, Integrys Transportation Fuels

Jason Reiman  
Vice President of Global Logistics, Hershey Company

Heather Sheehan  
Vice President, Indirect Sourcing and Logistics,  
Danaher Corporation

Michelle VanderMeer

The starting point for this discussion was research conducted at Penn State University by Dr. Al Vicere, Executive Education Professor of Strategic Leadership. He published a report of his findings — “Leadership in the Network Economy” — in the early 2000s. He concludes that two major forces of change have significantly changed the economic environment over the past few decades.

- Globalization
- Technology that connects multiple organizations

The impact of these forces is that we now have a “network economy.”

Panelists were asked to discuss the changes and trends that define the current economic environment, the leadership traits necessary to succeed in the network economy, and whether women are well prepared and positioned to lead in this new environment.
“You can get yourself in a situation where it becomes very difficult to make a hard decision, because you’re going to have to make somebody angry or you’re going to create a win-loss scenario. It’s very important that leaders have the ability to make good decisions. And sometimes we need a little extra help with that. So good coaches, good mentors, good reading, some conferences like this one all help sharpen the skills you have or introduce you to some new skill sets you’ll need to be that kind of leader.”

“It’s all about getting to know people and creating a linkage between yourself and your interdependencies, your key stakeholders, whoever they might be in your organization. That means you have to invest time to build trust with those key stakeholders and those interdependencies, and a really good way to build trust in times of rapid change and build those networks or build those relationships is by offering your help or asking for help.”

---

**Books recommendations**

- *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* by Patrick Lencioni
- *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap. And Others Don’t* by Jim Collins
- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan and Al Switzler
- *The Leadership Engine: How Winning Companies Build Leaders at Every Level* by Noel Tichy
- *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: Comparison of Women’s Campaigns for Executive Office* by Rainbow Murray
- *Hardball for Women: Winning at the Game of Business* by Pat Hei

“Words of Wisdom” are comments from participants in the AWESOME presentations and discussions — part of the “listening-based” record of the up-to-date thinking from senior supply chain women.
Key concepts and opinions expressed by panelists:

1. The current economic environment requires certain leadership skills, including the readiness to embrace and manage change.

2. Although there is reluctance to reinforce stereotypes regarding men and women, one area where women seem to have more comfort is collaboration. The old pattern of leadership was to develop a vision and then work to get others on board. Today’s leader is more likely to start with an idea or a concept and then collaborate with others to move forward. Yet, a leader must be ready to make difficult decisions and not let an organization become paralyzed by consensus building.

3. Negotiating has tended to be less comfortable for women because it can create winners and losers; therefore, they may need to develop talents and build skills in this area. (However, new models of negotiation are being developed that involve more dialogue and limit the win/lose dimension.)

4. Self development should be a priority of a leader – not just developing everyone else.

5. “Diversity” should be addressed not only in terms of gender and ethnicity, but also age, education, background and experience.

6. Companies can encourage diversity by certain best practices, including measuring diversity and inclusion within the company, having biannual engagement surveys of employees, supporting flexible work arrangements such as work from home and flexible hours, recruiting and promoting from a diverse pool of candidates, and providing leadership education and training.

7. A company that agrees to support diversity by offering flexible arrangements should also make sure that the person in the flexible arrangement is not sidetracked.
On Changes In The Economic Environment

“With the advent of technology, we have more information at our fingertips, and it’s instantaneous, so when an issue happens, you can find out any time of day or night, when it’s happening. And that increases the need to keep up with what is going on.”

“Mobility is entering into a new stage, because consumables can occur at any given moment in time anywhere in the world. Getting the consumable from point A to point B becomes ever more important today than it was even five years ago, because our expectation for immediacy has increased with technology.”

“Another change I’ve seen is kind of the break-up of power across a distribution stream or a value stream where maybe it used to be more hierarchical and dominated in one sector. And the technology, obviously, has enabled that so there is more efficiency and more rapid deployment of process improvement across those value streams and more regulation.”

On Diversity

“The diversity of your workforce makeup should largely reflect the customers that you serve to make sure that you’re capturing like-mindedness of those customers so that you can stay on top of the cultural norms of what’s changing out there in the marketplace.”

“On the topic of flexible hours, it’s not just working out the arrangements that allow folks some flexibility, but making sure they’re not handicapped in the process. I’ve seen it where a company makes arrangements for someone to work from home or someone to work the night shift or whatever it might be, to be more flexible with their situation at home. But then they’re kind of cast out to the island and thought of in a different way in terms of career advancement or as a professional candidate. And we’ve got to stop that. So it’s both making the arrangements and finding a way to allow that person to stay on the track, to stay in the spotlight, and as leaders and managers ourselves, maybe it’s giving them those big projects to work on, the next great idea to bring back and add value.”
On Characteristics Needed By Leaders of This New Economy

“A good leader, a valuable leader, a constructive leader, is one that believes in organizational health. And I think a healthy organization that has a common, clear, resonant goal and vision and aspiration, that has a culture of trust and teamwork, I think a leader who can enculturate those types of things in their organization, is going to be tremendously successful.”

“The roots of your culture are to be preserved and to be respected, and they’re part of your value system, your DNA in your company. But you also have to have those wings that allow your company to take flight in different directions, to be flexible and responsive and nimble to opportunities.”

“A bottom line, I think, for a leader is someone who has the proven ability to make things better, make things better for their employees, in their homes, in their communities, for shareholders, for customers.”

“Negotiating may require a little bit more training tools and tactics because it does create winners and losers, and the collaboration mindset is somewhat in conflict with creating winners and losers and negotiating for a win.”

“Risk taking is a key piece of it. It’s not risk taking like going off Niagra Falls in a barrel, but it’s taking calculated business risks around the business decisions you make and career decisions you make as well.”

“An antiquated view of leadership was that you had to provide this vision that people had to go after based on your instruction and guidance and follow your prescriptive path. A newer version is that you provide this idea, this concept. And then you collaborate.”
AWESOME
Tapas and Chocolate Event
October 20, 2013
CSCMP Session
October 21, 2013

Women in Logistics and Supply Chain Management
Results of Annual Survey: “Career Perspectives of Women in Logistics and Supply Chain Management”

Presenter: Martha Cooper
Professor of Marketing and Logistics, The Ohio State University

The survey has been conducted annually among CSCMP members since 1997. Questions cover demographic profiles, work environment profiles, career patterns, and attitudes and perspectives.

Some key findings include:

- The main reasons for liking the field of logistics and supply chain management have not changed greatly over the years. What respondents continue to like best is that the field is challenging and fast-paced.

- When asked what respondents like least about the field, the top answer continues to be the lack of understanding by senior management. In both 1997 and 2005, the answer named next most often was that it is a field “dominated by men.” In 2005, “the feeling of stress and pressure” joined “dominated by men” as the second most popular answer – and “…stress and pressure” has remained in second place since 2005.

- The characteristics that respondents believe contribute most to success are
  - Dedication, hard work
  - Big-picture understanding
  - Leadership/management skills
  - Analytical ability
  - Strong interpersonal skills
  - Good communication

- When the survey asked both men and women how difficult it is to balance career and life (in categories of not difficult at all, not too difficult, moderate, somewhat, very difficult), their answers were very similar, with most believing the difficulty is moderate or somewhat.

This year’s survey also asked about mentoring experiences and views on supply chain redesign. Members of CSCMP (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals) may view the entire survey results, including surveys dating back to 2009, at http://www.cscmp.org/member-benefits/women-logistics.
The “Shining Light on Women’s Leadership Award”
For her attention to and her understanding of women in the supply chain field, Martha Cooper receives a special “Shining Light on Women’s Leadership Award” from Ann Drake.

“I met Martha nearly 30 years ago when I had just finished business school. She was so warm, and so friendly and so knowledgeable about the science of all of this, let alone the fact that she was so into people—women and men—and her students.

Martha, 30 years ago, paid attention to women, and she began quietly and steadily studying the careers of the few women there were and shining a light on their experiences and their issues. As a scholar and a supporter of women for all these years, Martha lighted the way for some of the great things that are happening today.”

– Ann Drake, Denver

Martha C. Cooper is Professor of Marketing and Logistics at The Ohio State University. She has been on the OSU faculty since 1982.

Martha’s research interests include supply chain management, partnership and other inter-firm relationships, corporate strategy, international logistics, and women in logistics/SCM. She has co authored three books, Customer Service: A Management Perspective, Partnerships in Providing Customer Service: A Third Party Perspective, and Strategic Planning for Logistics.

Martha has taught undergraduate, masters, and doctoral level logistics courses, and has received outstanding teaching awards. She has presented at the meetings of professional organizations and continuing education programs in the U.S., Canada, Eastern and Western Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Math/Computer Science and a master’s degree in Industrial Administration from Purdue University. Her doctorate is from Ohio State.
Key highlights of Collected Wisdom from May 9 AWESOME Symposium

Presenter: Ann Drake, Founder of AWESOME
Chairman and CEO, DSC Logistics

Ann Drake presented selected observations from the complete May 2013 Symposium report – *Reality Check: What We Now Know (Insights and Observations about Women’s Leadership from Supply Chain Executives.)*

Ann’s remarks focused on sections of the report that included participants’ comments about women’s leadership strengths, obstacles and strategies.
WORDS OF WISDOM:

“As recently as a decade ago, being good at logistics meant you had to lift big boxes, you had to wear steel toed boots. You were an order-taker... and took orders from nearly everybody. You worked in silos. People rarely collaborated. There was little room for innovation or creativity. You had to follow the rules... or do what they had always done. No wonder there weren’t many women.

“But there’s now much more to supply chain management – it’s more strategic, more collaborative, more important to the overall enterprise -- and the future looks very different.”

“Words of Wisdom” are comments from participants in the AWESOME presentations and discussions — part of the “listening-based” record of the up-to-date thinking from senior supply chain women.
STRENGTHS:
• Women are especially good at building and inspiring teams.
• Women are good at seeing the big picture and communicating that vision to others.
• Women excel at multi-tasking.
• Women look for opportunities to collaborate — to cross boundaries, knock down silos, pull people together, and make new connections.
• Women aren’t tied to the barriers and hierarchies that characterized the old order.

OBSTACLES
• The image of the profession – or the lack of an image – makes it a less popular choice for young women who want a stimulating career.
• Persona and style often keep other people from recognizing a woman’s leadership abilities. Leadership looks different in a female form and people aren’t as used to seeing it.
• Women still run up against stereotypes that come from misconceptions.
• Women are still the ones who do the majority of juggling when it comes to meeting family and work commitments.

STRATEGIES
• Own your career. That means taking a proactive stance and raising your hand for the challenges and experiences that will take you to the next level.
• Build your own skills. Supply chain leaders need to be business leaders, too.
• Help develop young women coming along the pipeline.
• Connect with each other and look for opportunities to collaborate.

To receive a printed copy of the complete report — Reality Check: What We Now Know — email mary.cline@awesomeleaders.org. Download the electronic version at www.awesomeleaders.org.
The “Thinkers & Movers” Award has been presented annually since 2009 by DSC Logistics to individuals whose innovative leadership has led to ground-breaking supply chain understanding and practices. The 2013 recipients are Debbie Lentz, Senior Vice President, Logistics and Customer Service, Kraft Foods, and Rick Blasgen, President and CEO of CSCMP (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals).
The “Thinkers & Movers” Award has been presented annually since 2009 by DSC Logistics to individuals whose innovative leadership has led to ground-breaking supply chain understanding and practices. The 2013 recipients are Debbie Lentz, Senior Vice President, Logistics and Customer Service, Kraft Foods, and Rick Blasgen, President and CEO of CSCMP (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals).

“Companies are finally realizing that their supply chain is absolutely critical to the success of their enterprise. Today’s businesses have global challenges...technological challenges...competitive challenges...productivity challenges...and we are right at the center of it all. We are the orchestrators and the collaborators. One of the reasons supply chain management has risen to the important role it has today is that a stream of ‘thinkers and movers’ have made it happen.”

Ann Drake
Scholarships were awarded for the first time to two university students. Scholarship funds made it possible for the two students to participate in the 2013 CSCMP (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals) Global Conference, including all AWESOME events. Each recipient wrote an essay to describe her experience.
Alex Kester
Alex is a senior in the Neeley School of Business at TCU, and she will graduate in May 2014 with a major in supply chain management and marketing. She is currently working on her honors thesis, “Human Capital Affects the Efficiency and Viability of the Supply Chain.”

Excerpt from Alex’s essay:

“As a student I have often heard that the world of business is a man’s world. I have been exposed to the Steve Jobs, Donald Trumps and Warren Buffets of the world; however, mentions of a woman’s name are few and far between. It can be discouraging to lack strong examples of successful women. Through AWESOME I have found role models and assurance that a woman can make a significant difference and penetrate the man’s world…I was exposed to strong, persistent, self-assured women who are masters of their craft. ..Three key takeaways from my interaction in these events are everyone needs a mentor, the right kind of confidence is essential, and women need to take more career risks.”

Monica Yu
Monica is a 2014 Robert Bartels Fellowship MBA candidate in the Fisher School of Business at The Ohio State University, focusing on operations, Lean Six Sigma strategy and marketing. She received her BA degree in finance from Soochow University in Taipei in June 2008.

Excerpt from Monica’s essay:

“As I learned at the Executive Forum, our career process is just like mountain climbing and we should try our best to support each other to succeed because, at the end of the climb, no one will care who reaches the peak first but will care that we arrive together. I shared this concept with my friend at Boston University after the event; now this philosophy becomes our shared goal…Our world needs more female leaders to stand out. Through this chance, I have more confidence in myself. Now I have the courage to think big and different. This is a life-changing experience. I told myself someday I expect to make the same contribution to support our next generation.”
The AWESOME Directory

All members of the AWESOME professional network who agree to be listed in the AWESOME Directory will receive a copy of the annual Directory.

To learn more about joining the network, please visit www.awesomeleaders.org and review eligibility criteria.

We also invite you to suggest other senior supply chain women for AWESOME by emailing mary.cline@awesomeleaders.org.

Next Steps for AWESOME

• A meeting of AWESOME Advisors in February 2014.
• The second annual AWESOME Symposium on May 15, 2014.
• An AWESOME track with six sessions at CSCMP’s (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals) 2014 Global Conference September 21-24 in San Antonio, TX.

If you would like to be involved in any of these next steps for AWESOME, please contact mary.cline@awesomeleaders.org.
AWESOME Insights and Observations about Women’s Supply Chain Leadership

Volume One
Reality Check:
What We Now Know
Published October 2013

Volume Two
Reality Check: What We Learned in Denver About Women’s Supply Chain Leadership
Published February 2014

To receive printed copies of these reports, email mary.cline@awesomeleaders.org with your request. Or download the electronic version at www.awesomeleaders.org.