

# RaggedEdge

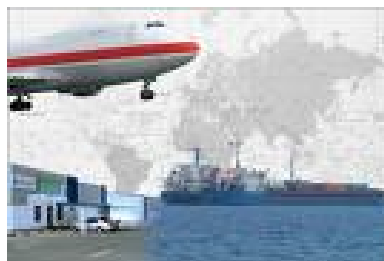
consulting + recruitment



*A guide to Careers in the Ports  
Shipping & Logistics Industry*

**And how you make the most  
of your most important asset –**

**YOU!**



## *Where do I start?*

Making the transition to full time working life or changing your career isn't easy. It takes time to hone the right skills and develop the best tactics not only to find the job you want, but also to make the most of it, once you have got it.

Forewarned is forearmed, however, paying heed to a few a few basic principals will carry you through.

**Don't leave career planning too late.**

**Make the most of your education and resources.**

**Do some preliminary research.**

**Let us help you, - we are here to assist.**



## ***WHY A CAREER IN THE PORTS, SHIPPING & LOGISTICS INDUSTRY?***

This industry is a significant contributor to the national economy and provides the major links to and from Europe, Scandinavia and the rest of the world for manufacturing, service and retail companies situated in the industrial heartland of the UK and their many customers and suppliers overseas.

The Ports, Shipping, Freight & Logistics industry offers a wealth of career opportunities for individuals with business skills, or those wishing to make a career in a fast moving, international, and changing business environment

### **10 things you probably didn't know about the Ports, Shipping & Logistics industry\*:**

1. Ninety-five per cent of the UK's international trade in goods travels by sea and the combined net overseas earnings of maritime services and shipping is worth about £2.5 billion a year
2. The City of London is the world's leading maritime centre, controlling about one fifth of the world fleet, and overseas owners with agencies in the UK sustain more than 4,500 City jobs including shipping law, banking and insurance.
3. There is over 585million tonnes of freight traffic going in and out of the UK each year.
4. The freight & logistics industry earns over £55billion annually (4% of the UK Gross Output).
5. There are over 1.6million people employed within the industry in the UK alone.
6. Grimsby and Immingham are the UK's number 1 cargo handling port.
7. The industry is suffering an acute skills crisis that needs to be addressed for future generations.
8. Over the past 10 years the value of economic output has risen by over 20%, dominated by growth in the service sector.
9. Over the past 10 years more specifically ports have seen a 55% increase in containerised traffic and a 44% increase lorry or unaccompanied trailer traffic.
10. The 3 most popular traffic types are A: Container, B: Liquid Bulk, C: Dry Bulk.

Source: [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

**Read on to understand where there may be opportunities for you in the future, and how you may be able to shape a rewarding career in this exciting industry.**

## *Ports, Shipping & Freight Forwarding*

The next time you visit a supermarket or a department store look for the country of origin on the goods that you buy. The fruit and vegetables may come from Africa, some tableware from Scandinavia, coffee from South America, clothing from the Far East, Coca-Cola from America. Millions of tons of goods are transported internationally every year and shipping companies and freight forwarders organise the movement of goods from one part of the world to another.

Over the past forty years container shipping has transformed international trade and because of efficiency, reliability and speed, containerised systems are now the principle and most economical method to move imports and exports round the world. There are numerous companies in Ports, cities and towns around the UK ranging from multi-national organisations with many overseas offices through to small specialist organisations who are involved in the supply chain industry.

### *Entry Qualifications*

There are currently no specific entry requirements for shipping and freight forwarding, but many employers ask for three to five good GCSEs. The most useful subjects are English Language and Maths. Fluency in a foreign language and knowledge of geography can also be an advantage. For young, ambitious graduates who are looking for an international career there are various programmes available through the head offices of European or International organisations.

### *Where can I start?*

There are a wide variety of starting positions among the companies operating in the Ports, Shipping and Logistics Industry. Examples are set out below:

- **Junior Operations Clerks** - who deal with customers' queries, perhaps needing further contact with internal departments or external suppliers, such as Hauliers.
- **Customer Services Assistants** - will be part of a team working together to answer customers' questions on the phone, so the most important part of their job is to respond to individual customer's requirements.
- **Customs Entry Clerks** - are responsible for clerical duties including processing import documents, recording customs clearance and insurance details.
- **Dock Runners** - deliver and collect documentation that has to be used by other companies in relation to the movement of cargoes.
- **Import and Export Clerks** - ensure that correct documentation is received to enable the Company to offer the most efficient service. Training is given in relevant areas such as customs procedures and port, warehousing and transport tariffs.

### *What prospects are there?*

Promotion is totally performance-related. To get on in the industry requires a combination of inter-personal skills and ability within the job. In a number of companies all vacancies at whatever level are advertised internally but within such a large sector opportunities are often advertised in the local press and through employment agencies.

As can be seen from the career map later in this document there are no barriers for the successful person.

### *What training will I receive?*

On-the-job experience is the most important part of training in many companies. It is often supplemented by training and education where learning is combined with work, starting with a Foundation Programme in International Trade and Services. Many institutions, such as the Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education, and Hull University through their Logistics Management Education programme provide excellent NVQ equivalent 2/3 programmes supported by the Institute of Logistics and Transport. This programme runs on towards a 3-year Foundation degree Course in Logistics Management.

At a senior level some companies encourage examinations run by the Chartered Institute of Shipbrokers. The larger companies have specific training schemes from technically based courses through to the development of management and leadership skills.

## *Transport, Warehousing & Logistics*

Efficient road and rail transport is essential to support our modern way of life. The effects of disruption caused by extreme weather conditions or strikes can soon be felt in supermarkets, hospitals and postal services. Countrywide transport systems ensure that our freight is delivered at the right time, to the right place, at the right price, after a well-planned journey. Warehousing involves the short-term storage of goods and overseeing the receipt, co-ordination, safety and dispatch of a wide variety of commodities. While some jobs purely involve management of a warehouse, others can involve managing distribution and packaging also.

Logistics involves the combination of all of the processes involved in the supply chain of goods, from the shop floor right through to the customer. This can encompass transportation, stock control, warehousing and relies increasingly on information technology to monitor the flow of goods and materials.

### *Entry Requirements*

No specific qualifications are required for starting in road transport and many managers have started in clerical, manual or driving jobs and worked their way up. Increasingly the work involves the use of computers. Evidence of such skills is an advantage together with numerical and verbal ability. Some companies are developing trainee schemes for 'A' Level entrants and the larger organisations recruit graduates for graduate training schemes operating both nationally and internationally.

### *Where can I start?*

As can be seen by the career map below, there are a number of entry routes. Possible positions that may be available are shown below with brief descriptions of the jobs:

**Customs Entry Clerks** - are responsible for clerical duties including processing import documents, recording customs clearance and insurance details.

- **Customer Services Clerks** - keeping records of sales made by the sales department, recording details of orders placed and preparing and sending out invoices.

- **Junior Operations Coordinators** - who deal with customer queries and help specialists who plan the routes and organise loads to ensure goods reach their destination on time and in good condition.

- **Transport Administrators** - who process driver orders on a daily basis ensuring that the correct documentation is being received as well as logging drivers' orders on the computer system, checking that the details shown are accurate and controlling proof of delivery documentation.

- **Administration Clerks** - process orders on a daily basis ensuring that the correct documentation is being received as well as logging drivers orders on a computer system and checking that the details shown are correct.

### *What prospects are there?*

Promotion is by performance and many companies advertise vacancies internally on notice boards. The industry is wide ranging with a large number of depots and warehouses throughout the UK. Some operations in ports are subsidiary companies of international transporters and there are opportunities throughout the UK and the rest of the world.

### *What training will I receive?*

A number of companies run induction courses and support education and training. A variety of courses are run in-house including those allied to BIFA (British International Freight Association) and the Institute of Logistics and Transport (ILT). Other training and development is linked to a modern apprenticeship /NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) training scheme. Practical experience of everyday operations is combined with a training programme geared towards a recognized qualification.

## *Business Services*

Common to all areas of the ports, shipping and logistics industry are the support functions and sales services without which the businesses could not operate.

### *Entry Requirements*

No minimum qualifications are specified but many employers ask for 3 to 5 GCSEs grade A - C. The most useful subjects are English Language and Maths. Excellent careers and training opportunities exist in the following areas

### *Where can I start?*

- **Back-up** services include finance, marketing, sales and personnel without which the ports cannot operate. Starter positions include:
  - **Trainee Accountants** who assist in the provision of accurate, timely financially based information on which management can base their decision-making.
  - **Receptionists/Telephonists** - to provide a professional and friendly first point of contact for port customers.

### *Progressing into?*

#### **- Sales and Marketing**

Sales people are an essential part of all ports, shipping and logistics businesses. They identify and win new customers, maintain relationships with existing customers and provide them with useful market information. While some trainees start as Customer Service Assistants other sales people develop from a clerical or administrative base. There is demand for good sales people and promotion opportunities to sales management roles exist both within individual organisations and throughout the industry. Most companies provide in-house training on their products or services and the techniques involved in selling.

#### **- Accountancy**

Trainee positions are generally available in departments dealing with bought ledgers, sales ledgers or cashiering duties. The work is involved with calculating the cost of purchases, sales and keeping records of daily financial transactions. Many organisations give support to their trainees by day release or distance learning to obtain qualifications in, for example, the examinations of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA).

#### **- Information Technology**

Year by year organisations are increasingly relying on computerized systems to increase efficiency. IT experience and skills are particularly important to the industry so any evidence

of competence is sought-after by employers. Many companies give training in their own systems and a number of company-wide initiatives have recently taken place in various organisations to develop computer literacy, for example training all staff to obtain an International Computer Driving Licence.

**- Personnel/Human Resources/Training**

Human resource or personnel officers help an organization make the most effective use of its workforce. The main areas of work are recruitment, training, salary, administration and employee relations. Most HR/Personnel/Training Officers have gained skills and experience within an organisation before moving into this area.

*What prospects are there?*

Promotion is related to performance, ability and practical application. This is the sort of industry where common sense and application of knowledge will lead to promotion. There are a number of large companies in the region who will have opportunities for both national and international careers.

There should be no barriers for the person who wishes to make a success of their chosen career.

*What training will I receive?*

On the job training, combined with an opportunity to study for professional qualifications such as The Chartered Institute of Management Accounts (CIMA) or the Institute of Personnel (IPD). Additional qualifications in level 2/3 of the Institute of Logistics (ILT) are useful to develop a greater understanding of the broader business of the industry.

*Career Map*

Our career map is on the following page. Take a look and see the opportunities available in this industry sector



## Type and Range of Qualifications available through the Ports and Logistics Centre

|   | CAREER STEP 1  | CAREER STEP 2   | CAREER STEP 3   | CAREER STEP 4   | CAREER STEP 5   |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Qualification</b>                        | Apprenticeship<br>NVQ Level 1 & 2<br>GCSE's<br>Industry-Specific Qualification   | Apprenticeship<br>NVQ Level 3<br>Professional Qualifications<br>A-levels<br>Industry-Specific Qualification                           | Foundation Degree<br>NVQ Level 4<br>Professional Qualification<br>Industry-Specific Qualification   | Degree<br>NVQ Level 5<br>Professional Qualification<br>Industry-Specific Qualification  | Post-Graduate<br>MBA  |
| <b>Ports</b>                                | Berth Operator<br>Crane Driver<br>Tug Driver<br>Forklift Driver<br>Rigger<br>Weighbridge Operator<br>Quay Clerk<br>Cargo Handler<br>Trainee Accountant<br>Business Services Assistant<br>Receptionist/telephonist        | Crane Co-ordinator<br>Operations Supervisor (Crane Drivers)<br>Timber Terminal Supervisor<br>Management Accounts Assistant            | Labour Controller<br>Shipside Superintendent<br>Yard Superintendent<br>Port Services Manager<br>IT Manager  | Duty Operations Manager<br>Operations Manager<br>Personnel Manager<br>Finance Manager<br>Port Services Manager<br>Harbour Master<br>Terminal Supervisor | Divisional Manager-<br>Container Operations<br>Port Manager                                       |
| <b>Engineering</b>                          | Workshop labourer<br>Apprentice<br>Maintenance Assistant   | Senior Electrical Technician<br>Senior Engineering Technician<br>Engineering Supervisor   | Engineer Shift Manager<br>Project Engineer<br>Team Leader<br>Engineer Controller  | Senior Manager – Engineering<br>Engineering Resource Manager  | General Manager-<br>Engineering<br>Regional Manager-<br>Engineering                               |
| <b>Shipping</b>                             | Dock Runner<br>Trainee Input Clerk<br>Junior Operations Clerk<br>Customs Entry Clerk<br>Customer Services Assistant  | Import & Export Clerk<br>Sales Assistant<br>Operations Clerk<br>Client Co-ordinator<br>Customer Co-ordinator                          | Operations Supervisor<br>Import Supervisor<br>Senior Operations Clerk<br>Commercial Clerk Co-ordinator<br>Senior Client Co-ordinator  | Commercial Manager<br>Sales Manager<br>Operations Manager<br>Supervisor   | General Manager<br>Director<br>Commercial Trade Director<br>Forwarding Manager                    |
| <b>Transport, Warehouse &amp; Logistics</b> | Administration Clerk<br>Customer Services Clerk<br>Customer Entry Clerk<br>Driver<br>Junior Operations Co-ordinator<br>Plant Operator<br>Site Administration Clerk<br>Transport Account Administrator<br>Warehouse Staff | Operations Co-ordinator<br>Sales Co-ordinator<br>Import Co-ordinator<br>Client Co-ordinator<br>Transport Clerk<br>Co-ordination Clerk | Terminal Co-ordinator<br>Senior Operations Co-ordinator<br>Operations Planner<br>Senior Co-ordinator<br>Senior Client Co-ordinator<br>Traffic Operations<br>Site Supervisor | Business Unit Manager<br>Ferry Manager<br>Sales Manager<br>Project Manager<br>Client Development Manager<br>Transport Manager<br>Site Operation Manager | Corporate Manager – UK<br>Operations Manager<br>Forwarding Manager<br>General Manager<br>Director |

## Salaries, pay and conditions

Salaries vary widely with different employers. Starting salaries will be no less than National Minimum Wage, and often more. Graduates will start their career on a salary level commensurate with their qualifications.

We can only provide guidelines as salaries vary widely according to age, experience, qualifications and company size.

For many people in these industries employment is not a 9 to 5, Monday to Friday job although these may be the normal working hours. Transport & Logistics, Ports & Ships operate twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and staff are needed to organise activities and deal with crises.

### **Salary Progression**

Overall, job opportunities in the sector are extensive and new jobs become available all the time allowing transfers between the various industries in the sector. After five years in the business with the right experience those on the management ladder can earn £25,000 or more according to their position in the company. After training, salary progression through each career step is illustrated below. These salaries are only indicators of earnings at each level

**Career Step 1 £12,000 - £17,000 (+ overtime)**  
**Career Step 2 £17,000 - £23,000 (+ overtime)**  
**Career Step 3 £23,000 - £30,000 (+ overtime)**  
**Career Step 4 £30,000 - £40,000**  
**Career Step 5 £40,000 plus**

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## ***ONCE YOU HAVE DECIDED THAT THIS IS FOR YOU!***

### **The Right Job for You**

Practice at application forms, interview technique, psychometric tests.

'People with focus are the people who will get on'.

The sort of skills today's employers value highly are communication skills – both verbal and written; problem solving abilities; and an ability to learn new material quickly and efficiently. While technical skills are still important, many employers no longer regard them as a priority. Team-working and self-management skills are also highly regarded. In contrast, however, many candidates still rate communications abilities as the main general skill needed for success. And many overlook the softer skills that are rated so highly by today's employers.

Ask yourself: do you have these more general skills? What experiences could you cite in an application or at an interview to prove that you do? Is there anything you could do now to develop these skills – work experience, perhaps? Attitude is another area where there has been disparity between employers' and candidates' expectations in recent years. For while talk now is of work/life balance, informal work styles and relaxed working relationships – all things highly valued by today's candidate - the traditional qualities, such as dedication, enthusiasm, thoroughness, honesty, a pleasant manner and punctuality, are all still expected by employers. Also important is something referred to by many as "cultural fit".

"Cultural fit" is a grey area to get to grips with. Employers are prevented by law from discriminating against applicants because of background or ethnic origin. However, recruiting someone with an approach and attitude in tune with an organisation's attitude is viewed as an essential part of finding the "right" candidate. This is as important for you as it is for them, however. Do your homework: find out not just about a company's career opportunities but also what it's like to work there. However beware: while you can do a certain amount of research into company culture, ultimately you will have to rely on gut feel. "There should be little shock to the system if a candidate has done what most employers now expect – work experience, and an evaluation of what that experiences taught them".

## ***SO YOU HAVE GOT AN INTERVIEW***

### **What are employers looking for?**

Employers seek a range of skills and qualities from graduate applicants. These are often referred to as transferable or core skills. A recent survey into skills sought by graduate recruiters listed the top 12 of these as:

- Willingness to learn.
- Commitment.
- Dependability/reliability.
- Self-motivation.
- Teamwork.
- Communication skills (oral).
- Co-operation.
- Communication skills (written)
- Drive/energy.
- Self-management.
- Desire to achieve/motivation.
- Problem-solving ability.

Prior to making an application you should analyse the information provided by the employer in order to establish the mix of skills and qualities they particularly require. Job descriptions can be limited to outlines of the work-related tasks rather than the personal qualities needed; however it is common now for employers to recognise the need to specify the qualities required in the person and the requirements of the job, so as to supply the candidate with more information. These are usually referred to as a person specification. They may distinguish between the attributes essential for the job and those that are desirable.

### **A person specification will usually include:**

- Attainments, qualifications;
- General intelligence;
- Special aptitudes e.g. IT;
- Interests - especially those showing motivational achievement related to the career.
- Characteristics – e.g. team player.
- Circumstances – e.g. availability to travel.

It is becoming more established to find competencies used as a basis for job selection. Competencies used as a basis for job selection. Competencies are defined as characteristics that help people to perform well in the job. A competency-type approach to recruitment will break down the jobs into their essential elements relating particularly to performance.

### **Examples of these might be:**

- Commercial and business awareness;
- Strategic vision and direction setting;
- Problem solving and decision-making.

Sometimes competencies will be named and describe so you can better match your own profile to them; other times you will need to draw up a competency framework from the person specification against which you will need to compare your own specifications, skills and personal attributes so as to assess your own potential to succeed in the recruitment. This will particularly be the case where the questions on the application form are indicated to have been framed so as to illicit information as to where you stand on stated competencies

## ***LET YOUR BODY DO THE TALKING***

### **Have You Got The Look?**

You can expect that anything between 70% and 90% of communication messages be conveyed through non-verbal aspects. Your body language gives a lot away about you and how you feel about yourself. In important situations such as at interviews or social events it is vital to get the balance right. Here we show you how to come across as confident and assured.

All of us often send out mixed messages. What we are saying is often contradicted by our body language. So, if someone says to you: "Yes, what you are saying is really interesting. Tell me more," – but then looks at their watch, fidgets or fails to maintain eye contact – would you believe their words or their body?

### **Body language often speaks louder than words.**

The first step to changing your body language is awareness. Start by observing other people, as it is usually easier than observing yourself. Once you are aware of body signals, then you can begin slowly correcting yours. Thing to watch for are:

- Tone of voice
- Inflection
- Speed of speech
- Eye contact
- Body posture
- Hand gestures
- Facial expressions

Here's how distinguish between assertive and aggressive behaviour:-

#### **Assertive**

- Direct eye contact
- Open Body
- Body is still and relaxed
- Hand gestures emphasise word
- Shoulders straight and posture upright
- Voice appears warm and firm

#### **Aggressive**

- Looking bored
- Pointing finger
- Hands on hips
- Sarcastic tone
- Loud or too soft voice
- Body closed off
- Invading personal space by standing to close

#### **Non-Assertive**

- Looking away
- Fidgeting with hair, jewellery etc
- Whining voice or difficult to hear
- Smiling inappropriately
- Shoulders slumped and bad posture

### **Winning body language**

Here's how to give the right message at important meetings and interviews.

#### **Posture**

Much is said about the importance of standing straight and tall. All of us are prone to slouching – so an instant and easy way to improve your posture is by holding your arms

relaxed down by your side and turning the palm of your hands and wrists outwards. This will immediately throw back your shoulders and open your chest.

## **Handshake**

A palm of the hand facing downwards in a handshake indicates a dominant attitude. A palm offered upward indicates a submissive approach. Keep your hand vertical, maintain firm (not crushing) pressure, keep steady eye contact and smile – this will signal co-operation, respect and friendliness.

## **Sitting**

Sit upright but relaxed in the chair. Do not lean overly forward; this looks too keen and nervous. Relaxing too far back into chair denotes disrespect.

## **Arms and Legs**

Unfold arms and uncross legs. Crossed limbs are usually perceived as negative, defensive gestures. Especially in an interview situation, crossed legs and arms can be a strong signal that something is wrong. Locking the ankles has the same meaning.

## **Hands**

Practise neutral positions, like laying your hands in your lap. Non-verbal gestures indicating deceit include rubbing your face below the nose, rubbing your eyes, and pulling your collar way from your neck. In general, keep your hands away from your face. Also don't be tempted to clench your hands together as this signals over nervousness.

## **The Eyes and Face**

These are the most expressive parts when it comes to body language. Speaking with the eyes closed, even for a second, signal an attempt to block someone from your sight because you are not particularly interested in what they have to say.

Excessive and sustained eye contact can be interpreted as aggressive and threatening. Smiling can be a really powerful body language tool; you'll appear confident, friendly and relaxed.

Improve your own body language by turning down the television for ten minutes a day and observing all the non-verbal signals.

## ***20 TIPS TO HELP YOU SETTLE INTO YOUR NEW JOB***

1. Be of smart appearance, punctual, and a good timekeeper
2. Don't be afraid to make notes to help you retain information and learn
3. Be patient and flexible in your approach to work situations
4. Be approachable and develop your team work skills
5. Be proactive with your new employer, don't forget you are both getting to know each other
6. Make sure that you understand the business of your employer and the systems that they employ

7. Make sure that you understand the rules and regulations of your new employer
8. Learn about the Health & Safety, Quality and other policies that your employer works to
9. Don't be afraid to ask about training, either on the job or in your own time
10. Be prepared to learn, and accept change
11. Learn the company systems, and don't be afraid to question if you are unsure
12. Learn about your companies customers and develop relationships with them
13. Learn about your companies suppliers and develop relationships with them
14. Never be afraid to ask questions, particularly if you are unsure about anything
15. Listen and learn
16. Accept advice and act on it
17. If you are uncertain about any aspect of your job, ask your reporting manager to explain it to you
18. Remember that the shipping, freight and logistics industry is customer driven, never strictly 9-5pm, and often demands you to work in a pressurised environment
19. Always look to assist your colleagues and employers in taking a positive attitude to overcome difficulties and search for opportunities
20. Above all enjoy yourself

**November 2011.**