



# Entropy Busters™ Series

## Your Supply Chain Organization

### Volume 1 | Number 1 | August 2018

Whether as a Senior Leader or Team Member, do you ever wonder why the team is not meeting targets or performing at desired expectations?

The key is envisioning where the organization needs to be at in 3, 5 or 7 years and building the team around the necessary skills and core competencies.

### Building the Supply Chain Team

Just last week Gartner published their Top Supply Chain Schools for BS degrees.

As a Michigan State Supply Chain Management graduate I'm always excited to see where MSU stands; Forth this year.

The Gartner rankings remind me of discussions with

1	Pennsylvania State University	↔
2	Rutgers University	↑
3	Auburn University	↑
4	Michigan State University	↓
5	University of Tennessee	↓
6	Arizona State University	↓
7	The University of Texas, Austin	↑
8	Western Michigan University	↔
9	Georgia Institute of Technology	↓
10	Northeastern University	↑

clients, in this case many heated debates.

I've built my career around leading organizations out of distressed circumstances. When I assess the team, often there are too many individuals who were "parked" due to lack of performance in another role, or promoted because they did a good job buying office supplies for the CEO and "how hard can it be to buy for manufacturing...?"

The client was the Director of Supply Chain and new to the organization. They inherited a team of several "parked" individuals who had little or no creditable performance feedback, development, and mentoring/coaching. The proposed plan, not mine, to replace the entire team with newly minted MBA's from top tier schools. Not an entirely ludicrous idea. My challenge was six points;

1. The ability to attract and retain a team of High Potentials in a manufacturing location in the rust belt.
2. The organization's ability to afford a significant increase to payroll.
3. The loss of "tribal" business knowledge to the organization.
4. A 100% high potential team, would "eat each other for lunch" trying to get ahead.
5. The message sent to the organization. Experience doesn't matter and there isn't room for vocational individuals on the team.
6. What happened to professional development? Sooner than later, you will need to mentor, coach and develop any team.

We agreed to;

- Hire two high potential Supply Chain professionals. Each degreed from Top tier schools and approximately 5 year's prior experience. This significantly raised the bar of the entire team on urgency and propensity for change.
- Implemented Daily Visual Management for critical elements.
  - Through the daily meetings we were able to coach team members up to their capabilities.
  - New members of the team learned the intricate workings of manufacturing processes, some tribal knowledge and established credibility with long-term employees by working closely and training/educating on alternative processes.
  - Additionally, utilized APICS in house training to increase knowledge base. We discovered individuals that were not the correct fit for new vision of Supply Chain Management. They were resigned to roles more aligned with skills and core competencies.
- When replacing a Supply Chain Team member, it was split 50/50. One person Supply Chain degreed and the other internal, they agreed to taking and passing APICS classes, tied to compensation. This greatly well rounded the team, created a real vocational career path for high potential hourly team members and kept the Supply Chain Team on the Leading Edge of their profession.

The correct mix of degreed Supply Chain Professionals in your manufacturing environment to vocational team members is up to you, however, I would target 50/50 split. And always envision where the

organization needs to be, then hire and develop current team members around the skills necessary for future success.

## Your Supply Chain, Your Supply Change, Your Leadership.™

[Visit our Website](#)

Thanks in advance for your time. As always, thanks for being a loyal client. Looking forward to helping you and your team again soon.

Carpe diem,

**Art Koch**  
Arthur Koch Management Consulting, LLC



[info@arthurkochmgmt.com](mailto:info@arthurkochmgmt.com) +1 336-260-9441

[Website](#)

[About](#)

[Services](#)

[Clients](#)

[Contact](#)