

OPERATIONS & SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT CONCENTRATION GUIDE

A concentration in Operations and Supply Chain Management (OSCM) offers a wide range of career opportunities including management consulting, production management, service management, lean and six sigma, production and inventory planning, sourcing/procurement management, and distribution management. Virtually every industry needs operations and supply chain experts. Many top executives began their career in Operations/Supply Chain because it provides a deep understanding of the fundamental activities that create value in the organization. OSCM can be effectively combined with other concentrations, such as Business Analytics, Information Systems, Management & Organizations, and Finance. Additionally, many students also seek minors outside of Questrom and students can focus their studies based on the area most interested in. For all available minors, please visit the Boston University programs website found [here](#). For more information about required courses and to contact the Concentration Faculty Advisor, please [visit here](#).

Operations & Supply Chain Consulting

Operations & Supply Chain consultants conduct analyses and advise businesses across a variety of industries on issues ranging from strategic decisions (such as what products to make versus buy, or how a potential acquisition would fit into a company's existing Supply Chain) to tactical decisions (such as how to run a specific operation more efficiently or how to reduce inventories to save cash and avoid obsolescence write-offs). Consultants will typically work in teams along with members from the client organization to determine the scope of the consulting project, develop strategic and/or tactical improvement strategies, determine the feasibility and cost/benefit of those strategies, and then may subsequently be involved in implementing those recommendations/strategies with the client organization. Key characteristics of Operations & Supply Chain consultants include: strong analytical and presentation skills, ability to work effectively in teams, willingness to work hard, and strategic thinking.

Careers Include: Strategy and Operations Consultant, Associate Consultant, Business Analyst, Business Process Analyst, Operations Associate, and ultimately Partner, Director, or VP

Sourcing and Product Realization

Sourcing and Product Realization Managers can take on a variety of roles within a company, ranging from tactical roles (including buying materials to identifying and negotiating with new suppliers) to more strategic roles (including helping to manage complex, critical purchases that affect the company's bottom-line and working with product development teams to help design new products and select suppliers to make the company's sourcing more effective and efficient). Sourcing and Product Realization personnel will typically work with teams including personnel from Engineering, Finance & Accounting, Manufacturing, Planning, and Sales and Engineering personnel from suppliers. Entry level positions are often focused on purchasing materials (direct and/or indirect) for a portion of the business and then scope of responsibility and complexity of the sourcing projects increases as the person proves his/her capabilities. Senior Sourcing and Product Realization personnel can be responsible for substantial purchases across the company (hundreds of millions of dollars in larger companies) and strategic projects that affect the company's future strategy and viability. Key characteristics of Sourcing & Product Realization personnel include analytical skills, teamwork, negotiation skills, strong organization and project management skills, risk management, and attention to detail.

Careers Include: Buyer, Global Sourcing Associate, Sourcing Manager, Director, and VP of Sourcing, and CPO (Chief Procurement Officer)

Planning

Planning Managers can be responsible for short-term/tactical planning (focused on ensuring that production lines are making sufficient product/providing sufficient volume of services to meet demand) and/or long-term/strategic planning (focused on what operations the company should be involved with, make/buy decisions, and long-term capacity requirements and network decisions). Planning personnel will typically work with teams from across the organization, including personnel from Program Management, Product Development, Manufacturing, Sourcing/Procurement, Finance, and Sales & Marketing. Entry level positions are often focused on more tactical issues (ensuring production lines are meeting demand, that sufficient production capacity, labor and materials are in-place to support planned production, and ensuring inventory levels are appropriate and maintained) and then move on to more strategic and broader projects as they get experience and prove themselves within the organization. Key characteristics/skills of Planning personnel include strong analytical skills, ability to think strategically, risk management, an understanding of the entire Supply Chain (being managed), and attention to detail.

Careers Include: Planner, Planning Manager, Director and VP of Planning, and SVP Planning and Strategy

Distribution & Logistics

Distribution and Logistics Managers are responsible for managing the storage and distribution of a company's raw materials, work-in-process, and finished goods, and may also be involved in the customer returns process ("Reverse Logistics"). Distribution and Logistics personnel will typically work with Planning, Manufacturing, and Sales & Marketing personnel from inside the company and contract warehouses ("3rd Party Logistics Providers") and carriers to store product and ensure safe, cost-effective, and timely movement of materials moving to/from production operations and customers. Entry level positions are often focused on managing a part of a warehouse operation and/or carriers serving a specific region or supporting some part of the company's operations, and then will move into roles with broader warehouse and transportation management responsibility as they move up within the organization. Key characteristics of Distribution and Logistics personnel include strong people management skills, the ability to ensure warehouse and transportation operations being managed reliably complete their tasks, and attention to detail.

Careers Include: Warehouse Supervisor, Distribution Manager, Transportation Analyst, Transportation Manager, and Director and VP of Distribution

Project Management

Project Managers are responsible for leading cross-functional teams that are (typically) responsible for special and/or high-impact projects at companies. They help plan out the work and timing required to complete the project, ensure that all of the functions involved in the project are communicating with one another, identify cross-functional issues that need to be resolved and potential barriers/problems (and resolve them before they derail the project), and manage the day-to-day operations of the project team, including detailed project planning and minutes and action items. The role is very cross-functional, and Project Managers will work with personnel from across the organization including: Manufacturing, Planning, Product Development, Sales & Marketing, Finance, Quality, and Information Systems. Many people who get into Project Management often start in another function at their company and then transition into project management roles as they lead small project teams. Once they have some experience as a project manager and have established their reputation, they can move on to larger/more complex and business-critical projects. Some consultants will also hire more junior people to into (entry-level) project management

roles. Key characteristics of Project Managers are attention to detail, strong risk management skills, the ability to work cross-functionally, and people management skills.

Careers Include: Program Manager, Director/VP of Program Management, and (possibly) Chief-of-Staff

Classes to Career Grid

Interested in seeing how different career paths connect back to the classes you take? Take a look at the grid below to help you strategize which classes will help you build the skills and knowledge you need to meet your career goals.

Operations & Supply Chain Management: Career Pathways	Operations & Supply Chain Consulting	Project Management	Sourcing & Product Realization	Planning	Distribution & Logistics
OM 441 - Supply Chain Analysis	A List	A List	A List	A List	A List
OM 440 - Supply Chain Strategy	X	X	X	X	X
OM 353 - Project Management	X	X		X	
OM 365 - Improving Quality	X	X			X
OM 451 - Sustainable Supply Chains	X		X		X
OM 467 - Global Sourcing	X		X		
IS465 - Managing Data Resources				X	
IS467 - Agile Development Methodologies [Spring]		X			
MO448 - Negotiations [Fall, Spring]			X		
BA305 - Business Decision Making with Data [Fall, Spring]	X			X	X
SI 360 - Strategy Lab [Spring]	X				

INTERNSHIP AND JOB SEARCH RESOURCES

Internships also offer a great opportunity to gain real-world skills, work experience, and to make connections that can help you land your first job after Questrom. {Need these hot-linked (same links as in the current doc)}

- Vault
- Pardee Library
- LinkedIn.com
- Indeed.com
- Simply Hired
- Glassdoor.com
- Internships

OSCM Specific Suggestions

- Take leadership roles on team projects, demonstrating your ability to lead small to mid-range projects and develop effective plans.
- Develop strong computer skills—proficiency in Microsoft Excel is essential.
- Gain customer/client support experience and supervisory experience through clubs and organizations or part-time employment.
- Be prepared to answer interview questions regarding process improvement ideas and/or process improvements implemented in past jobs, teamwork skills, communication skills, analysis/problem solving ability, and the ability to adapt.
- Recruiting for OSCM positions, especially leadership development programs, can start as early as September of your senior year, so be prepared early for the job search.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in the field and attend career events in the fall and spring, including information sessions and career fairs with Questrom and the BU community.

Popular Employers

Accenture	Dell	IBM	SAP
Amazon	Deloitte	KPMG	Softbank Robotics
AT Kearney	Disney	Liberty Mutual	Oracle
Boston Scientific	Dunkin' Brands	Lockheed Martin	Takeda
Charles River	E&Y	McKinsey & Company	Thermo Fisher Scientific
CVS Pharmacy	Hannaford	Microsoft	Wayfair

Next Steps

QUESTROM/BU CLUBS Questrom/BU Clubs: Joining clubs is a great way to gain experience and build your professional network.

For a complete list of business specific Questrom Clubs, please visit { <https://questromworld.bu.edu/udc/questrom-life/student-organizations/> } and for a list of BU wide clubs that offer organizations across larger interest areas ranging from health to nonprofits, please visit { <https://www.bu.edu/admissions/why-bu/student-life/student-activities/> } }

Professional Associations

Professional Associations exist on the regional and national level. They host national conferences discussing relevant topics, networking events and training and professional development opportunities. If you are interested in careers in Operations & Technology Management here are some professional associations, you may want to consider joining:

- Production & Operations Management Society
- Institute for Supply Management (ISM)
- American Purchasing Society
- Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP)
- Project Management Institute (PMI)
- American Production Inventory Control Society (APICS)

LINKEDIN GROUPS

LinkedIn is a crucial part of anyone's job search and networking strategy. Using LinkedIn groups, you can develop more targeted networks for various positions including location, industry, function and more! Below is a list of sample LinkedIn groups OTM concentrators may want to consider; for more assistance on using this feature please make an appointment with a UDC Career Advisor at bu.joinhandshake.com:

- Questrom OSCM LinkedIn group, apply at: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12716769/>
- Operations Manager
- Retail Field Operations
- Sales Operations Group
- Operations Management in Practice
- Operations & Supply Chain Strategy
- Ops Management