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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN LOGISTICS

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Logistics is vital to modern life. When logistics works, as it does almost all the time, nobody notices. It becomes an invisible service that we all take for granted. For example, when we shop in the typical department store, we seldom give a thought to all the complex processes that have brought tens of thousands of products together in that one location from all over the world in sufficient quantities to meet our demands. Thousands of separate supply chains converge on that one point to give us the level of product availability we have grown to expect. Indeed every service we use and every product we buy depend on elaborate supply networks. Logistics is important to global economic and social well-being [1].

As more and more companies scale to reach global markets, logistics management demands a high degree of international coordination. It is more than the movement of materials and the fulfillment of orders. Under pressure to compete, managers must keep up with the flow of information.

Language diversity is a gigantic challenge in the international environment. As supply chains go global, many companies are finding that the “going” gets tough. When the flow of communication is interrupted by language barriers – companies can lose their competitive edge [2].

In this context, English has emerged as an important tool for communication and coordination in the logistics industry worldwide and here are some of the reasons why [4]. To start with, English is used for negotiating contracts, drafting agreements, communicating with partners, and coordinating operations across borders. Also, important documents in logistics industry such as invoices, bills of lading, shipping slips, customs documents and packing lists are written in English or require English proficiency for accurate interpretation and understanding. Moreover, logistics software is typically designed in English. Lastly, a lot of multi-national companies are looking for talented candidates, and fluency in English communication is one of their top requirements. Being fluent in English makes you confident and an effective communicator and presenter. This makes you stand out at your job and even crack interviews with confidence [3].

All in all, English language skills are beneficial not just for the individual growth but also the competitiveness of the logistics company as a whole.

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