

**DON'T LET
TALENT
BE YOUR
SUPPLY
CHAIN'S
WEAKEST
LINK:
3 LESSONS**



LOOKING FOR ADVICE ON STRENGTHENING YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN?

You won't need to look very hard. Open any industry book, magazine or website and you'll be pelted with helpful information on what to do – or not to do:

- Implement a Kanban system
- Commit to just-in-time purchasing
- Fill orders faster
- Contain costs

All great ideas.

But where is the advice on finding the right people – the link that can be your greatest asset – or your biggest liability?

Every supply chain strategy, from lean manufacturing to global sourcing, requires the right people to execute them.

So here's our advice – take just a few minutes to read this eBook. You'll learn three great lessons to ensure that the people you hire are the strongest part of your supply chain.

LESSON 1:

GREAT COMPANIES DON'T ALWAYS HIRE GREAT PEOPLE.

80

80% of employee turnover is because of bad hiring decisions, according to the Harvard Business Review.

You may be outstanding at your job, but that doesn't make you a hiring expert. However, you can improve your chances of success by avoiding these five common supply chain hiring mistakes.

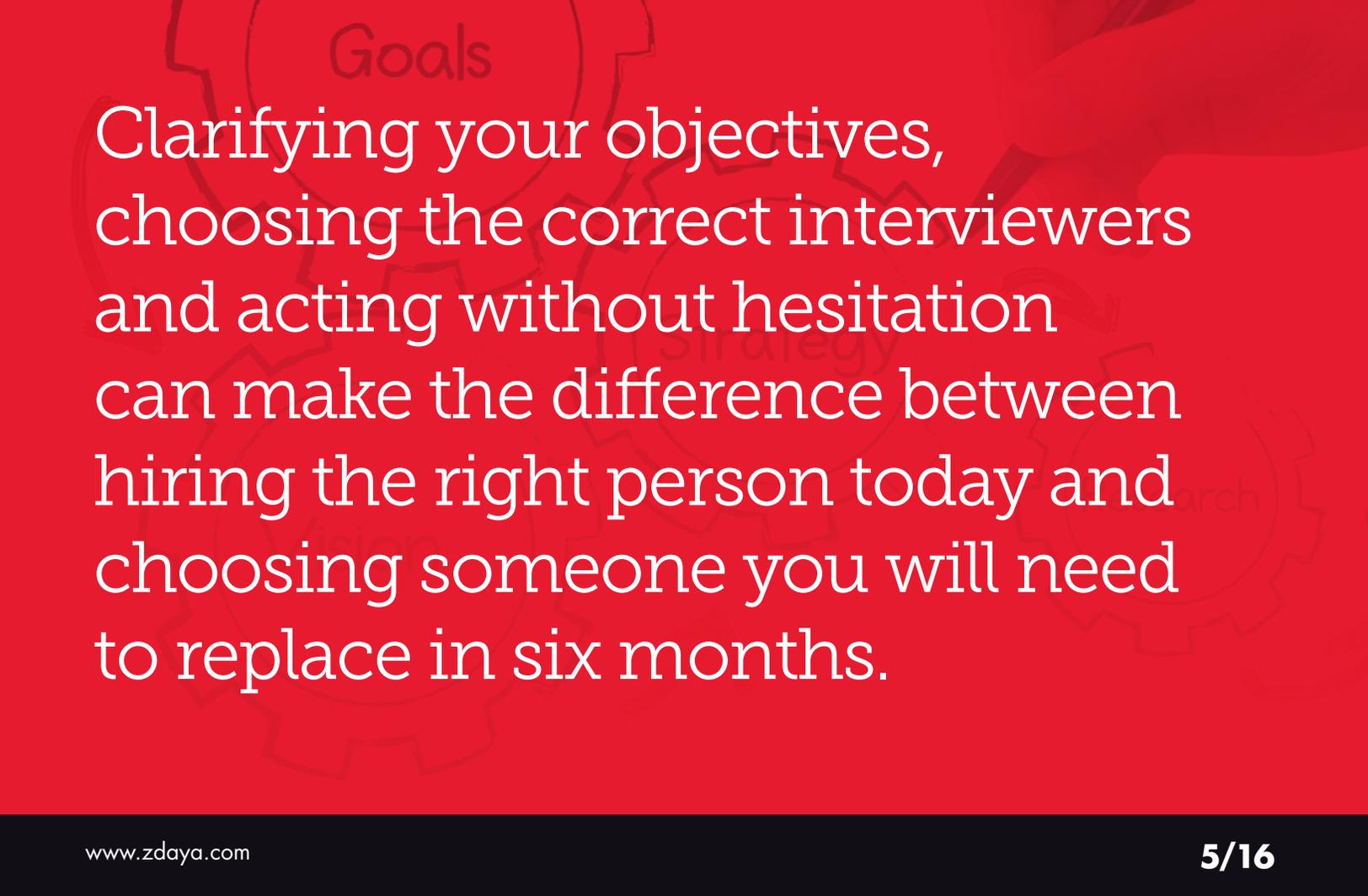
1. Too many people – or the wrong ones – involved in the interviewing process.
Increasing the number of people who interview a candidate doesn't always improve your odds of getting the hire right. Include only those who can provide useful insights or will be working directly with the person and understand what the department needs to succeed.

2. Not understanding the talent market.
Sure, everyone wants to hire a "rock star" candidate, but are you willing to do what it takes to attract top talent? Be realistic about what qualifications you really need and whether a candidate exists who can meet them all.

3. Taking too long to make a decision.
Don't delay when screening resumes, returning phone calls, conducting initial interviews and scheduling face-to-face interviews. Good candidates get multiple offers and will be gone if you are unresponsive or don't make hiring decisions quickly.

4. Putting too much emphasis on a resume.
Industry experts estimate that 40 percent of hiring decisions are based on personal chemistry, not on a resume. Resumes should be used as a high-level screening tool to help identify potential candidates. Get likely prospects in for an interview quickly and assess them in person.

5. Lack of clarity in your requirements.
Job descriptions are often too generic, outdated and not well thought out. The hiring manager must be clear on the skills, competencies and experience needed for a successful hire.

The background is a solid red color with several faint, semi-transparent gear icons scattered across it. Some of the gears contain text: one at the top left says "Goals", one in the center says "Strategy", and one on the right says "Research".

Clarifying your objectives,
choosing the correct interviewers
and acting without hesitation
can make the difference between
hiring the right person today and
choosing someone you will need
to replace in six months.

LESSON 2:

PREPARATION IS KEY TO HIRING SUCCESS.

The most experienced interviewers, the best interviewing techniques can still be doomed by a faulty hiring plan.

Before introducing yourself to that first candidate, take the time to quantify exactly what makes a successful supply chain hire. Begin by identifying the capabilities and soft skills that are vital to your team.

**Qualities of a Great
Supply Chain Manager**

1.

Global Mindset

Supply chain managers today need to be globally capable. Most retail and manufacturing companies source or sell globally, or their competitors do. A successful supply chain executive must manage initiatives that extend across continents, and build relationships with suppliers and customers worldwide.

2.

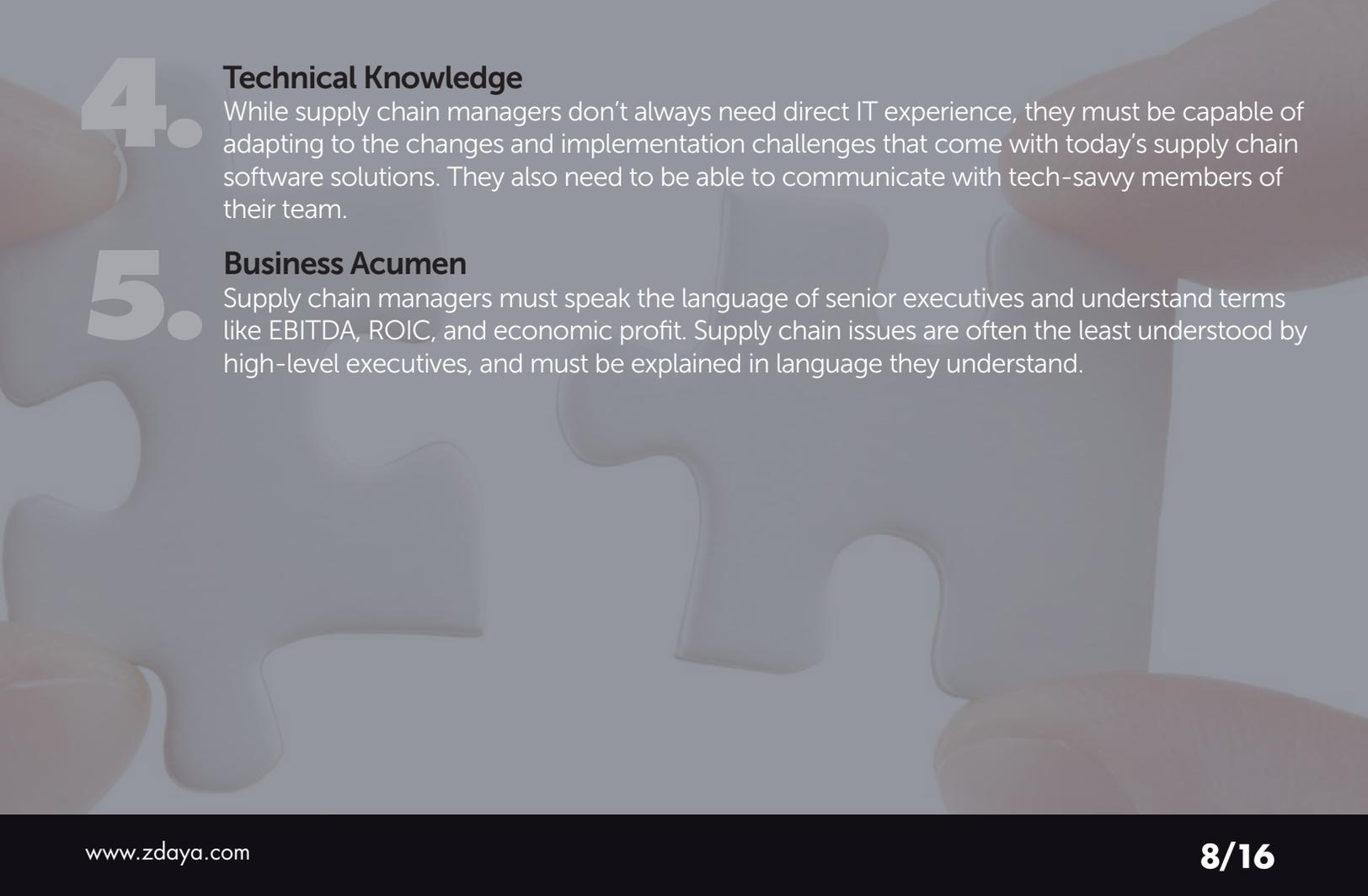
Big-Picture Perspective

Successful supply chain managers must see the supply chain as a cross-functional, cross-company system. It's vital that they understand the connections and interdependencies within procurement, logistics, manufacturing, and marketing/sales internally, as well as relationships with external suppliers and customers.

3.

Leadership Abilities

Supply chain managers increasingly take a front-and-center role in the organization. Not only must they build credibility for themselves and the supply chain function, but they need to communicate their message compellingly to multiple stakeholders including sales and marketing, human resources, and finance.

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of several hands holding together white puzzle pieces. The hands are positioned around the edges of the puzzle, suggesting a collaborative effort to assemble a picture. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is professional and focused.

4.

Technical Knowledge

While supply chain managers don't always need direct IT experience, they must be capable of adapting to the changes and implementation challenges that come with today's supply chain software solutions. They also need to be able to communicate with tech-savvy members of their team.

5.

Business Acumen

Supply chain managers must speak the language of senior executives and understand terms like EBITDA, ROIC, and economic profit. Supply chain issues are often the least understood by high-level executives, and must be explained in language they understand.

LESSON 3:

MUST-HAVE SOFT SKILLS FOR SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGERS

While knowledge of the supply chain, industry experience and insights are important, soft skills are equally critical.

Look for skills like these:

1.

Communication Skills

The candidate's communication abilities must be top-notch – pay as much attention to their verbal answers as you did when assessing the quality of the writing in their cover letter.

2.

Attention to Detail

Larger problems are often solved or even avoided by noticing small details that many would not notice.

3.

Adaptability

In the supply chain, change is a constant. It's critical to choose candidates able to adapt to the inevitable variations and globalization of the marketplace.

4.

Integrity

Assessing candidates for integrity and people skills is also important, considering the relevance of those attributes for managers – no matter the industry.

5.

Analytical Skills

Supply chain managers must constantly analyze their operations to identify ways to save money and improve delivery.

6.

Negotiation Skills

Candidates must be capable of handling difficult negotiations and situations in which they need to creatively solve a supply or demand issue.

Talent is more than just a bundle of skills. Soft skills are a large part of determining who will fit well into your organization in both the long and short term.

LESSON 4:

INTERVIEW BETTER FOR MORE RELIABLE RESULTS

Now that you know the mistakes to avoid and the qualities to look for, the question is, what information do you need to make the best hire?

**Ask these three questions of
supply chain candidates:**

1.

What is your understanding of the supply chain?

Verify that the candidate fully understands the supply chain process. Probe to learn their familiarity with different operational models to gauge their suitability for the role and your organization.

2.

What does the global nature of the supply chain mean for the industry?

Find out how well the candidate relates to the different cultural perspectives typical in the global logistics industry. Chances are great that they will have to work with suppliers and clients from all over the world.

3.

How would you solve this supply chain problem?

Ask the candidate to discuss a problem specific to the role and how he would solve it. Late shipments, missing components, weather delays, and raw materials shortages are likely topics. Listen for reasoning skills and an ability to shine under pressure.

These questions will give you an overview of the candidate's abilities. By asking plenty of follow-up questions, you can dig into the candidate's experience and analyze how they think.

Your interaction with them during the interview process will reveal important soft skills including how well they communicate and perform under pressure.

Use what you have learned in your interview to make a hiring decision.

IS YOUR HIRING PROCESS YOUR WEAK LINK?

People can be the strongest link in your supply chain when you hire the right way.

But if you're spending too much time hiring and not enough time completing your own objectives, consider working with a staffing and recruiting firm.

A firm with specific supply chain expertise can help you hire faster and more effectively by narrowing the field to the most highly qualified candidates.

Whether you want to keep your workforce lean or are preparing for global expansion, the supply chain experts at ZDA can help identify, attract and screen top talent.

Experience. Expertise. Excellence.

ZDA provides them all.

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