



Press Release

The Digital Supply Chain: Creating Skills for the Future – New Report Released Today

February 1, 2018 – The Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council (CSCSC) today releases its new report, *The Digital Supply Chain: Creating Skills for the Future*, which looks at the expected impacts on human resources of six technologies being adopted in the sector: autonomous vehicles, robotics and automation, big data analytics, drones, mobility internet and the internet of things, and blockchain.

Funded by the Government of Alberta Workforce Initiatives Branch and undertaken in partnership with the Calgary Logistics Council, the report focuses on Alberta, but mirrors conditions and developments in the supply chain across the country. The research, conducted by Calgary's Triskele Logistics, looks at:

- the current role of technology in the supply chain;
- key characteristics of emerging technologies and the ways they will likely be implemented into supply chains;
- adoption rates of emerging technologies within industry;
- the labour skill changes that are projected to occur in select supply chain occupations; and,
- projected impacts on skill sets required across supply chain roles.

The research findings indicate that, based on projected changes in the sector over the next three to five years stemming from the increasing use of these new technologies, the labour force will need new skill sets. The top four skills that are expected to be required by supply chain professionals are strategic thinking and problem solving; collaborating across different business units, customers and functions; leading and developing others; and managing global and diverse teams.

Sarah Stata, Director of Supply Chain for Sherritt Oil & Gas and Power Divisions at Sherritt International Corporation in Calgary – and Co-Chair of the advisory committee for the CSCSC's Connecting People, Technology and Skills project, through which the new report was created – believes that, “The results of this project have provided an invaluable look into future trends within supply chain and the changing skill set that is going to be required to help our sector adapt to the future.”

As the report notes, “To accelerate efficiency and competitiveness in the supply chain sector, Canadian companies adopting new technology must also actively develop the skills and capabilities that these technologies require. Technological advancements and the growth of the supply chain sector are creating a demand for new skills, and smart companies are working to build those skills before the technology advancements reach a critical adoption rate.”

Stata agrees, saying, “With the ever-changing environment within the supply chain sector and the growing need for qualified professionals, understanding the impact of new technology and the future state is more important than ever.”

The next step in the CSCSC's Connecting People, Technology and Skills project – which has already produced, in addition to the just-released report, version 2.0 of the Connector Skills-Matching Tool, 10 “People in Supply Chain” career-awareness videos and labour market data (both historical and projected) – is referred to as “Accelerator 2.0.” With consultant GO Productivity, the CSCSC will update the work done in 2012 by the Calgary Logistics Council and its partners, the CSCSC and the Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table. The 2012 report provided a framework for the development and implementation of a supply chain HR strategy.

Pat Campbell, Executive Director of the CSCSC, explains: “The CSCSC will now work with stakeholders to map out a plan for helping supply chain companies meet the new challenges outlined in the report and maintain their competitive advantage.” This work will result in actionable strategies to support growth of the sector, based on needs identified in the new report and information gathered through community partner workshops across Alberta. The CSCSC will complete the project in June with a three-year plan including recommendations for workforce development and supply chain growth.

The Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council brings together partners in the sector to develop solutions to the human resource challenges faced by stakeholders. Recognizing the vital role of the supply chain to Canada's economy, the Council is committed to enhancing the sector's ability to attract and retain workers at all levels and across the full range of functions, and to advancing the skills of those workers.

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Connecting People, Technology and Skills Project

The Province of Alberta is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to provide employment support programs and services.

