



Warehouse Solution Design



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Finding my way to a successful and fulfilling career in logistics!

Tell us about yourself and why you chose a STEM related career.

My name is John Rose. I am 39 years old and a father of four and have been working in logistics for almost 20 years. I chose a STEM career after becoming a warehouse operative at an automotive spare parts site. I wanted to progress in my career in this exciting subject and gradually advanced to become a supervisor, project manager, WMS workstream lead, BPE and solution design expert.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

When I was younger, my original career choice

at college was to work in editing (movie / TV editing) as my courses were English language and media studies. I faced some personal family challenges that forced me to put my studies on hold, however I found my way to a successful and fulfilling career in logistics. It wasn't the path I had expected to take, but I've discovered that this industry is incredibly interesting and rewarding. I'm proud of the hard work and perseverance that got me to where I am today.

What does your current job involve?

During my time working with the BPE team, I was approached by the Head of Solution Design who was impressed by my background in various warehouse roles and experiences, as well as my strong analytical skills that I had developed in my previous positions. My main responsibility is to respond to customer RFQs, primarily in the ecommerce and retail sector. This involves creating warehouse design layouts in CAD, process modelling and resource planning, costing, and leading internal and external



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stakeholder reviews and presentations.

Tell us about the most exciting thing you have done at work?

I find that winning new business is the most exhilarating aspect of my job. It fills me with pride when a customer chooses CEVA as their logistics partner based on my design. Witnessing a project that started as an Excel, PowerPoint, and CAD design come to life during the implementation stage, meeting all the customer's expectations, is an experience like no other. My first encounter with this was when I won the Under Armour contract to manage their UK supply chain for ecommerce, retail, and wholesale.

How does your work impact the world around us?

Every item we purchase goes through a long journey before it reaches us. From the moment it's brought into the country through a complex logistics network, to being processed at a distribution center and finally transported to its destination. They ensure that the process runs smoothly and efficiently, impacting our daily lives. The impact that logistics and supply chain management, and the people within our industry, have on our daily lives is truly incredible.

What has been the biggest challenge and greatest achievement of your career to date?

My main career challenge has been grappling with imposter syndrome, likely due to my transition from operations to my current role. Despite doubts, I was nominated for the global Solution Designer of the Year award in 2022.

Winning it and receiving it in person at our Marseille headquarters from the CEO was my proudest moment.

Who is the most inspiring person you have met or would like to meet?

The person who has inspired me the most is my former boss, Steve Knowles. He believed in me and helped me develop my skills. As someone who loves running, I am most inspired by Courtney Dauwalter, one of the greatest female ultra runners. She is an inspiration and demonstrates the incredible physical and mental capabilities of the human body.

Do you have any top tips for young people looking to work in a role similar to yours?

In my experience, the most effective solution designers possess a combination of robust academic, analytical, and practical skills/experience. I would recommend that they dedicate some time to learning the tools commonly used in the industry such as CAD and Excel, as well as gaining real-world operational experience across various warehouse environments and sectors.

Are there any experiences that you found particularly valuable in the early stages of your career?

One of the most valuable experiences that I have had throughout my career is having key mentors to learn from and guide me along my career path. I have found that my best experiences and key learning opportunities have come from the



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people around me and from making mistakes. By understanding my mistakes and how I can learn from them, I have been able to grow both personally and professionally.

What positive changes do you think could influence the learning environment?

Adding more hands-on activities and focusing on subjects related to specific jobs can make learning more exciting and useful. Instead of just reading about things, students get to try them out for themselves, which helps them understand better and become better at solving problems. Teachers can bring in real examples from different industries to show how what they're learning applies in the real world. Also, students can get the chance to work with companies or do internships, which lets them see what it's like to have a job in their field of interest and make connections with professionals. These changes make learning more fun and practical, and they help students get ready for their future jobs.

How would you explain the role of logistics in everyday life?

When my twin girls were younger, they suffered from eczema and required moisturiser and over-the-counter creams to treat the symptoms. At that time, a leading consumer retail company was undergoing a challenging implementation and change in their third-party logistics provider, which resulted in delays in their supply chain and led to understocked or out-of-stock items in stores. Now, imagine if this were not a medical item that caused minor inconvenience to a few families, but a life-saving drug or a piece of medical equipment. The ramifications of delays or issues in the supply chain could have significant impacts.

What advice do you have for students navigating their career journeys?

My honest advice would be to keep your career options open and diverse if you haven't decided on a particular path yet. Always strive to challenge yourself and undertake tasks that

may push you out of your comfort zone. This will make you more versatile and help you gain experience. From my personal experience, it is important to be dedicated and hardworking and to learn from the more experienced individuals around you. Finally, remember that you are bound to make mistakes, but what is important is how you learn from them and create strategies to avoid repeating them.

Glossary

WMS – Warehouse Management System

BPE – Business Process Excellence

RFQ – Request For Quotation

CAD – Computer Aided Design

DC – Distribution Centre

3PL – Third Party Logistics

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

Find out more

[BBC article: "Courtney Dauwalter: Step inside the 'pain cave', where rules are remade](#)

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