Reform of Logistics Management Specialty Practical Teaching in Application-Oriented Institutes Based on Competency Model

Ru Li
Oxbridge College, Kunming University of Science and Technology, China
1043446285@qq.com

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Abstract. This article discussed how to create a new practical teaching system to improve logistics management specialty students' comprehensive abilities, employment rate and meet the social demand for logistics personnel. Based on the competency model of the basic positions in logistics enterprises and logistics departments of companies. Deep cooperation between institutes and companies and student-centered practical teaching curriculum are needed.

Introduction
The positioning of application-oriented institutes is to cultivate practical talents and meet the needs of production, construction, management, and service. Logistics management is a major integrated theory and practice closely. Improving teaching quality is the one of the most important parts for talent development scheme. This article analyzed the problems existing in current logistics management specialty practical teaching of application-oriented institutes, and gave some suggestions to reform them by improving students’ professional knowledge, skills and common quality.

Logistics Management Specialty Practical Teaching Situation and Problems

Shortage of Funds for Laboratory Construction
Logistics operation involves many aspects, such as buying, inventory, warehousing, distribution and transportation. How to apply theoretical knowledge to practice is one of the goals of logistics practical teaching. Students could understand logistics procedure and main function modules clearly by stimulating enterprise real scene. Practical teaching needs a series software and hardware to support which need a lot of money. On the country, it is the common situation for local universities and independent colleges to be short of educational outlay, to have limited investment in large equipment and laboratory construction. Most application-oriented Institutes would rather invest a software or a short project than a laboratory considering the utilization ratio of facility and shortage of funds. In the present situation laboratory construction is far behind the real needs. Cooperation between enterprises and enterprises is difficult to be further.

Hard for School-Enterprise Cooperation
With the transformation to application-oriented institutes, it becomes a consensus to strength exploration, construction of external-campus practical bases and combination of industry and institute. Development practical bases is easy but maintenance is hard. Cooperation agreements between schools and enterprises are lack of binding. Personnel changes of enterprises often causes execution decline, even cooperation terminal. The maintenance of practical bases is more based on interpersonal relations instead of mutual benefits. School-enterprise cooperation cannot be carried out deeply because of inconsistent interest demands of the three parties, school, corporation and students. Schools hope students could practice operational capability and use the theoretical knowledge they learned into practice. Corporations’ try to find potential employees by the program in a long time, and cheap labors in a short time. However the most important thing to students is to find a good job according to their actual situations. One hand, interns can only work in the same
department and do same thing which makes them learn limited skills. It’s difficult to arouse students’ enthusiasm. On the other hand, corporations cannot be motivated to implement seriously facing high intern turnover rate. At last, practical significance of practical bases are under expectation.

**The Separation of Practical Teaching System and Social Needs**

Logistics is a fast growing industry, logistics enterprises and logistics department of enterprise have strong ability to absorb employment. But some university graduates go into the enterprises with unrealistic expectations, lack of professionalism, doing little but talking a lot. Companies take a very cautious approach when recruiting graduates specialized logistics, and even some companies are reluctant to recruit fresh graduates. It’s also for lagging employment concept of parents and students. Most parents still hope their children could work “In System”. Graduates’ elite consciousness takes strong root. They are unwilling to do simple basic work and receive low level wages. Most of them have low loyalty to enterprises which causes companies spending a lot of training costs but not achieving the desired goal. On the other hand, logistics management specialty practical teaching system of institutes is often lack of professional practice curriculum design, application-oriented training direction and targeted ways. The application-oriented institutes cannot reflect the differences compared with research universities and graduates have no obvious competitive advantages. Social needs of logistics personnel cannot be met and practical teaching system of application-oriented institutes is separated from social demands.

**Analysis on Competency Model of Basic Logistics Jobs**

Logistics management specialty of application-oriented institutes dedicate to developing logistics talents with rich professional knowledge and be familiar with the actual business operations who can service regional logistics development. Under the existing conditions, how to improve employment rate of logistics management specialty graduates and meet the social demand for logistics personnel is very important. We should know the requests to logistics personnel in logistics enterprises and logistics department of companies from business knowledge, qualities and required skills. We can build the competence model to analyze.

**Competency Model of Basic Logistics Jobs**

The competency model was initiated by David McClelland in the 1960s with a view to moving away from traditional attempts to describe competency in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude. It focus instead on the specific self-image, values, traits, and motive dispositions that are found to consistently distinguish outstanding from typical performance in a given job or role. Competency model studies on required competency in a particular organization, a specific job and the weight assignment, relationship between them. Competency model on basic logistics jobs focus on abilities and qualities of employees on the basis which tend to recruit university graduates. We build three dimensions competency model from three aspects, general quality, professional knowledge and job skills. (Table 1).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Competency index</th>
<th>Competency definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General quality</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Deal with organizational matters based on something original, unaffected by personal interests, likes and dislikes. Treat mistakes correctly, commitment, discipline, realistic, incorruptible.</td>
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<td>Willing to take responsibility</td>
<td>Understand their job responsibilities, take action to fulfill those tasks seriously. Be in charge of the consequences consciously.</td>
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<td>Team work</td>
<td>Solicit views from others, share information with others, encourage each other, work together to complete the task</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional knowledge</td>
<td>Logistics knowledge</td>
<td>Master the knowledge of warehouse management, inventory management, transportation management and supply chain management, etc. Grasp basic logistics operational processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing knowledge</td>
<td>Grasp the theory of marketing knowledge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Basic management knowledge</td>
<td>Master basic management knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job skill</td>
<td>Customer service awareness</td>
<td>Concern external customers' changing needs, make every effort to help and serve our customers, create value for customers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>Express their own views to a certain target audience clearly by listening, have the ability to transfer information with others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>Make the work plan, organize and classify the transaction in accordance with priorities. Have methods and techniques to cope with accidents or interference.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adjust to changing circumstances</td>
<td>Change their working methods or ways of doing things in accordance with the changing circumstances. Accept changes readily.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attention to details</td>
<td>Take the initiative in various ways, cross-check its authenticity before providing information or information, in order to ensure that no errors or mistakes in the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer skills</td>
<td>Use Office software, office operating system for processing text, pictures and office information proficiently</td>
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**Approaches to Enhance Students’ Abilities Based On the Competence Model**

From the competence model of basic logistics jobs, we can see that logistics management companies need graduates with good overall quality and professional spirit, mastering basic theory of logistics, marketing and management science, knowing techniques and methods, familiar with the logistics business operations. In application-oriented institutes, we are facing teaching financial constraints, insufficient investment on laboratory conditions. How to use existing resources to improve students’ professional ability, we can take actions from the following aspects.

1. Raise students’ general qualities through course penetration and key events education. Integrity, honesty, willing to take responsibility and team work are basic qualities to any positions.
It is foundation to be a qualified employee with good performance. Encourage students to divide the

task and work together during all-around practical teaching (such as ERP, business simulation)

to group discussions, cooperative learning, group work, etc. To cultivate students’ team spirit,
score them according to the contribution of each student, and guide them to show the best
themselves for a high score. Lead them to find out a way to show every team member’s contribution
so that each team member can get high scores. In the process of practical teaching, encourage
students to express their true thoughts, objective and neutral evaluation of their own and others, to
face their own problems by a new evaluation method which combines mutual evaluation among
students and different teams, teacher’s comments and self-assessment. Enhance the awareness of
taking responsibility, know themselves better and find out solution to the problems through
work. Teachers can also catch key events timely and educate them appropriately during
practical teaching, enable students to reflect and introspect, change their attitude to correct their
behavior spontaneously, take the initiative to cultivate general qualities.

(2) Integrate theoretical and practical teaching, improve professional knowledge. Increase the

proportion of practical teaching appropriately, design practical training problems depending on the

key points of courses, let students learn hands-on design, self-analysis and solve problems using

the knowledge of management, marketing, logistics management and related courses. Secondly, the

practice of teachers should explain involved theory and knowledge clearly so that students can

understand how to apply theoretical knowledge to solve practical problems. Logistics simulation

and machine operation can not be limited to computer operations, teaching should be focused on
guiding students to actively think about why to do, how to do it, through the data analysis to know
the possible reasons and explain them by the knowledge they learned. Improve the integration of
theoretical teaching and practical teaching to solve problems.

(3) Construct the true learning environment to improve students' job skills. Communication

skills, time management skills, adaptability and attention to detail can reflect one’s overall quality.
These job skills can be improved by comprehensive practical teaching. University Students have
strong plasticity. Teachers should strive to build authenticity, situational learning environment and
guide students to interact in it to improve their job skills. Teachers can redesign teaching contents
oriented by obtaining employment. There are several main directions to find a job for the students
majored in logistics management. Teachers can take task as the core, cultivating students
‘comprehensive ability as the goal, according to job functions, reproduce the real professional scene,
in order to improve students’ job skills, such as negotiation, cross departmental communication.
Communication skills and time management skills also can be trained through the file basket,
targeting the customers through market analysis and forecasting analysis. Develop students’
awareness of customer service by finding ways of improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.
Encourage students to develop good habits of attention to detail in the course of practical teaching.

**Exploration to Create New Practical Teaching System for Logistics Management Specialty in
Application-Oriented Institutes**

**Develop Student-Centered Practical Teaching Curriculum**

We should explore a new practical teaching system from resource-based model to student-centered
model. New practical courses adapting to business needs should be developed as soon as possible
on the basis of the existing conditions. The goal is to enhance graduates’ professional knowledge,
ability and quality, according to comprehensive status of application-oriented institutes. Encourage
experienced double-professional teachers to work with staff members of company, develop
practical courses together and modify them regularly. Double-professional teachers make deep
research at the first line, design practice guide books for students’ cognitive practice, integrated
practice and internship as substitute, considering business operation process, facilities and
equipment, service standards and quality systems. The practical syllabus should be formulated by
week including introduction of weekly work, objectives, terminology, resources use (theoretical
knowledge), practical work (practical operation), problems and thinking (how to apply theory to
practice). So that students can understand how to use theory into practice and then go back to theory. In addition, teachers and line managers should review with the students once a week, give them detection timely and evaluate their performance. Weekly evaluation forms will be one part of their practical scores. Establish a comprehensive evaluation system of teaching practice, detect students’ short-board, be targeted training to improve students' comprehensive ability and quality.

**Carry Out Depth School-Enterprise Cooperation**

Both schools and companies need to establish communication mechanism on different levels, such as top to top meeting, middle-leveled meeting and operating review. Once key staff leave, school-enterprise cooperation will not be interrupted. Off-campus practical bases play important roles which can make up shortage of funds for laboratory construction. How to use it better, the key point is how to bring benefits to two sides. Rights and obligations of two sides should be cleared in cooperation agreement and operation details should be added in additional agreement. Schools can provide a lot of general management training and advisors to companies, as an exchange, experienced managers can be a teacher to give professional lessons to students. The courses of “Order Class” can be linked with companies’ training of management trainees. After practice in company, enterprises can find suitable candidates from the interns and they can save a lot of training cost by school-enterprise cooperation.

**Focus on Students' Professional Ability and Quality**

Cultivate and improve students' professional ability by a variety of teaching methods, including document fill, simulation, case studies and education of key events. The teaching process should be followed strictly with clear objectives. Encourage students to participate the test of “Logistician”, "Assistant Logistician" and other certificates. Improve students' employability and competitiveness by "Diploma" + "Professional Qualification Certificate" model. Guide students to always understand the market and to attention industry trends and dynamics. Lead students to analyze the hot issues in the industry, put forward their own views and suggestions of innovation and entrepreneurship. Improve students' professional ability by shaping the structure of knowledge, ability and meet business needs.

**Summary**

Reform practical teaching of logistics management specialty in application-oriented institutes will improve university graduates’ competitive ability and quality and promote employment. New practical teaching system will be more targeted which is based on competency model of basic logistics jobs, starting from three dimensions of 12 indicators.

**References**

