

Cynthia Quinny Chin – “I changed my career path in my 30s”

Cynthia Quinny Chin’s interest in the food supply chain was piqued while working in a fast-food restaurant. Today she’s a high-level supply chain manager. This is her story.

Early in my career, I was working in a fast-food outlet during the day and in a restaurant in the evening. It was completely different to what I am doing now. The change in direction to become a supply chain specialist started in May 2003 when I began a job at Toops, then a subsidiary of Foodstuffs Wellington, mainly serving the café and hotels sector. I started doing self-service checkout and cashier work, then moved to inwards goods and a grocery buyer role.

Late in 2005, I moved to Foodstuffs Wellington’s head office, working as an assistant category manager in general merchandise. This role was very interesting, but I couldn’t see it becoming my future career. In 2007, the opportunity for a year’s secondment arose as a general merchandise/grocery shipping officer, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

After the secondment year was up, I didn’t go back to my previous role. Instead I moved to the primary freight logistics team as a logistics coordinator. I realised that this was the work that I loved.

Search for a qualification

After spending a few years in the primary freight sector at Foodstuffs Wellington, in 2010 I began to look for a suitable qualification to progress my career and improve my professional development. It was then that I found the Logistics Training Group (LTG) and the CILT UK professional diploma and certificate courses they offered. After making the initial decision to proceed, unfortunately I had to delay starting the course until 2015 due to personal issues.

By this time I had developed a love for the busy nature of transport logistics and the various modes.



Cynthia Quinny Chin, international supply chain specialist at New Zealand Post: “I’ve enhanced my performance and quality of work by having a better overall view of the supply chain”

I was intrigued by the operations of trucks, airplanes and trains. I changed work again, taking on the role of international supply chain specialist at New Zealand Post in late September 2014. This role exposed me to international supply chain networks rather than just New Zealand’s transport and logistics. I wanted to improve my skill sets in this role and worked hard to gain knowledge and experience in this field.

Gaining new skills

After researching a number of logistics courses, I chose LTG’s CILT UK Professional Diploma in Logistics and Transport as my preferred study option. I emailed Tessa at LTG for information, and she asked about my role and the purpose of the study. After some discussion about the course requirements, my experience and providing my CV, I enrolled in the diploma and began my studies. The fact that graduates of the professional diploma are eligible to apply to enrol in the Massey

University Master in Supply Chain Management programme also appealed.

Working 40 hours a day, five days a week, plus managing my restaurant in the evening – another 32 hours a week – while studying at the same time wasn’t easy. I would put 15 hours aside each week for my study. I struggled to complete each task as English is my second language, but I didn’t give up and went through each assignment, handing them in before the due date. I felt I had really accomplished the task when I would get an assignment result saying ‘clear’ (a pass) and some marked ‘well done’ or ‘excellent’.

Enhanced performance

Since completing the diploma, I have gained more knowledge and understanding of supply chain management. Both during and after my studies, I have used the course materials and knowledge gained to improve my role at New Zealand Post – and have put the experience to good use while

managing the restaurant too. I’ve enhanced my performance and quality of work by having a better overall view of the supply chain and network management. The additional knowledge in supply chain management has also improved my relationship with the stakeholders that I work with – such as the sales team, processing staff, ground handlers, transit hubs and suppliers – by better understanding their goals, responsibilities and perspective of their work areas.

I especially appreciated all the support that Tessa gave me during the two-year course. She called regularly to check how I was doing and was always encouraging me.

The Professional Diploma in Logistics and Transport is offered in New Zealand by the Logistics Training Group; for further information, visit www.ltg.co.nz

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