

curriculum vitae



1967 Read Maths at Oxford, and studied at Leicester School of Management and Cranfield School of Management before joining British Steel.

1974 – 2002 Logistics and supply chain consultancy with Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

1980 Founder and first director of the distribution studies unit

at Cranfield - now the Centre for Logistics & Supply Chain Management. Established world's first Masters programme in logistics.

1992 Set up the Logistics Director's Forum.

1997 – 1999 Director of Cranfield's Centre for Logistics & Supply Chain Management.

1998 Awarded the Sir Robert Lawrence gold medal for his contribution to logistics.

2000 – 2004 Chairman of the CILT UK.

2002 Joined Solving Efeso as global vice president supply chain innovation.

2003 Founded the European Logistics Users, Providers and Enablers Group.

2004 – 2008 President CILT UK.

2006 Awarded the OBE for his services to logistics. Becomes international vice president of the CILT.

2007 Appointed to the European leadership team of the Supply Chain Council.

2011 International president CILT.

Alan Waller

As a champion of collaboration across the supply chain, the CILT's new international president is well placed to drive the organisation forward.

Alan Waller has just taken over as international president of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport – thrust into the role a year early following the untimely death of Len Harper. But Waller is undaunted and is well primed for the role. He has been international vice president since 2006 and has run a task force reviewing the strategy for the institute internationally.

As a result, he is clear about the Institute's direction. "The strategy is to have global coverage, to have consistent service and quality between each territory and branch, to have free transfer of information between the different parts of the organisation."

This means transferring best practice and products between countries in a way that creates mutual opportunity, thereby creating a stronger bond and capability between member states. "That then becomes an irresistible proposition for the countries that we aren't active in."

This in itself addresses the objective to expand the institute into territories where it has not had such a strong presence in the past. The USA, Latin America, China and India are key targets for development.

"We've been in India for a long time, but we haven't got anything like the number of members in India that we should have given the size of the country and the strength of the economy."

Waller brings a huge depth of experience to the task. He worked for British Steel Corporation in both production and supply chain roles, before spending about 30 years as a management consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers. Consultancy was interspersed with years at various business schools lecturing, and founding and directing the Cranfield Centre For Logistics and Supply Chain Management.

In fact, his professional trajectory strongly resembles the "zig-zag career" that he describes as ideal for developing supply chain leaders of the future. He highlights the growing tendency for supply chain representation in the board room, and is keen that as the supply chain function matures there are individuals in place who can do it justice, and adequately earn their seat around the table.

He advocates candidates with a range of skills garnered from different parts of the value chain and in different functions to lead supply chain theory and practice. He gives the example of a "T" shaped person, where the upright of the "T" represents technical depth. However, that is only one of the skills that is needed: "It is absolutely clear that it's not sufficient. The bar of the "T" at the top is all about

leadership skills, teamwork communication and collaboration."

Waller has been at the forefront of the drive to improve collaboration in the supply chain. He is chairman of European Logistics Users Providers & Enablers Group (ELUPEG) which was set up to encourage real life collaborative projects.

Collaboration is a win-win situation, he says. For customers it enables lower inventory and better on-shelf availability; it reduces transport, warehousing and overhead costs for the participating players and it also reduces carbon emissions to boot.

Collaboration is also a way of creating value in already efficient, post-recession supply chains. It is an opportunity to look outside internal operations, which have often already been trimmed, to create joint savings.

To sceptics he says: "ELUPEG is not a tree hugging organisation.

It's an action-based organisation. It gets companies to work together for their own individual benefit... any business will only do this stuff if it makes sense for their bottom line."

Waller says that resistance to collaboration is most often down to an inbuilt tendency to compete. "We've got to move through and beyond that, and get more grown up about this and start working with other businesses for mutual benefit."

He is clear that in some cases that can even mean working with competitors.

Attitudes are changing and many companies will now work with competitors, but typically not their closest competitors, he says. Collaboration is no disadvantage, because facilities such as truck space are not a direct source of competitive advantage;

whereas passing by collaboration is missing out on an opportunity for competitive advantage.

Waller sees the biggest challenge to supply chain as sustainability. As well as economic and environmental sustainability, he says that a key topic for debate among all of his organisations is social sustainability. Looking beyond making businesses more resilient and cutting emissions, he says we cannot ignore the people within the supply chain and must take responsibility for working conditions.

"What we have to do is to work to bring the rest of the world up to our standards."

Waller recognises that this is a tall order and requires collaboration. "We have a huge challenge and we can't do it on our own, we can only do it together."