



The Logistics Skills Gap:

Labor Market Trends for the Modern Supply Chain

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Table of Contents

- 3 Supply Chain Has Taken Center Stage, But Who's Running It?
- 4 Logistics Needs People, Now More Than Ever
- 5 Attracting Supply Chain Talent: 3 Strategies Companies Are Using
- 6 Supply Chain Demands New Skills
- 7 What Companies Are Looking For
- 9 Changing Skill Demands Create New Roles
- 10 How Skill Change Is Influencing Existing Roles
- 13 Who Is The Current Logistics Professional?
- 17 Building an Agile Logistics Team
- 18 Getting Help Where You Need It
- 19 A Note on Methodology
- 20 About

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Supply Chain Has Taken Center Stage, But Who's Running It?

» In the not-too-distant past, business leaders were able to rely on their supply chain team to manage complex global shipping patterns and just-in-time inventory without much oversight. As customer demands changed, costs ebbed and flowed to meet demand without much hesitation.

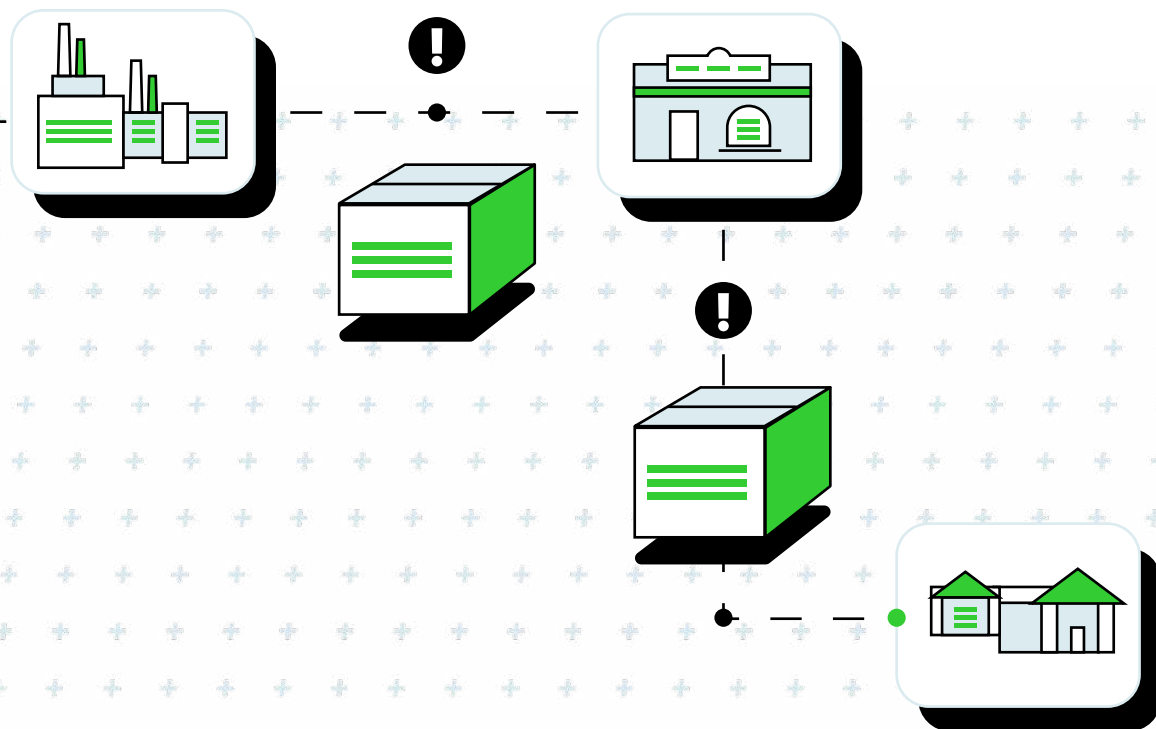
Those days are over.

Now businesses of every size — and their customers — are acutely aware of the importance of supply chain efficiency and management. Because of this, more executives are looking closely at supply chain performance to better predict and prevent exorbitant costs, delivery delays, and unhappy customers from choosing competitor brands.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have vaulted the topic into the national conversation, but the supply chain has been growing rapidly in scope and importance for years, driven by e-commerce, shifts in demand, and technology.

To meet modern customer expectations — whether B2B or B2C — businesses need a modern supply chain operation. And that goes beyond a new AI-powered platform; it's more critical than ever to attract, develop and retain talent.

But what does the modern logistics professional look like? In this report, we'll examine job posting data to identify trends around emerging skills and roles that businesses are hiring for to take their supply chains to the next level.



Logistics Needs People, Now More Than Ever

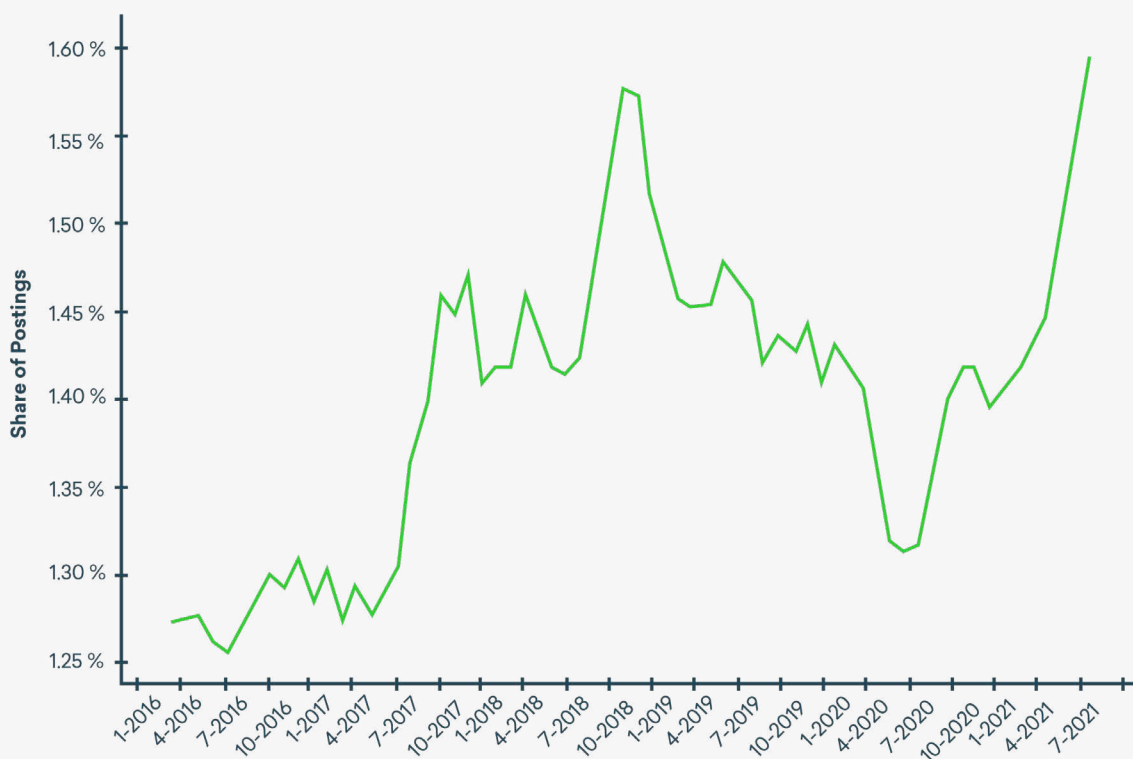
» It would be comforting to think that all the current supply chain chaos would disappear with the right technology, but the vastness and complexity of logistics networks means you need people, at every level of the network, who can solve tough problems.

A recent Coyote study on the topic found that, when asked about the ideal balance of people and technology in supply operations, businesses wanted **58%** technology and **42%** people. Compared to 2019 results, that actually represents a **3%** shift towards people. In all the disruptions of the pandemic, it's human minds that businesses want at the helm, not just modeling software, and you can find clear evidence of that in labor markets.

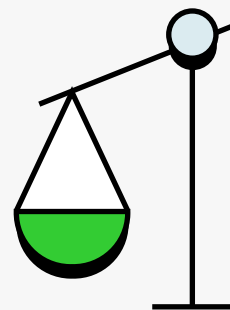
There has been a lot of focus on the commercial truck driver shortage, where a recent Coyote study found that there are nine postings for every one hire, but businesses are just as desperate for supply chain management. In fact, postings for logistics managers have risen to an all-time high.

Shippers cannot approach hiring like they used to. By offering insight into labor market trends, we hope to equip companies with the resources to hire wisely, efficiently, and effectively.

Supply Chain Management Roles
Growth over time (3 month rolling average)



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021



ATTRACTING SUPPLY CHAIN TALENT:

3 Strategies Companies Are Using

» The logistics labor market is extremely tight. Job postings consistently far exceed actual hiring, which means that employers are posting for jobs without filling them.

The raw demand seen in postings data is not the only indicator that firms are looking for talent — they are using a variety of tactics in their postings to make more compelling offers. Offers of training increased from 2019 to 2021: by **40%**.

Furthermore, the share of postings advertising future career advancement climbed **45%**. The share of postings requiring no experience grew even more, up **333%**.

3 Ways Companies Are Attracting Logistics & Supply Chain Talent

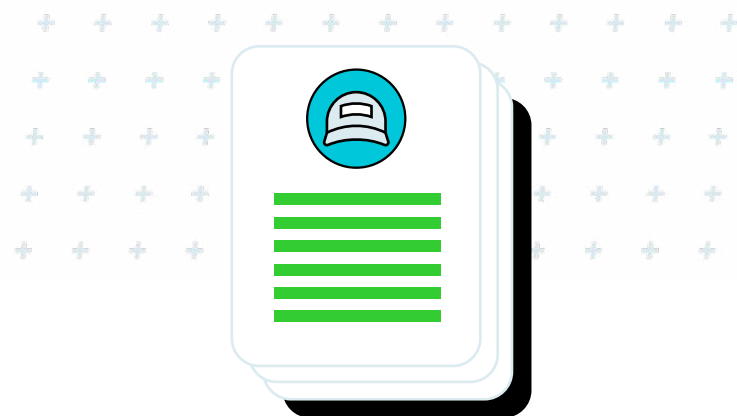


% change in job postings mentions, March-August 2019 vs. 2021



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

While the raw number of postings that feature either training, advancement, or no experience is relatively small (each category represents under **2%** of total postings), the substantial growth represents a clear trend: employers are both trying to widen their recruitment pool and make their offers more competitive.

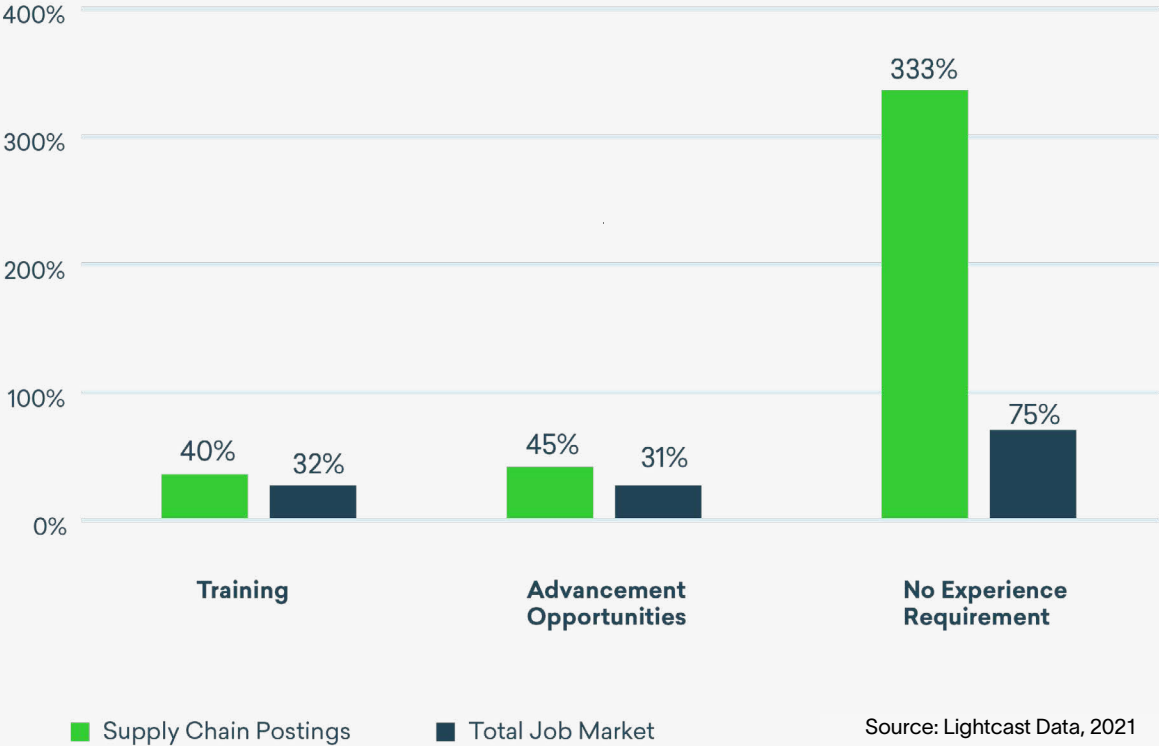


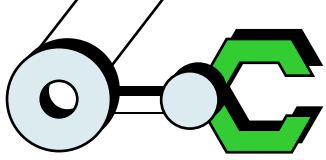
Supply Chain Demands New Skills

» It would be easy to dismiss these substantial growth numbers as a product of an overall tighter labor market. Indeed, all three of the categories are up in the wider labor market as well, but supply chain is still growing faster.

For training and advancement opportunities, supply chain job postings are leading the total market by **8%** and **14%**, respectively. Experience is even more dramatic, with supply chain job postings that mention it outpacing the total market by **258%**.

Supply Chain Postings vs. Total Job Market





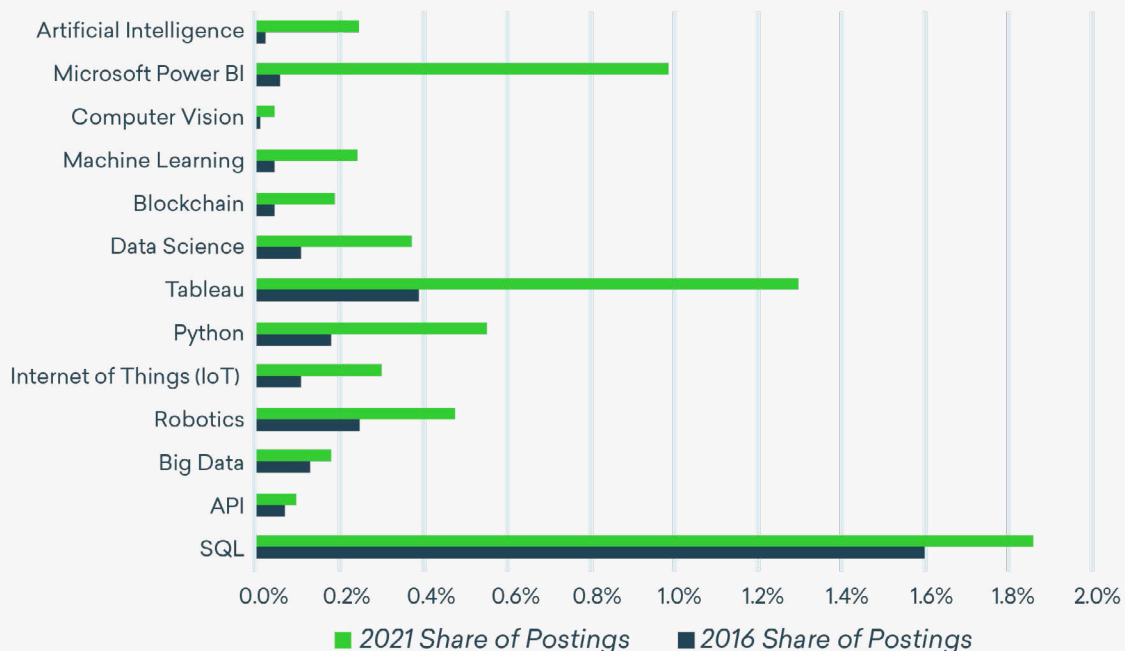
What Companies Are Looking For

» With more eyes on supply chain than ever before, it's become increasingly prominent in a company's overall strategy, triggering investment in both technology and people. But a modern day supply chain operation requires people with new or emerging skill sets. What should leaders be looking for as they look for talent?

Emerging technologies within supply chain organizations are rapidly changing the in-demand skills. Logisticians and supply chain managers need to assess and analyze overall performance and budget. The technical skills have been broadened to have baseline knowledge and capabilities around AI, programming languages, IoT (internet of things), data science, alongside cybersecurity and robotics.

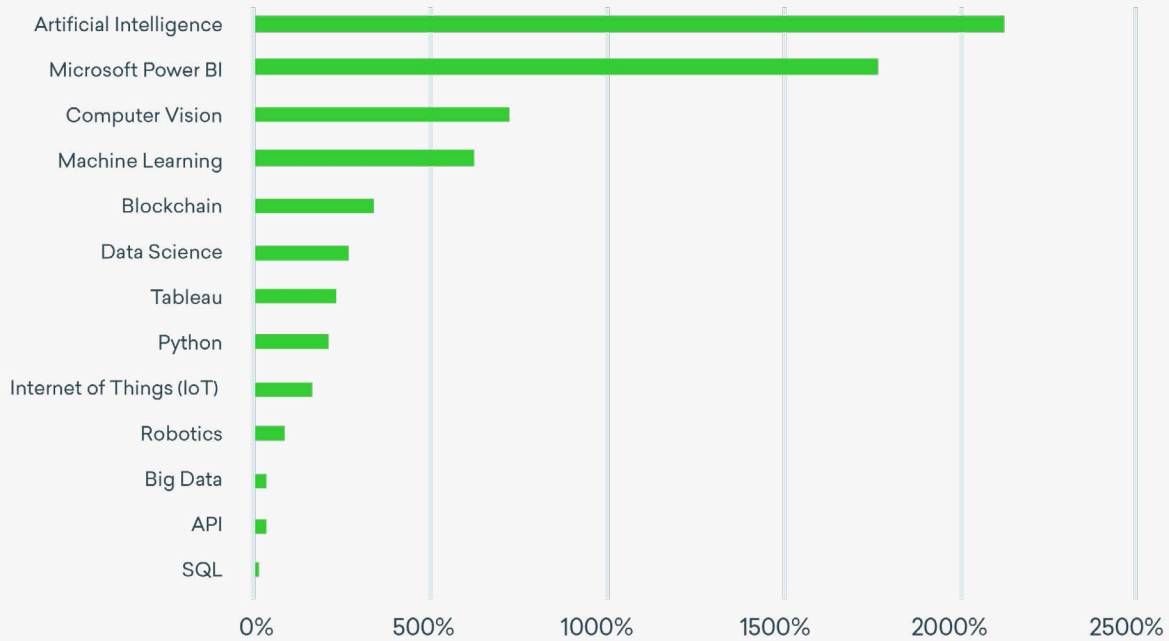
Even by looking at the data, it's clear that understanding performance is key for many supply chain professionals. Individuals able to manage and synthesize large data sets into key performance metrics through any number of tools help quickly inform organizations where to make changes in either strategic or tactical decisions.

Emerging Skills in Supply Chain Management



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

Growth of Emerging Skills from 2016 to 2021

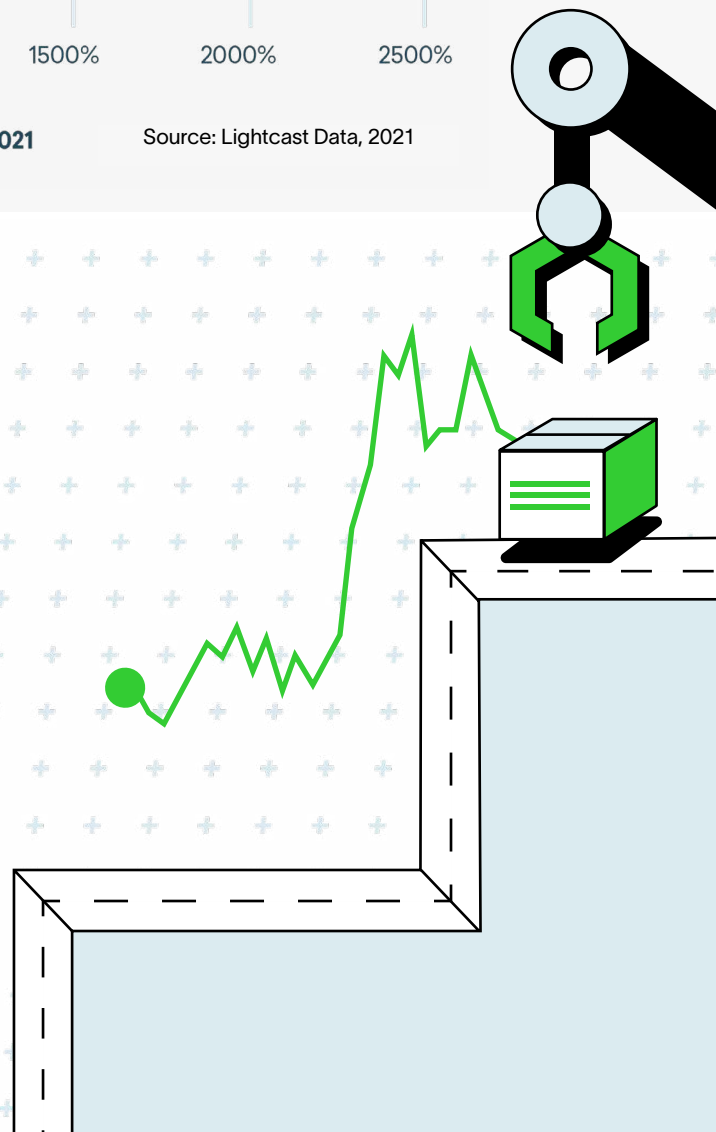


Percent change in posting share from 2016 to 2021

Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

» Of these skills, artificial intelligence, Microsoft Power BI, and machine learning grew the most between 2016 and 2021. SQL and Tableau lead in current overall demand, again with Microsoft Power BI not far behind.

» Big data — particularly its analysis and presentation — is the domain that defines the present logistics landscape. If growth patterns continue, AI will define its future. And with big data now moving to more cloud-based storage or processing, cybersecurity becomes even more critical in protecting end-user data, as well as observing and maintaining data privacy practices that adhere to legislative requirements.



Changing Skill Demands Create New Roles

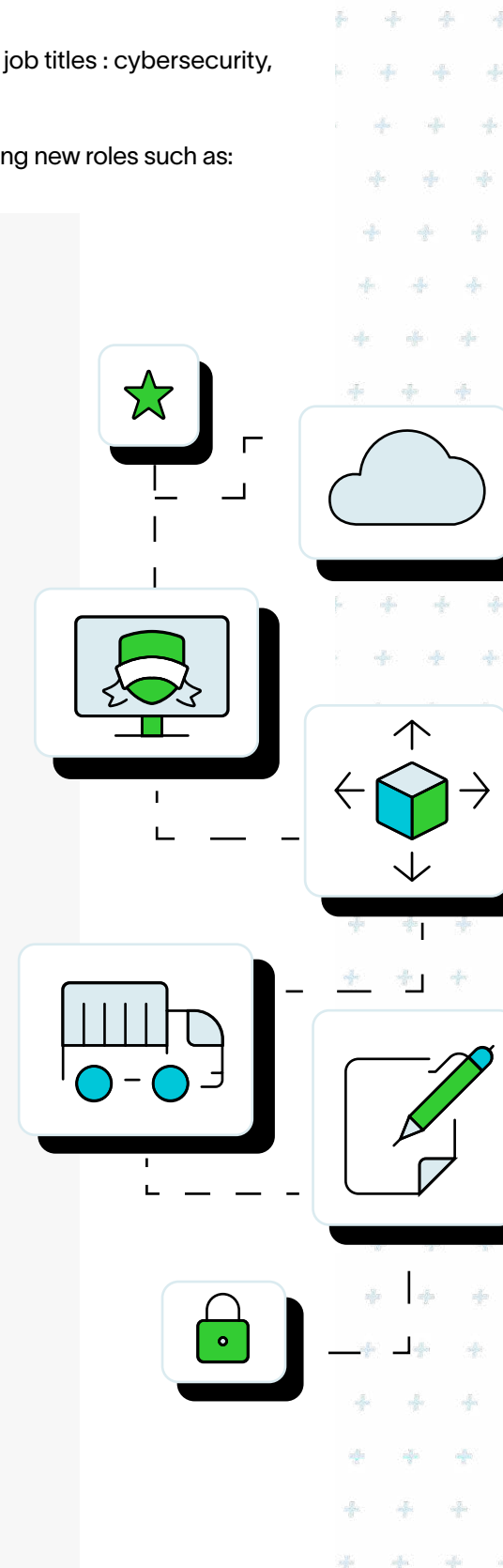
» The demand for certain skills is actually creating entirely new roles.

We grouped key skills into six major themes based on their appearance in job titles : cybersecurity, policy, robotics, cloud, automation, and digital.

We investigated key emerging technologies appearing in titles and skills creating new roles such as:

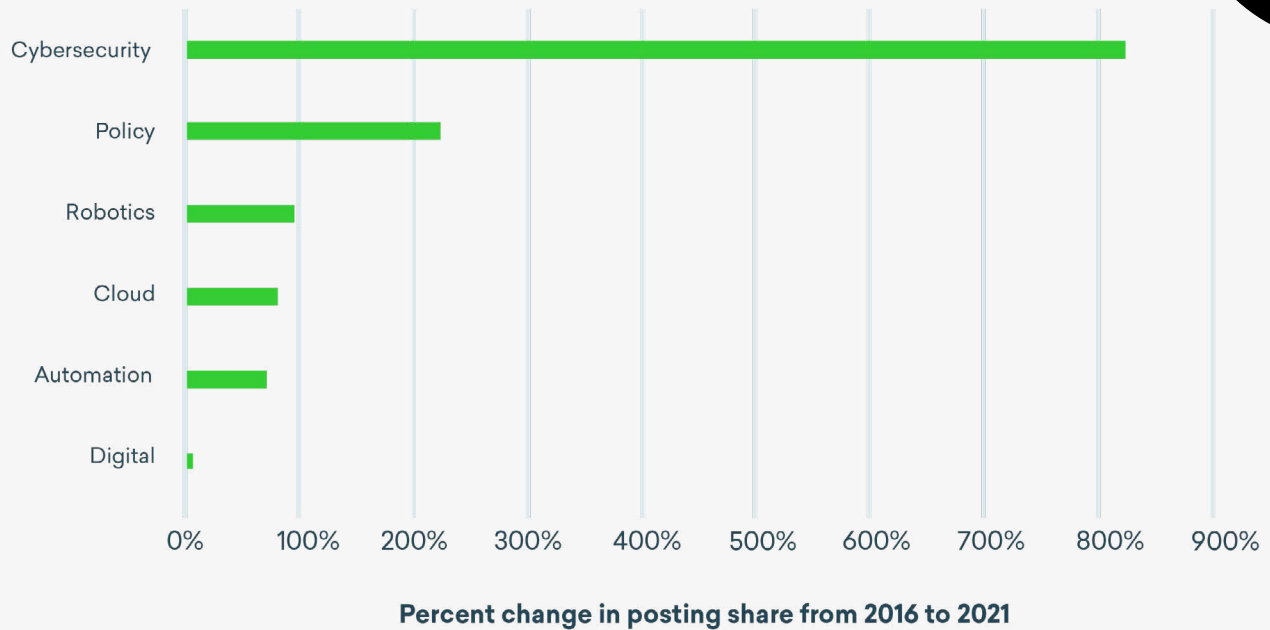
Cybersecurity	Policy	Robotics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply Chain Cybersecurity Analyst • Cybersecurity Operations Manager • Senior Cybersecurity Compliance Manager, Supply Chain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Policy Specialist • Senior Manager, Policy Operations • Policy, Compliance and Operations Managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robotics Operations Manager • Finance Director, Robotics Supply Chain • Lead Product Owner - Supply Chain Robotics Integration
Cloud	Automation	Digital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Director, Cloud Infrastructure Operations • Cloud Operations Manager • Oracle Cloud SCM - Supply Chain Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous Vehicle Operations Supervisor • Lead Product Owner - Supply Chain Automation • Director, Supply Chain Process And Automation Virtual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Supply Chain Manager • Digital Operations Manager • Head Of Digital Product Management Vice President - Digital Supply Chain

Source: Lightcast Data, 2021





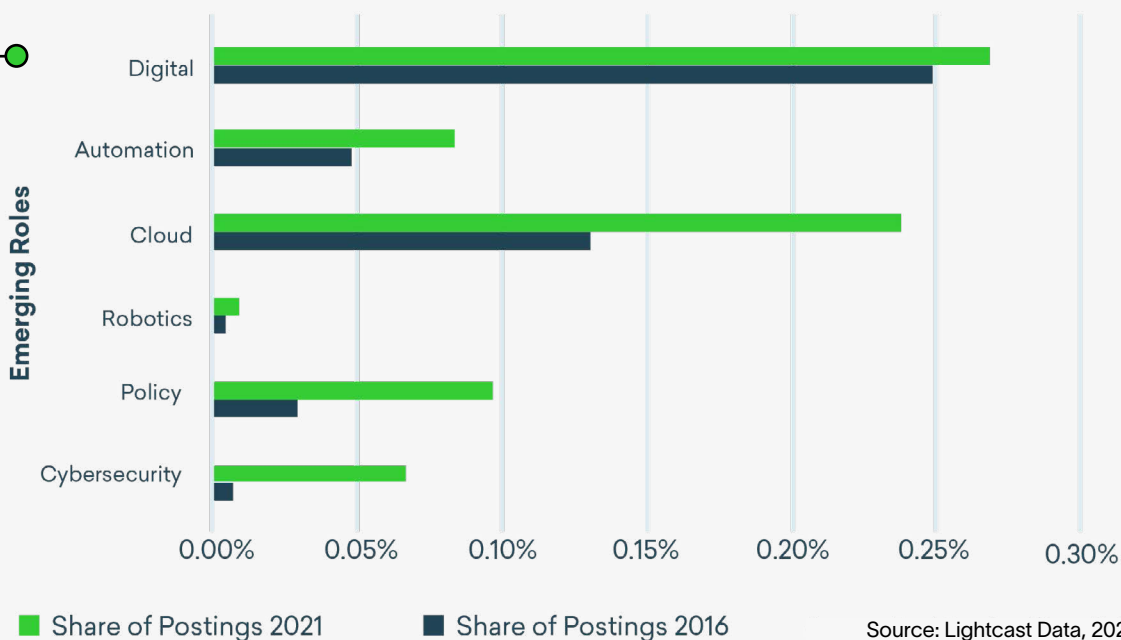
Growth of Emerging Roles from 2016 to 2021



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

The largest growth was around roles in cybersecurity, policy, and robotics. But the most dominant roles in terms of overall percentage of market share were digital and cloud.

Emerging Roles in Supply Chain and Management



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

How Skill Change Is Influencing Existing Roles

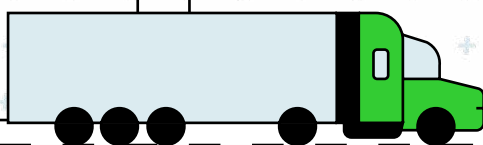
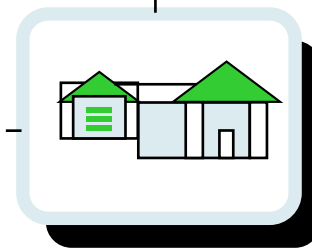
» Beyond creating net new job titles, emerging skills are also changing how we view existing roles in the supply chain org chart.

We can see how technology is shaping the desired skillset for logisticians between 2016-2021. Product development and data analysis have increased in demand, while information systems, vendor relations, stock-keeping, and operations management have all declined.

The days of in-person local hub management are moving toward more efficient, broader network management models that allow for flexibility, visibility, and a remote workforce.

Logistician/Supply Chain Specialists are becoming more technical, with skills like Product Development and Data Analysis growing and Vendor Relations and Operations Management declining.

» This means that the career pathways within supply chain management are changing as well. A modern logistician's job looks like a product manager's, which instead has a heavier emphasis on data analysis and continuous improvement.



» What about the supply chain professional already in an analytics role? Similarly, financial analysis and cost control have declined making a pathway from or to accounting less likely than that of a data analyst, even from a different industry.

We've seen an increase in preference for newer analytics platforms, like Microsoft Power BI and Tableau, over older technologies, like Microsoft Access.

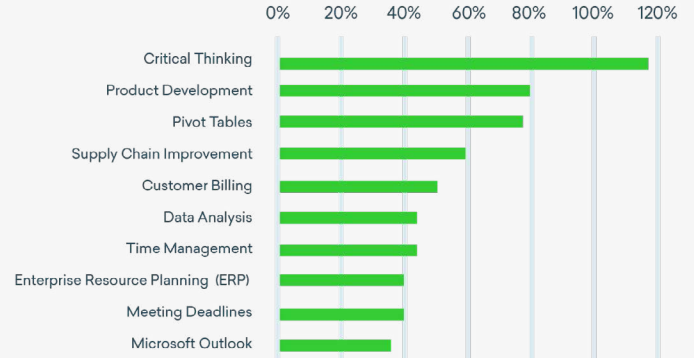
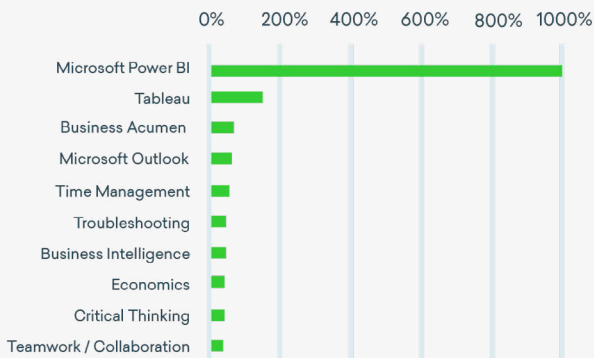
Employers also expect their analysts to be able to work across teams to clearly communicate insights; an analyst cannot just be a subject matter expert in a silo. We've seen a decrease in job posts featuring technical writing/editing, logistics engineering, and logistics analysis, while more analyst posts mention business acumen, economics, and teamwork/collaboration.

Changing Skillsets for...

**LOGISTICS /
SUPPLY CHAIN ANALYSTS**

**LOGISTICAN /
SUPPLY CHAIN SPECIALIST**

Greatest Skill Increases 2016 - 2021



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

Who is the Current Logistics Professional?

» As various supply chain roles evolve, we see some overall trends in skill shapes. While each role will look different for each organization, here are some general guidelines based on an aggregate of the current labor market landscape.



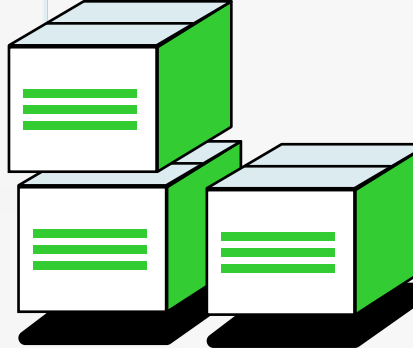
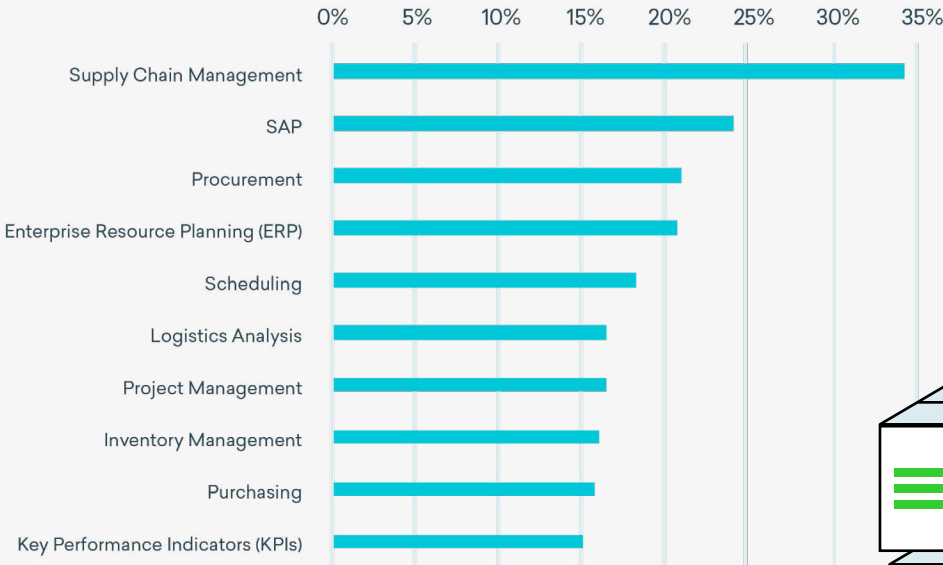
1. Supply Chain Analyst

» **Experience:** Three to five years.

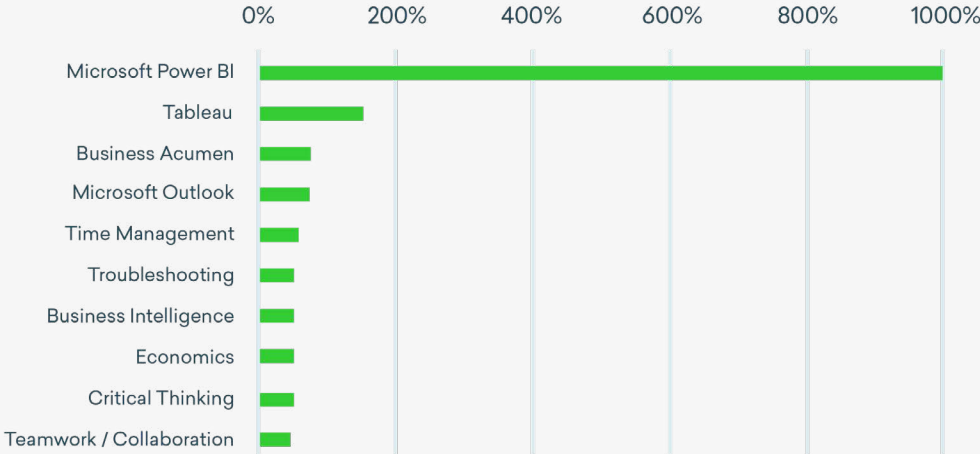
» **About this role:** Over the last five years, demand has grown the most for Microsoft Power BI, Tableau, and Business Acumen. Four of the top ten fastest growing skills are human skills, with Time Management, Troubleshooting, Critical Thinking, and Teamwork/Collaboration all appearing.

The current most in-demand skills for this role are supply chain management, SAP, and procurement.

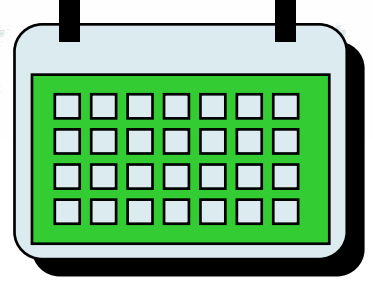
Logistics / Supply Chain Analyst Top Skills



Greatest Skill Increases 2016 - 2021 Logistics / Supply Chain Analyst



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

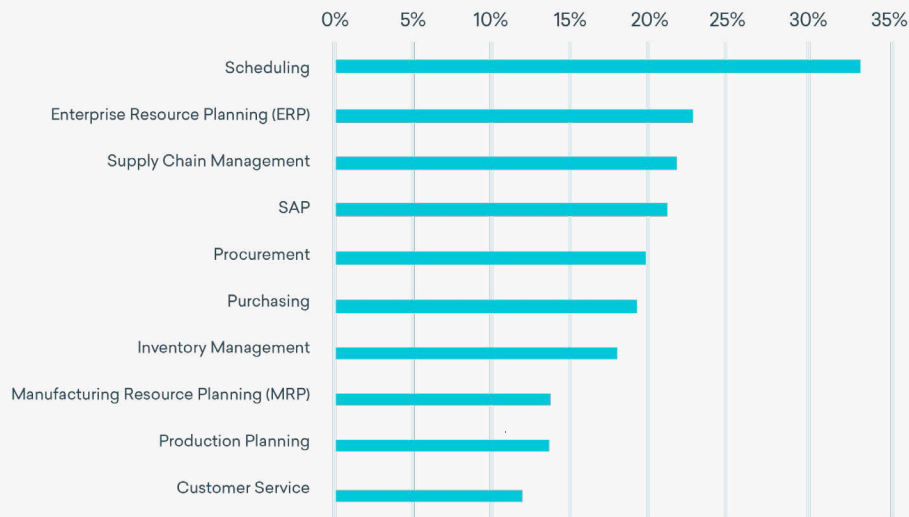


2. Supply Chain Specialist

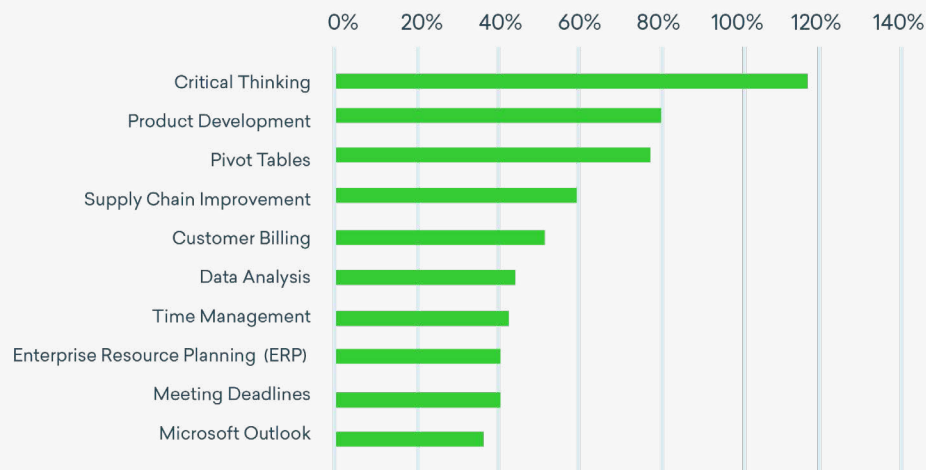
» **Experience:** Three to five years of experience.

» **About this role:** The current most in-demand skills for this role are Scheduling, Enterprise Resource Planning, and Supply Chain Management. Critical Thinking, another human skill, showed the greatest demand increase over the last five years. Product development, pivot tables, and supply chain improvement are also among the fastest growing skills for this role.

Logistician / Supply Chain Specialist Top Skills



Greatest Skill Increases 2016 - 2021 Logistician / Supply Chain Specialist



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

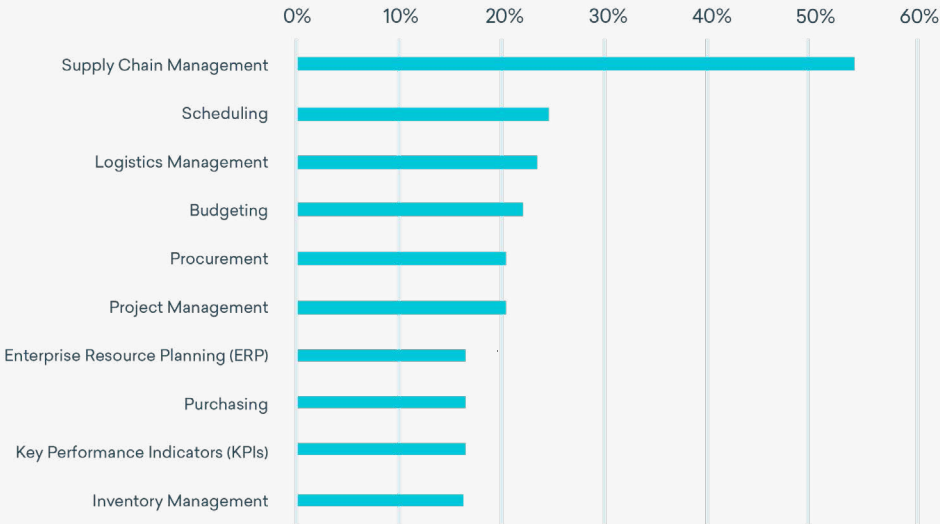
3. Supply Chain Logistics Manager

» **Experience:** Three to five years

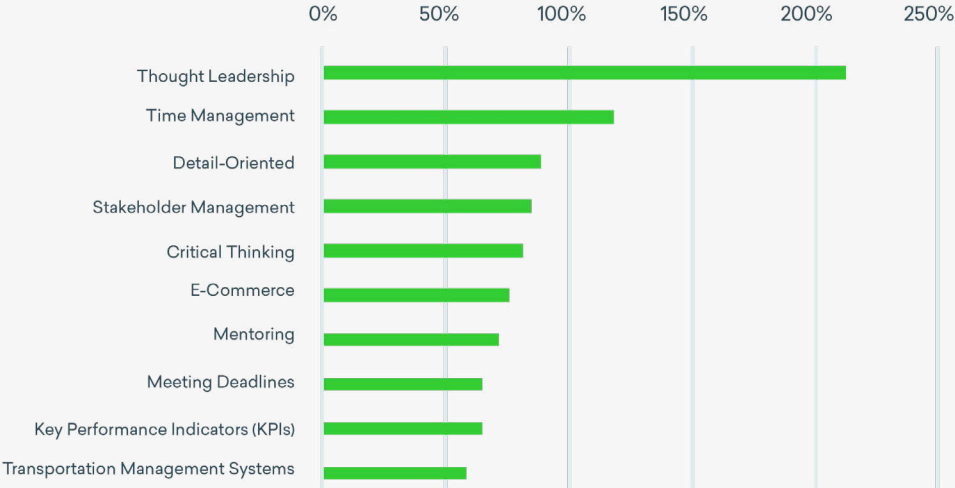
» **About this role:** The typical logistics manager has three to five years of experience. The top skills for this role are Supply Chain Management, Scheduling, and Logistics Management.

Between 2016 and 2021, the skills with the biggest uptick and demand were Thought Leadership, Time Management, and Detail Oriented—again, all human skills.

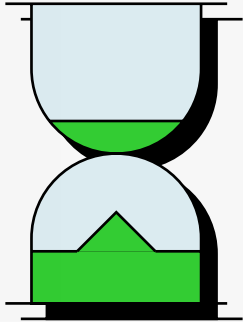
Supply Chain / Logistics Manager Top Skills



Greatest Skill Increases 2016 - 2021
Supply Chain / Logistics Manager



Source: Lightcast Data, 2021



Building an Agile Logistics Team

» This report outlined the landscape of the current labor market, detailed new and emerging skillsets and roles trending in logistics, and provided a few snapshots of what a modern supply chain professional looks like.

While the logistics industry is increasingly defined by technology, paradoxically, it needs people, and their adaptability, more than ever. It's notable that human skills — management, critical thinking, analysis, service — were, for every role, among the fastest-growing desired skills.

With that in mind, what can businesses do to find the creative, problem-solving humans they need?

1. Drop barriers to entry

While the data shows a growing number of firms eliminating experience requirements, it's still a tiny fraction of the overall whole. To be competitive in today's tight labor market, companies need to both attract entry level talent and facilitate career changes. The more open-minded you can be, the more options you will have.

2. Hire talent, not just technical skills

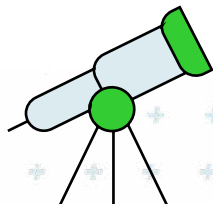
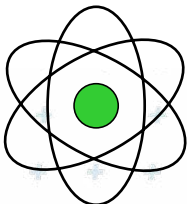
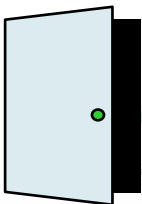
In-demand and fast-growing skills like critical thinking are transferrable, and can be developed in a variety of contexts — not just supply chain and logistics. Look for evidence of core human capabilities across a wide talent pool, rather than scanning resumes only for technical keywords. As you start your search, be clear about what you can teach someone, and what you can't.

3. Develop on-ramps for emerging skills

For key emerging technical skills, partner with educational institutions or develop in-house programs to train talent in the skills driving industry innovation — especially where those skills are difficult to self-teach or quickly certify. Upskilling your current people is in many cases more efficient and cost-effective than hiring someone new.

4. Consider what you'll need next

The rate of change in the supply chain industry won't slow down anytime soon. As you hire for the skills you need today, keep an eye towards the future. What emerging trends will shape your business strategy, and what talent will you need in order to execute? The more you can get ahead, the easier it will be to train your labor force with new skills.

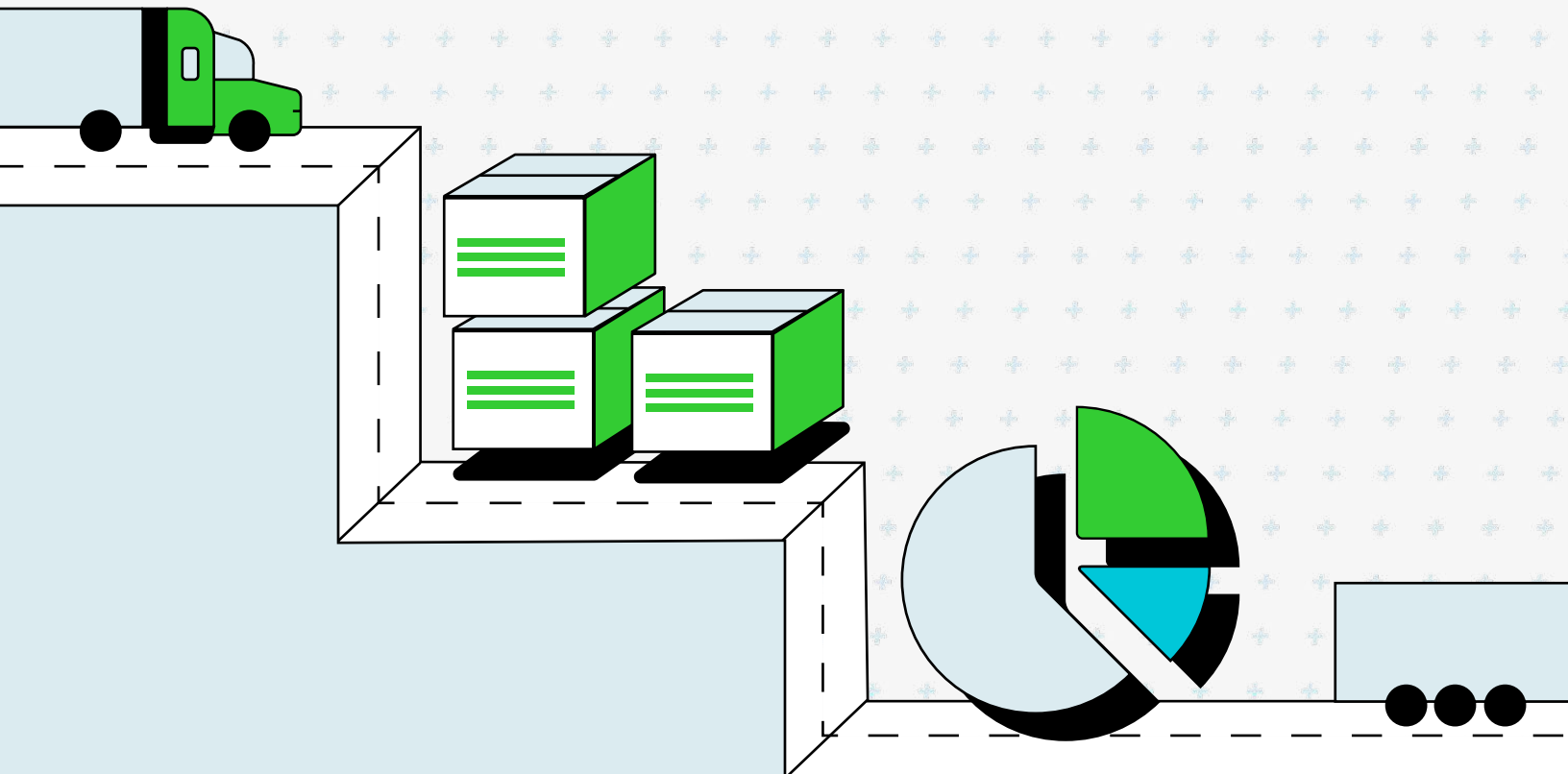


Getting Help Where You Need It

» A better talent acquisition or retention strategy alone won't solve all supply chain challenges, but without the right people with the right expertise, technology can only do so much — especially in the face of unpredictable and disruptive events. Though the current labor market is incredibly challenging, using data-driven insights to inform the vision for your labor force is a great place to start, or at least benchmark your own approach.

This report gives you a snapshot into the current market, but you may need deeper, more customized data, analytics, and insights. Whether you're looking to improve your job posting strategy, get more effective at recruiting, analyze your compensation, or need some help workforce planning, the labor market experts at Lightcast can help.

And while adding talent to your own internal team is a necessary part of any supply chain strategy, it's also important to ask the build vs. buy question. Working with agile, multi-modal 3PL partners like Coyote can help supplement your existing teams with strategic, consultative support in analyzing your supply chain performance and strategy, in addition to managing portions or the entirety of your freight portfolio. Whether you need help sourcing truckload, LTL or intermodal capacity, or want to outsource your supply chain to a dedicated team of logistics specialists to manage on your behalf, Coyote can help. Talk to a logistics specialist to find out how we can make shipping easier for you.



A Note on Methodology

» Because logistics is such a vast sector, encompassing both the warehouse worker loading trucks and the experts analyzing reams of data, we limited our analysis to specific roles tasked with managing the large scale complexity of supply chains rather than providing the physical labor involved.

Roles included in Occupation Definition

- Supply Chain / Logistics Manager
 - Logistician / Supply Chain Specialist
 - Logistics / Supply Chain Analyst
 - Cargo Coordinator / Freight Forwarder
 - Operations Manager / Supervisor
 - Scheduler / Operations Coordinator
 - Inventory / Supply Specialist
 - Storage Distribution Manager
 - Procurement / Sourcing Manager
 - Transportation Manager
- Include the following if in the Transportation and Warehousing industry:
- General Manager
 - Project Manager
 - Program Manager

Source: Lightcast Data, 2021

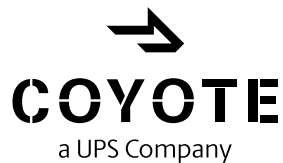
It's important to note that overall, companies explicitly offer training only rarely in postings. In 2019, only **.50%** of postings for supply chain and logistics roles mentioned the possibility of training new recruits. The growth we saw between 2019 and 2021 should be contextualized by the low initial numbers.



» **Lightcast** provides trusted global labor market data, analytics, and expert guidance that empowers communities, corporations, and learning providers to make informed decisions and navigate the increasingly complex world of work. With a database of more than one billion job postings and career profiles, our team provides best-in-class customer service with robust data, clear analysis, and expert guidance on skills, jobs, and opportunities.

Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Moscow, Idaho, Lightcast is active in more than 30 countries and has offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and India. The company is backed by global private equity leader KKR.

For more, visit www.lightcast.io



» **Coyote Logistics** is a leading global third-party logistics provider that has moved business forward with expertise and integrity for over 15 years. More than 15,000 shippers around the world trust Coyote to move 10,000 loads every day through their comprehensive multi-modal solutions portfolio. Data intelligence and market insights, reliable support and proprietary technology combine with these solutions to enable smarter supply chain decisions and strategies. Coyote became a UPS Company in 2015, adding new services and capabilities to their expanding solutions portfolio. With headquarters in Chicago and Amsterdam, Coyote is the trusted global logistics provider that empowers business growth in a rapidly changing world.

For more information, visit Coyote.com