

Logistics Manager

The next time you go to the grocery store or shopping mall, pay attention to all the products you find there. Some of those products came from places all over the U.S., some came from China. Other products were brought in from various countries in Southeast Asia, South America, and beyond.

How did all that stuff get to your local store? The obvious answer is by train, plane, cargo ship, and truck. The more complicated answer is logistics. Someone had to figure out how to move all those products from places where they were made or grown to the stores where you buy them.



Shutterstock Photos/Weerasak Saeoku

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)

What Do Logistic Managers Do?

The process of moving goods from one place to another is called the supply chain. Logistics managers are an important link in keeping the world supplied with the products people need and want to buy. Their job is to figure out the most efficient way to move goods from suppliers to consumers. According to the Food Marketing Institute, the average grocery store sells as many as 47,000 different products. Add up all the grocery stores in the world, throw in all the other different kinds of retail stores, include all the cars people buy...Are you getting the idea that logistics is a big and challenging job? That's why it takes at least an associates degree in logistics and supply management to qualify for these types of positions. Logistics managers work for all kinds of transportation companies, manufacturers, and product distribution centers.

CHALLENGE #1: If you had this career...

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Where in the world would you most like to visit? For the sake of this activity, let's imagine that you are the "product" that needs to get from your hometown to your most desired location.

Use the Internet to map out your journey. Would it be more efficient to go by car, airplane, train, or ship? What is the quickest way to get there? What is the least expensive way to get there? Make a chart to compare your options.

If your teacher or parent gives you permission, you may even go so far as to compare prices for actual trips using websites like Amtrak (www.amtrak.com) for trains and Kayak (www.kayak.com) for flights.

