



SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT PEER GROUP MEETING

Spotlight on Supply Chain Process Improvement Initiatives

January 2011

Successful Supply Chain Management leaders are always on the lookout for good ideas to improve internal processes. This meeting showcased the most effective recent improvement initiatives undertaken by several UWEBC member companies. Participants discussed these companies' experiences and evaluated the potential for implementing similar approaches to improve their own supply chain operations.

Presenting companies included Alliant Energy, American Girl, Briggs & Stratton, Rockwell Automation, and School Specialty.

Key Takeaways are culled from attendees' comments communicated during discussion periods and on paper.

Attendees' Key Takeaways

- √ **"Communication and collaboration are the keys to a successful initiative."**
Supply chain processes aren't just about the supply chain. They touch every area of the business. Communication and collaboration with as many areas as possible is critical to an initiative's success as measured both quantitatively and qualitatively.
- √ **"It's important to have IT as a business partner in the supply chain."** See the first key takeaway. The principle applies especially to partnering with IT, as today's supply chain processes are so technologically advanced.
- √ **"Take control of your freight."** Interact frequently with supplier portals to better manage incoming and outgoing freight, especially internationally.
- √ **"Eliminate extra steps by printing the HTS code right on the purchase order."**
The closer you can get to a single information resource the better. Multiple process touch points invite both human and technology error. Eliminating extra steps maximizes efficiency and minimizes obstacles.