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Supply Chain Management Internship – J.B. Hunt

By:

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**An Experiential Report for the degree Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in
Supply Chain Management.**

Sam M. Walton College of Business

University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Arkansas

May 9, 2023

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Introduction and Company Background

Introduction

Sometimes we take for granted how our goods get from one place to another. We do not realize what all goes into ensuring that we have exactly what we need when we need. We can thank transportation for this. Transportation is all around us, but often goes unnoticed. The supply chain would not work without transportation. Having been able to work in the transportation industry for the last year, I have seen firsthand how important transportation truly is to keep our supply chain running. I have a whole new respect and appreciation for this sometimes-forgotten industry.

Background and Company Overview

J.B. Hunt was founded in 1961 by Johnnie Bryan Hunt and Johnelle Hunt. By 1983, J.B. Hunt became a publicly held company and the 3rd largest trucking firm in the U.S. J.B. Hunt then began partnering with railroad services to begin intermodal service. Today over sixty years since the start, J.B. Hunt is a Fortune 500 company because of the 33,000 plus employees.

J.B. Hunt offers services in intermodal, truckload, dedicated fleet management, less than truckload (LTL), and final mile to customers across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The company has pioneered digital technology about five years with the J.B. Hunt 360 platform. This changed the way capacity was met and directly connects shippers with carriers. J.B. Hunt shows no signs of slowing down and continues making themselves a logistics powerhouse and making strides to be the very best in the industry.

Company Culture

A positive culture is a big deal at J.B. Hunt they want employees to bring their authentic selves to work every day and they have programs to support that. J.B. Hunt wants to celebrate differences and wants employees to succeed. They have many employee resource groups such as AAMERG -African American Employee Resource Group, GROW – Growing and Retaining Outstanding Women, and VERG – Veterans Employee Resource Group (What Drives Us) just to name a few. They also want their corporate office to be enjoyable about make work beneficial. They are an on-site gym, coffee bars, catered breakfast and lunches, dry-cleaning service, post office and walking trails. They want the office to be a comfortable and relaxed workplace environment. There has been a lot of talk recently about environmental sustainability and supply chains and J.B. hunt wants to be a good steward. There is a continued effort to reduce carbon emission intensity 32% by 2034.

Personal Learning Objectives

This section summarizes my learning objectives for my internship. These objectives are to:

- Become familiar with how a business works and see the importance of transportation.
- Develop skills to become an effective communicator in a business setting.
- Be flexible and open to learning in an ever-changing environment.

Become familiar with how a business works and see the importance of transportation. Coming into this internship, I had no experience with a corporation or how a business works in general. I wanted to see how the different business units within the company work together to make J.B. Hunt successful. I hoped to be able to see the pros and cons of working for a big corporation and learning as much as I can along the way. I also wanted to be able to have a first-hand experience with how important transportation is to a functional supply chain.

Develop skills to become an effective communicator in a business setting. Communication is not one of my strong suits, but I knew for this internship I needed to work at it. Because we work with so many different people every day and deal with so many different loads it is important that communication is clear across the board, and everyone is in the know. I hope to be able to communicate well with my own team in the office on an everyday basis, but also communicate with customers well. Customers are not always happy when we speak with them, and I want to be able to communicate with empathy and help solve their problems as quickly and smoothly as possible. I had to learn exactly who to communicate with and if there is a problem I cannot solve, who the right person is to solve the problem. Communication was a very valuable skill for me to learn because it is important for my professional and personal life.

Be flexible and open to learning in an ever-changing environment. As someone who loves to have a plan and gets a little thrown off when the plan does not work out, I wanted to learn to be more flexible in the work environment. Supply chain is fluid and does not go according to plan. Some days there is going to be bad weather, or a rail strike and you must have a back-up plan. I wanted to learn to be okay with that and pivot and come up with a different direction. Sometimes when a load gets delayed, there is nothing you can do. You must communicate with everyone get the load rescheduled. No day is every going to be the same and there are new problems that must be solved. But with communication and flexibility the problems get solved smoothly. It is important to control the controllable and not fixate on the things out of your control. I wanted to learn and develop flexibility in my life, and I was able to do that by interning for a flexible company.

Project/Assignments/Responsibilities Details

As an Intermodal Intern for J.B. Hunt, my responsibility was specifically for making delivery appointments with receivers. I was located at J.B. Hunt's On the Hill location in Fayetteville, which made working during school very convenient. There were about twenty other interns as well as three managers. Our role specifically was to make delivery appointments with receivers all over the country. Once the loads were on the trains, they pulled into our system and from there based on previous data from the last six weeks we were able to suggest a delivery appointment. We had to communicate with these receivers in specific methods whether that be by email, phone call, or website. This required a lot of attention to detail and communication to ensure everyone was on the same page. More specifically, I worked with a group of three other interns and our role focused more on the Temperature Controlled Intermodal loads. These specific loads were of higher priority since they had perishable goods on them. Essentially, these loads were bumped to the top of the list and were delivered first. These receivers were very particular about their loads and wanted them at certain time. With train delays and other problems out of control, this sometimes caused a little tension. But by ensuring that everyone was over communicating and doing their job, we made sure to keep customers as happy as possible. This role not only require communication within the office, but also with other business units around J.B. Hunt.

Analysis/Implications for the Company

Temperature Controlled Intermodal Process

Business Problem

Temperature Controlled Intermodal (TCI) is relatively new area of business that J.B. Hunt has recently gotten into. TCI offers the benefits that J.B. Hunt is known for but has specializations for products that require refrigeration. There are over 2,500 TCI containers, which is the largest intermodal fleet in the U.S. J.B. Hunt has plans to grow and expand in this area of their business. Because this is a relatively new business area for J.B. Hunt there is still a lot of learning that comes with it and since the products are refrigerated there are more details to go over. Receivers put a lot of faith in J.B. Hunt to ensure that their perishable goods arrive when they need them and in perfect condition. These loads are of higher priority and need to get to the receiver as quickly as possible. As someone that worked specifically with TCI, we had to follow an entirely different standard operating procedure for these loads. Since every receiver is different and J.B. Hunt wants to do the best job possible, it can sometimes be difficult to keep up with the specific ways the receiver wants their load scheduled and how they want to do about it. With more and more receivers wanting to use TCI and since interns do come and go, there needed to be a way for everyone who works with TCI to be on the same page and ensure that the receivers are happy.

Plan of Action

Since TCI is very specific and, my team along with my manager wanted to ensure that everyone was on the page and knew the details for each receiver. My group of peers that work TCI would not be with J.B. Hunt forever, so it was important we equipped and trained the new group properly. We decided that the best way to go about this was create a master sheet with every TCI receiver and constantly add to it with every single detail for how to go about scheduling their deliveries the specific way they wanted. We wanted to make it as clear and easy to understand, but also detailed to ensure we had everything we needed. The goal of this plan was to provide a clear understanding for everyone who worked with TCI to be able to provide customers with the best experience. There is room for tremendous growth the TCI division and if customers are happy it will continue to grow. My team came together and worked hard to cross check every detail and organize a great master sheet. Our manager was even able to share this master sheet with other people that work with TCI at the corporate office to ensure that communication was solid between the entire business unit.

Conclusion and Personal Evaluation

After this project and my time at J.B. Hunt, I have learned so much. I have been able to see firsthand the importance of transportation to a successful supply chain. I have a whole new appreciation and respect for transportation that I did not have before. I was able to see just how a business works and how all the business units must work together. Even though I was working with delivery appointments, we had to work with Operations, Customer Experience, and other groups to make sure the job was getting done. I was able to see the behind the scenes of a successful supply chain and learned that even what seems like the smallest task has the largest impact on a supply chain.

I also had to work with my peers in the office. We had to delegate tasks among the office and over communicate to be sure the job was getting done properly. I learned how an office environment works and what a good company culture should be. All the interns respected our managers and in turn were respected by them. We worked hard every day at our jobs, but we also had a little fun and enjoyed coming to work every day. People's ideas and opinions were respected, and we collaborated well together. I had to learn how to work specifically with those I was working on a project with and benefitted from having that responsibility.

Having this opportunity to have an internship and work on a special project with J.B. Hunt has been an amazing experience. I have grown both professionally and personally. I have learned so much about how a business works, the importance of transportation in a supply chain, and developed many important skills. I am so excited for where my career takes me, and I know I am prepared because of my time at J.B. Hunt.

Addendum

The Importance of Being Flexible in an Ever-Changing World of Supply Chain

If we have learned anything from the last several years is that things are constantly evolving and changing. Just when things seem to be consistent something comes in and disrupts it. Things change constantly in every aspect of life, but things seem to be even more fluid in the world of supply chain.

The pandemic was a prime example of how supply chains need to be flexible. It must be ready to quickly adapt and make the necessary changes to keep things running smoothly. We have learned many things over the last few years and having a supply chain that can adapt to many circumstances is very important. One small disruption can have major lasting impacts. Being able to adapt quickly and strategically will have lasting benefits for the company as well as to meet the demands of its customers.

As someone who loves consistency and loves when things go according to plan, being flexible is something I have really had to learn. During my time in my internship at J.B. Hunt, I have been able to learn to be more flexible and roll with the punches. The transportation industry is a very unpredictable industry and can have disruptions from rail-road strikes to bad weather and everything in between. Not every day is going to be the same and some days things just are not going to go according to plan and that is okay. How you react and adjust is what is most important.

Some days things are not going to go according to plan and that is okay. It is all about how you respond.

Some of the most successful companies are the ones that are the most flexible. Whether that be Walmart, Amazon, J.B. Hunt, or Apple, these companies have a plan before disruptions occur and are ready to go at a moment's notice. They have plans and strategies in place in case things go wrong and are able to act quickly. Things were so uncertain during the pandemic and companies had to pivot quickly to get the job done. Even though things were so tumultuous during the pandemic, supply chains have changed for the better now. Companies are prepared and have learned so many lessons. They can be flexible and respond accordingly to whatever disruptions may occur.

As important as it is for the company and its individual supply chain to be flexible, it is even more important to be flexible in your own individual work and self. Flexibility within yourself

can be hard to achieve. I know it is something I am learning every day and want to continue to grow in that aspect of my own life. Being flexible is important because it allows you to learn new skills and assume responsibilities that you may have not signed up for.

5 Takeaways from my Supply Chain Internship

As I continue my internship at J.B. Hunt during my final semester, I have had the opportunity to reflect on some of my key takeaways. I have had the opportunity to put into practice what I have learned in my Walton Supply Chain courses in the real-world transportation industry. It has been very beneficial to have this real-world experience both personally and professionally. Through collaborating with other interns in the office, talking directly to receivers, or even working alongside members of the Customer Experience and Operations teams, I have experienced a lot of challenges and successes. Here are my 5 key takeaways from the last 8 months with J.B. Hunt.

- It's Okay to Start Out Nervous

Doing anything for the first time can be nerve-wracking, especially starting a job. When I started my internship, I was very nervous. Nervous about doing something new, about being in an office all the time, or even just nervous about meeting new people that I would work with. Getting job nerves is normal for people to experience and it is okay. It is okay to get out of your comfort zone and try something new. Trying something new allows you to grow as a person and employee. Once I took a step back and realized I was not going to be new forever and could learn this job I was okay.

- Don't Be Afraid to Ask Questions

When you start something new, you are not going to know everything or have all the answers. During my time at J.B. Hunt, I have learned the importance of asking questions. No one here expects me to have all the answers and it is crucial to work together and be sure everything is getting done correctly. Asking questions is not a weakness, but instead, a strength to show you care and want the job to get done right. Asking questions has allowed me to see things from different perspectives and gain insights from those I work with daily.

- Take Initiative

Before I started my internship, taking initiative was not one of my strong suits and it is something I am continually working on. During my internship, I have had to start the decision-making process and not wait around for others when things need to get done. Rather than wait for instructions from my manager, I have been able to go ahead and get started on tasks and projects that need to be accomplished.

- Be able to Put Skills into Practice

Along with learning new skills, I have been able to put the skills I already have into practice. Internships are a great place to take everything you have learned in college classes and use it. I have learned so much during college as well as my time working with J.B. Hunt, and I use my skills every day. These skills include my attention to detail, my communication with those I work with, or just my knowledge of supply chains. I have faith in myself that I have real-world knowledge and am not completely clueless when it comes to the world of the supply chain.

- Have a Feel for a Work Environment

Jumping into a workplace environment right after college can be scary, but during my time at J.B. Hunt I have been able to experience a wonderful work environment. I have been able to work with other interns and managers, who only want us to learn and grow. Everyone talks about workplace culture and during my internship I have been able to experience great workplace culture. I look forward to going to work every day, enjoying the work I do, and having great relationships with the people I work with.

Being an intern with J.B. Hunt has been a wonderful experience and I am excited to see how I continue to learn in this role and prepare myself to enter post-grad life with confidence and excitement.

The Significance of Having an Internship During College

College is a very pivotal time during one's life. There are a lot of unknowns and new experiences. Everyone is a little clueless and needs some time to figure life out and a new sense of freedom. People are figuring out what to do for the rest of their lives and internships are a great way to do that. It is very common for undergraduate students to have internships during college to have some work experience in their field of study.

The [J.B. Hunt Transport Department of Supply Chain Management at the University of Arkansas](#) requires students to have internships during their four years to graduate. I think this is one of the greatest aspects of the Supply Chain Department. Having the experience of an internship is necessary for today's work environment to get a job after college. Employers want their future employees to have experience upon hiring and by having an internship you are set up for success. Having an internship gives students an edge when looking for a job for post-grad. Employers see college graduates that have some work experience as more marketable and can handle more responsibility. Sometimes, there is often a lot of pressure to find the perfect internship and have a glamorous experience, but sometimes that is not the case. It is okay to not find the right match and try again. That is what an internship is all about, learning and gaining experience.

During my internship, I have gained valuable work experience that will prepare me for my future career. It can be very overwhelming stepping into a career immediately after graduation, but during my internship, I have had a sense of real-world experience. I am in an office and must deal with the day-to-day duties that come with having a job. It has been so beneficial for me to be able to experience this in an internship setting.

I have also been able to explore a future career path. When I first decided that I wanted to major in Supply Chain Management, I had no idea what a future job would look like. I was hesitant that this may not be the right career path for me or that I may change my mind, but that has not been the case. By having the opportunity to work at J.B. Hunt, I know that supply chain is the field I want to be in, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have an internship to figure that out.

In the professional world, it is all about whom you know. Networking is crucial and internships help provide networking opportunities. During my internship, I have been surrounded by wonderful professionals who have been at J.B. Hunt for their whole careers and know the industry very well. I have learned so much from those I work with and have been able to get to know them. They are wonderful connections to have as I go continue in my professional career.

Everywhere you go you can make connections and get to know people. As interns and students, we must take advantage of that opportunity to expand our networks.

When I was a freshman, I heard repeatedly the importance of having an internship in college. I never truly understood just how important it was until I was given the opportunity to have one. You learn so much in the classroom and around campus, but internships are where you can put all that knowledge and life skills into practice. My internship has been one of the best parts of my college experience and I am so excited to see how it enhances my future career.

5 TAKEAWAYS FROM MY SUPPLY CHAIN INTERNSHIP

1 IT'S OKAY TO BE NERVOUS

Being nervous at the start of something new is totally normal. There is so much growth that comes from trying new things. Get out of your comfort zone. You can do it!



2 DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS

Asking questions is important. You are never going to have all the answers and asking questions you can get insight and knowledge from those around you.

3 TAKE INITIATIVE

Don't wait on others to tell you what to do and give you a task. Trust your gut and your decision-making skills.



4 PUT SKILLS INTO PRACTICE

We have learned so much in school and now it's time to put your skills to use. Have faith in your abilities and your knowledge.

5 GET A FEEL FOR A WORK ENVIRONMENT

The workplace can be intimidating, but an internship is a great place to get used to it. Enjoying where you work and the people you work with is the best part!



What is Supply Chain and which part of the chain is the most important?

Until March 2020, I never knew what a supply chain was. But then suddenly it is what everyone is talking about, and it was “broken” and needed to be fixed. When I first came to college, I had no idea what I wanted my major to be. After taking the Intro to Supply Chain Management course and hearing all over the news about the broken supply chain, I became fascinated and decided that is what I wanted to major in. Since that moment I have enjoyed every class, I have been able to take and continue to pay very close attention to the news to the supply chain stories happening around the world.

When people ask me what supply chain is, my quick answer is “how things get from point A to point B” or “when you order something online and it shows up at your doorstep in 2-3 business days”, but it is so much more than that. It is so much more complicated than that. If we learned anything from 2020, we learned that when one part of the supply chain is not working properly then there are disruptions in the whole supply chain. Gartner defines a supply chain as “a group of functions and processes focused on optimizing the flow of products, services, and related information from sources of supply to customers or points of demand.” It stretches across multiple different levels and there is a lot of communication involved. Some of the main aspects of the supply chain include supply chain planning, sourcing and procurement, manufacturing, distribution, and transportation. All these different categories have unique aspects within them.

Being a student at the University of Arkansas, I am constantly surrounded by some great companies with very successful supply chains. We can hear real-life examples in the classroom and then put them into practice in internships or in jobs. During my final year of college, I have had the opportunity to intern with J.B. Hunt. J.B. Hunt is one of the biggest names in the world of transportation and logistics and continues to grow. Having the opportunity to intern at J.B. Hunt and being a part of their successful business has been a wonderful opportunity.

In my specific role at J.B. Hunt, I connect with customers and schedule deliveries for the Intermodal team. In this role, I am on the transportation side of the supply chain. We schedule deliveries for the products to be delivered to the customer and from there another step of the supply chain begins. Even though this may seem like just contacting the customers and scheduling the deliveries, there is a lot more that goes into it. We must over-communicate and keep documentation of all communication, so everyone involved knows what is going on. Sometimes there are delays that are out of our control, whether that be weather or rail delays, so it is our job to keep everyone in the know.

There are many different aspects in the supply chain and many people must work together to make it work. The question of which is the most important part of the supply chain can be asked, but I do not think it can be properly answered. Every part is important, and every part must work with another so we can have a successful supply chain. In my internship, I have had the chance to realize how important each part is. Yes, I work in transportation, but transportation could not work without planning, sourcing, or procurement. Every part must work in tandem to create the most successful supply chain possible. Being a small part of a huge supply chain has allowed me to have a better understanding and appreciation for all parts of the greater picture.



Kendall Benson (She/Her) • 1st

Honors Marketing and Supply Chain Student at the University of Arkansas

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This week, [Parker Shearon](#), [Garrett Locknar](#), and I got together to answer questions about our internship at [J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc.](#) and to take a look around our office!!

Thank you to [Abby Roberts](#) for videoing and [Carey Olson](#) for being our special guest! [Brian Fugate](#) J.B. Hunt Transport Department of Supply Chain Management at the University of Arkansas [#Thisishowweintern](#) [#SupplyChainU](#)



Some Final Thoughts

With graduation fast approaching, there are a lot of thoughts and feelings that come with that. It is an extremely bittersweet time as this chapter of my life comes to an end, but I know I am more than ready for that next chapter of my life. When one door closes, another exciting one is up ahead. I have had the opportunity to do a lot of cool and exciting things here at the University of Arkansas and I have loved every second. I would not be who I am today without this place and the experiences I have had.

I have experienced a lot of growth here at the University of Arkansas in the classroom and at my internship at J.B. Hunt. I was able to take what I had learned in the classroom and put it into real-life practice at my internship. I have gained valuable skills and knowledge about how a business works, operates, and what a good workplace culture should be. One of the greatest things I have learned during my internship is the importance of flexibility. I am the first to admit I love to have a plan and when my plan does not go my way it causes me a little bit of stress. Being a part of the supply chain industry has allowed me to improve my own flexibility. The supply chain industry is ever-changing and unpredictable. We have seen many prime examples of that unpredictability over the last three years. Things do not always go according to plan and there is so much value with how you react and adapt to that change. Companies with flexible supply chains are some of the most flexible. J.B. Hunt is a prime example of a company with this kind of flexibility. They react quickly and are ready for whatever the industry throws at them. Having the opportunity to work with a flexible company has allowed me to grow personally and professionally in some of my weakest areas.

Being a part of a very successful company has allowed me to see many different areas of how a business should work and operate. Before this internship, I did not have the opportunity to see how a business works. But now, I have been able to experience a great workplace culture where everyone gets along and respects and values each other's ideas and opinions. I have learned how each business unit must work together for the business to be successful. No job is no small and unimportant. At a successful company like J.B. Hunt, the smallest jobs still carry a lot of weight and must do their job to keep the supply chain successful and running.

During my supply chain courses, we discussed the importance of transportation, but I never truly understood the importance until this internship, and I worked with transportation daily. Transportation truly keeps the world moving and is one of the most important aspects of a successful supply chain. I now truly understand just how important transportation truly is and I know that working in the supply chain industry is very important and does not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

Communication in every aspect of life is so crucial and important. Communication often makes or breaks many experiences and relationships. In the internship, I have truly learned the importance of communication. It is important to communicate with those you work directly with and those that you may not work directly with to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Working specifically with the group I worked with, Temperature Controlled Intermodal (TCI), I have truly realized the importance of communication. There is a higher priority with those loads and more steps to follow so it is crucial to overcommunicate to ensure that everyone knows exactly what is going on. There are so many different pieces to one supply chain and communication is vital to ensure the success of a supply chain and ensure that everyone is aware of what is going on to allow it to flow as smoothly as possible. When you work with people, sometimes people will be upset. But communicating with empathy, explaining the process, and helping them solve their problems will help you be a better communicator and that is something I have had to learn in this internship.

During my time at J.B. Hunt, I had the opportunity to work specifically with the Temperature Controlled Intermodal (TCI) group. Being a part of this group was awesome and allowed me and my team to work together on something exciting and important to J.B. Hunt. These loads had perishable items and needed to get to the receiver as quickly as possible. They essentially jumped to the top of the list and followed an entirely different standard operating procedure. Being a part of this team really allowed me to focus on my personal goals and have a whole new understanding of the supply chain. I had to understand the business and transportation in an entirely different way and be able to overcommunicate since these loads are on more of a deadline and the receivers are very particular about how the appointments are scheduled. I truly saw how important transportation is, but all aspects must work together. There is not one most important aspect of the supply chain, but everyone must work together. Planners must work with people in sourcing and procurement who must work with manufacturers and distributors, and transportation. Everyone must work in tandem, and problems begin to arise when not everyone is doing their job. Being a small part of a huge supply chain has allowed me to have a better understanding and appreciation for all parts of the greater picture.

After my time at J.B. Hunt, I have learned so much. I have been able to see firsthand the importance of transportation to a successful supply chain. I have a whole new appreciation and respect for transportation that I did not have before. I was able to see just how a business works and how all the business units must work together. Even though I was working with delivery appointments, we had to work with Operations, Customer Experience, and other groups to make sure the job was getting done. I was able to see the behind-the-scenes of a successful supply chain and learned that even what seems like the smallest task has the largest impact on a supply chain.

I also had to work with my peers in the office. We had to delegate tasks to the office and over-communicate to be sure the job was getting done properly. I learned how an office environment

works and what a good company culture should be. All the interns respected our managers and in turn, were respected by them. We worked hard every day at our jobs, but we also had a little fun and enjoyed coming to work every day. People's ideas and opinions were respected, and we collaborated well together. I had to learn how to work specifically with those I was working on a project with and benefitted from having that responsibility.

Having this opportunity to have an internship and work on a special project with J.B. Hunt has been an amazing experience. I have grown both professionally and personally. I have learned so much about how a business works, and the importance of transportation in a supply chain, and developed many important skills. I am so excited about where my career takes me, and I know I am prepared because of my time at J.B. Hunt.

As bittersweet as it is that graduation is this weekend, I could not have asked for a better four years in the Supply Chain Department and the University of Arkansas. I have learned so much in the classroom, but also outside of the classroom. I have learned so much about Supply Chain Management and have truly enjoyed learning. I want to continue to be curious and never stop learning as I enter my career. These were truly the best four years I could have ever asked for and I am so excited for the next chapter.