



APICS CSCP PROGRAM

WHY I EARNED THE CSCP

Frank Murphy, MS, CSCP
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Why did you decide to pursue the APICS CSCP certification?

“After more than ten years since finishing my bachelor’s degree in psychology and after seven years making an earnest effort at building a career in demand generation, I finally decided to listen to my dad, a supply chain director for a leading global cosmetics company. My dad was studying for his CPIM when I was in diapers. By the time I graduated college and started working, he was the VP of Education for his APICS Chapter. My mom, after hearing that I had decided to take my dad’s advice and pursue my CSCP, remarked that, after my father started his involvement with APICS, our lives really turned around.

Here I was in my early 30’s, not even married for two years and purchasing a home with my wife. Even with all this going on, I decided to devote three months to studying supply chain science and applied theory—I pursued the CSCP certification for my family.”

How did you prepare for the APICS CSCP exam?

“An Instructor-led course through the APICS Tappan Zee Chapter, New York.”

What was your biggest takeaway from APICS CSCP training?

“The language. CSCP reveals a glossary of words which allow you to confidently communicate as a cross functional leader.”

Have you implemented a supply chain initiative at your organization as a result of your APICS CSCP training?

“While in another position at my previous employer, we were seeing a lot of errors all along the supply chain. Customers were receiving the wrong orders. Factory orders were packed incorrectly. Forecasts couldn’t be relied upon. Back orders had really begun to pile up due to other suboptimal conditions. Having access to the tenets of SCOR allowed me to begin to measure our performance. Once I could measure how effective a process was in its current condition, I could start making improvements.

Because the company was expanding and finding it difficult to keep pace with demand, we began holding CPFR meetings with some of the most valuable downstream stakeholders in our network. We let them know that we identified some of the conditions preventing us from keeping up with demand and communicated our strategies to catch up to current requirements. Including them in the process really made positive impacts on the relationships we had with the people in our extended network.”

What are other benefits of APICS certification?

“Within a year of earning my CSCP, I’ve gotten a new job with active involvement in a truly global supply chain for a company with worldwide recognition in the aerospace industry. I’ll be traveling to France to meet with other supply chain professionals at my company’s central supply node. Members of my chapter are encouraging me to get more involved on the board of my APICS chapter and I’m looking forward to the unfolding journey that lies ahead. Overall, I’m so much happier at work and at home.”

apics.org

APICS CSCP

The APICS Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP) program brings the entire value chain into perspective by providing a truly end-to-end view of the global supply chain. apics.org/cscp



APICS CSCP LEARNING SYSTEM

A professional development and certification exam prep program that provides a customized learning experience. Free demo at learncscp.com/free-demo

APICS MEMBERSHIP

Network with operations management professionals around the globe and members-only savings on educational offerings, and certification programs. apics.org/community/membership.

APICS CSCP Exam Dates

NORTH AMERICA

October 31 – December 19, 2015
March 19 – May 7, 2016
July 09 – August 27, 2016
October 29 – December 17, 2016

OUTSIDE NORTH AMERICA

31 October–12 December 2015
19 March – 7 May 2016
4 June – 2 July 2016
13 August – 10 September 2016
29 October – 10 December 2016



Rosemary Cheung, CSCP
Global Key Accounts
Supply Optimizing
Manager for North
East Asia
Shell Hong Kong Limited

Primed for a Thriving Supply Chain Career

Using APICS certification to unlock the possibilities

Rosemary Cheung, CSCP, has been employed for seven years at global energy and petrochemicals group Shell Hong Kong Limited, which delivers petroleum and chemical products to Hong Kong, Macau, and South China. She began her career there working in organizational design and then moved to a regional role, where she dealt with base oil supply. At present, Cheung manages global key accounts in Northeast Asia.

“My role is about strategic support, so I always need to use innovative and out-of-the-box thinking,” she says, adding that—after more than 20 years in the business world—she sometimes felt “drained” of new ideas. “So, when I received information about APICS, I found it to be the perfect way for me to refresh my supply chain skills and knowledge.”

Recognition and validation

Cheung’s APICS affiliation began with her pursuit of the Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP) designation. Her company sponsored her membership in March 2013. She then started taking CSCP courses in May 2013 and was certified in August of that same year.

She says that the CSCP learning program she and many of her coworkers followed—a course that combined web-based and textbook study—was fun and challenging. However, Cheung admits that she first had very mixed feelings. “When the study materials arrived, there were six, one-inch textbooks [which seemed like] a very heavy workload,” she says. “Every week, we had to finish

“My eyes were opened to many options that I had overlooked in the past.”

the online assignment, which would be graded and commented on by the course tutor and members of a small study team of colleagues. This continued for 10 weeks, so you can imagine that it was hard work.”

In the end, Cheung eventually decided that she just had to “have faith and grow to love the course.” She explains that these goals were aided by well-organized course materials that provided clear examples of supply chain best practices, technologies to drive improvement, techniques for maximizing organizational efficiency and bottom-line

results, and methods for reducing risk and failure. “I could cross-reference my daily work with the examples quoted in the study materials and think of . . . different ways to approach the same problems,” she says. “My eyes were opened to many options that I had overlooked in the past.”

For example, Cheung recently wanted to identify the optimal logistics strategy that she could offer her customers in order to generate the best value for the company. By referring to the CSCP textbooks that were right on her desk, she says that she was able to apply lessons from the course materials and think in a much broader perspective. Importantly, Cheung adds that having these industry best practices available at all times offers her a new approach that enriches her credibility and recognition in the workplace.

Important takeaways

Beyond the personal growth Cheung experienced, she also enjoys the enhanced teamwork, professional development, and career advancement that have occurred as direct results of her organization’s CSCP initiatives. Cheung explains that the teams at Shell that have pursued the APICS CSCP program together now have “a consistent foundation and structure, common vocabulary, and an understanding of the underlying information technologies to collaborate on cross-departmental business solutions.”

Furthermore, she believes that she will continue to progress professionally thanks to her ability to make more valuable contributions and be highly effective at her day-to-day activities—all of which, she adds, means that she is better equipped for a career in supply chain.

“I would definitely encourage others to take the APICS CSCP courses in order to develop and enhance their skills, to create and execute a global supply chain management strategy that meets customer needs, to reduce cost, and to increase profits,” she says. “The knowledge is yours. Use it, share it.”

Two Supply Chains, One Common Purpose

APICS education helps MillerCoors gain alignment

The Customer Supply Chain (CSC) organization at MillerCoors is responsible for creating the demand and supply plans and managing fulfillment processes, including customer service and logistics. As a joint venture between two brewing companies, CSC employees must successfully operate dual supply chains—each with its own methods, structures, and languages. For a little more than a year now, CSC professionals have been implementing new processes and systems in order to achieve this goal.



MillerCoors CSC employees participate in an APICS CSCP study group session.

A key principle of CSC's business transformation initiative is to execute standardized best practices. As such, company decision makers recognized an immediate and clear need for team members to step up their understanding of supply chain management concepts, develop a common vocabulary and agree on a vision of future operations.

Supply chain know-how

CSC leaders selected the APICS Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP) education program. "We established an initial goal of certifying 20 individuals per year over the next three years and developed a team approach that is designed to maximize the learning and engagement of our people," says Matt Williams,

MillerCoors director of supply chain planning. "We see APICS education as a key enabler in this endeavor."

Study groups meet weekly to review CSCP materials and discuss their application at MillerCoors. There are two teams, and each member has a chance to lead discussions. In addition, employees take online quizzes to help them get a feel for the exams. "We took special care to set up groups with a mix of functions, locations, and job levels—from entry-level analysts to managers and directors," Williams says.

The study groups have proved to be a highly effective part of the learning process. They enable participants to develop solid, cross-functional perspectives on the application of concepts at MillerCoors and help everyone stay on track. "I was surprised by how much I enjoyed the study sessions," says Jenn Troop, CSCP, senior supply planning analyst. "Our group was really engaged, and I enjoyed talking through our personal experiences with the weekly topics. It was a great way to relate to the materials instead of just memorizing textbook definitions."

Joe Black, CSCP, is the manager of craft and innovation. He says he also found considerable value in the study groups. The most rewarding aspect of the learning format for Black was being able to interact with and learn from team members representing all different functions within the organization.

Importantly, MillerCoors executives are championing this supply chain transformation effort. In addition to financial support for educational materials, membership dues, exam fees, and professional development meetings, company leaders incorporate APICS into individual and team goals. This ensures management alignment and that appropriate time is allocated to the program.

MillerCoors executives recognize that the transformation will be more successful if employees are grounded in a solid conceptual understanding. As such, the investment in both their people and the APICS CSCP designation was placed at the core of business readiness activities. Williams says APICS education fits squarely into

the company philosophy of being a learning organization and in providing employee advancement.

“I love that I was given an opportunity to continue to develop professionally,” says Kim Weyker, CSCP, senior materials planning analyst. “You can balance very demanding job requirements and still take advantage of the opportunities given to you.”

The initial 2013 class is widely recognized as a success, with a 91 percent first-time CSCP exam pass rate. Furthermore, after earning their credentials, many designees have chosen to volunteer their time in support of the 33 current CSCP participants. The mentors are sharing lessons learned and best practices from their own program experiences.

“We recognized that future teams would benefit from our knowledge,” explains Sarah Cramer, CSCP, business transformation subprocess owner. “We use a survey and discussions to tease out what was and wasn’t successful with our approaches for reviewing the material and preparing for the exam.”

APICS education at work

MillerCoors is enjoying both long-term transformational results and more immediate benefits. First, program participants say the APICS body of knowledge has shaped a broader view of supply chain management. Employees now possess a far-reaching perspective on how they operate their supply chain versus other industries and how all functions integrate.

In addition, APICS competencies and best practices are making a positive impact on finished goods inventory management. Employees see improvements in the form of reduced inventory levels, fewer out-of-stocks, increased product availability, and less finished goods loss.

Participation in the APICS CSCP program also has created a community of knowledge at MillerCoors. Stacy Duda, CSCP, sales and operations planning manager, says she and her colleagues

Employees who have gone through the training are genuinely excited to discuss and apply the learnings with others.

are rallying around the new philosophy. “APICS provides endless opportunities to tap into a wealth of external knowledge,” she explains. “Employees who have gone through the training are genuinely excited to discuss and apply the learnings with others.”

Perhaps the most significant achievement at MillerCoors is the establishment of a common supply chain management language and understanding with standard terminology, which Black says “enhances the credibility of an already strong supply chain organization.” He and his colleagues note that structure and consistency are increasingly critical as the two MillerCoors supply chains become more integrated, extend across multiple organizations, and undergo change.

“We are still a company operating on two totally different platforms,” Troop explains. “APICS education helps create a high-level common ground, despite the fact that we are in different systems.”

Denise Relish, CSCP, distribution center analyst, says the single-largest impact that APICS education has had for her is the creation of that common playing field. “We had Coors processes and Miller processes—and on top of that, there were industry standards. Since receiving my APICS certification, we all understand each other’s processes better,” she says.

Elle Shrefler, CSCP, project manager, says having a common language was meaningful to her during the recent acquisition of a cider company. The bulk cider is imported, filtered at one location, and then moved to another to be blended and packaged. At that point, the product is shipped to warehouses and distributors. “As I was managing this new process, I happened to be reading the APICS CSCP Module II,” she says. “I immediately implemented the vocabulary into my everyday business acumen. Understanding the differences between a freight forwarder and broker—as well as the different modes of transportation—was extremely beneficial. With members of the team working across six time zones, all with different backgrounds, this allowed us to communicate in the same language. The knowledge and base understanding are already penetrating the organization.”

Shrefler goes on to say that she now can easily identify the CSCP designees at MillerCoors just by the way they talk about and look at the supply chain. She believes this is making a tremendous difference to the company as a whole.

“The APICS CSCP program has been, and will continue to be, beneficial to MillerCoors supply chain management practices. It’s an important part of our learning and development, and we will continue to leverage it in the future,” Williams says. “I look forward to MillerCoors evolving into an organization where professional certifications such as the APICS CSCP are the expectation.”

Elizabeth Rennie is managing editor for APICS magazine. She may be contacted at editorial@apics.org.

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