

## *Introduction*

Hello, and thank you for purchasing this book! You are very wise.

First a little about me. I am a seasoned global supply chain leader who has realized success and also carries a fair share of battle scars. Graduate credentials, industry certification and a boatload of sweat equity supported my rise through the ranks. Since the 1990s I have had the great fortune to have leadership roles in global supply chains with several outstanding companies in a variety of industries. But despite being great companies, humans are involved---so there were daily opportunities for things to go off the tracks. Yours truly has caused a few screw-ups, fixed many more, and mitigated an even larger amount.

One consistent theme during this time was my search for additional knowledge. There just *had* to be others in very similar situations, right? I desired the real world perspectives of other business leaders. These peers have developed the sophistication to successfully blend formal training with the informal, but very real and important nuances that comprise our field of global supply chain. As I didn't particularly desire to schlep my way through evening professional mixers it seemed logical to pull these perspectives from the web. But when I searched I consistently ran into the walls so common in our industry---namely the majority of the resources were either overly scholarly or were poorly-disguised pitches to sell me a product or service.

I get it though. Global supply chain has absolutely exploded in the past 25 years. The improvements in sophistication, complexity and agility of global supply chains has been driven in a big way by blue blood companies and third party solutions providers. The culture in these shops that helped drive this growth has been a stuffy, conservative, business-casual-on-Friday's type of environment.

Consequently materials and communications related to our field are so often sterile, overly-analytical and generally soulless. Try searching around for honest perspectives about what goes wrong, what isn't totally efficient, and how to actually handle things in these environments....it's tough to find! With this dearth in real, pragmatic perspectives on global supply chain in mind I set out to become part of the solution. This book attempts to put a voice to the challenges from the perspective of a business leader who has been immersed in this stuff.

So what is a global supply chain? There are a lot of opinions out there, partly because the field is constantly evolving and partly because everyone brings their own biases to the table. Do a search on Google for that specific phrase and you'll be returned over 450K distinct entries. Your findings when you dive into this quagmire may or may not jell with the understandings you already have. You should be able to cherry-pick out a given article that is relevant to the itch you're scratching, read it and understand it. The tougher part is *applying* it to your specific environment. That's where some of the material in this book comes in.

Suffice it to say, at the end of the day a global supply chain is a complex beast filled with risks from head to toe. When it "works" it's a beautiful thing and the satisfaction you get in delivering results to your customers and your organization is about the best thing going. Here's the thing---it hardly ever works as it should. Every night a global supply chain leader lives with the knowledge that something could take a nosedive half the world away. You can be armed with a best in class education, certifications and supported by high dollar consultants (more on *them* later in this book....) and still be consistently surprised. An effective leader in our field will never stop thinking about what can go wrong and what contingencies can be put in place when those bad things eventually occur. This is the pragmatic approach.



*The office of a modern global supply chain leader.....*

Before you dive further into this book I wish to briefly level set expectations. You will NOT see any of the following: a regurgitation of the academia prolific in our industry, liberal doses of SCM buzzwords, fancy flow charts or value flows (*sorry*), and a thorough analysis of conventional theories. Several reasons for this:

- a. Your own search for wisdom on global supply chain yields mostly these types of things. The world does not need another book with “Optimization”, “Modeling” or “Gemba” in the title. If you desire that, go to Amazon and have a feast.

- b. While most of this is good stuff, it doesn't necessarily prepare you to be a global supply chain leader. Experience does.
- c. As stated earlier much of the existing literature is sterile and, in fact, boring. Which is a damn shame! Our field is incredibly vibrant and exciting, and I hope to contribute to that in a positive way with this book.

Last thing. You will **not** get any sales pitches in this book. You **will** see many attempts to convince you to apply certain practices that will end up saving you much pain. I'll throw out numerous real world examples of things to avoid and good things to do. I will also liberally sprinkle in anecdotes derived from first hand experiences that reinforce these things.

I hope you find this book informational. I hope it makes you think a bit. And I hope you find it a pleasant read.

Drop me a line when you find topics here that resonate with you. I love to hear the stories from others in the trenches!

Thanks!

C. Elliott

**Good stuff, right? Go to [www.pragmaticscm.com](http://www.pragmaticscm.com) to get yourself the whole book**