

The 7 habits of highly effective health supply chain professionals

Habit 1: Is proactive - Anticipates the future, does whatever is in his/her power to improve the situation.

1. Take the time to *interpret information* - A highly effective supply chain professional will quantify and flag imminent or probable *risk* to relevant *stakeholders* so that they may have an opportunity to try to avoid it if possible. (NS);
2. *Monitor and report on performance* and feedbacks into supply chain (MS);
3. Have a passion for *supply chain solution research* (FT);
4. Monitor and evaluate the health supply chain systems - *how to use available information to inform supply chain systems and make relevant decisions*. A good Supply chain Practitioner should have interest in *collecting good quality data (where possible) and use this data to improve the system*. (SN).

Habit 2: Begins with the goal to be achieved in mind-the customer, and meeting their needs efficiently and effectively. (For example how many lives to be saved and your role in it rather than how many boxes to be delivered even when they arrive late, damaged or empty)

1. *Be guided by an overall supply chain strategy* (MS);
2. Always aim at *best value* (MS);
3. Be Customer Focused or *Patient Focused* (s);
4. A Highly Effective Health Supply Chain Practitioner is the one who is always aware of state of the art supply chain concepts and best practices, and during his actual implementation of the concepts, he is not trying to copy and paste other sectors'/individuals'/or countries' performance but is all the time endeavouring to *identify and apply SCM techniques and practices particularly suited to the SC environment (cultural, geographical, political, infrastructure, etc.)* (MI).

Habit 3: Plans and Prioritize activities – Good planning and prioritizing will usually save you a lot of actual work later. Decide which of the roles and goals are most important, then determine what steps will best achieve those goals is bold and moves fast, and has courage to change the plan if the first does not work! **Stays flexible - has a strategy, is disciplined but engages a** floating format which allows him/her to change tact when the situation demands,

1. Ensure that commodities are issued *First to Expire First Out while working to maintain stock levels between Max and Min Inventory levels*. (N2);
2. Monitor *speed and quality* (MS);
3. Ensure formulation and dealing with an *Essential Drug List* (Chuka);

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4. Check dashboard daily on key areas of importance which are relevant to your *political environment* (AV);
5. Make decisions on the following trade-offs:
 - a. Centralization of stock vs. delivery frequency/quantity to be delivered
 - b. Delivery frequency vs. cost of logistics/distribution
 - c. Computerization vs. user-friendly, simple system and staff expertise
 - d. Data availability and accuracy vs. decision making enabling
 - e. Unloaded stock size/delivery frequency vs. local storeroom space capacity - Etc. (PdV);
6. I think some other habits that we have to look on especially on medicine supply are:
 - a. the *prescribing pattern*, in many cases as we have in Sudan doctor turn over will affect the rate of consumption of specific items, to reduce stock out or expiry medicine at lower limit
 - b. *seasonal change*, in autumn many areas are unreachable, so early supply with enough quantities is recommended
 - c. Also, when *the medicine market is not regulated you have to monitor the market stock of specific items to have the best prices in the suitable time* (MM).

Habit 4: Considers the needs of other stakeholders – Seeks solutions that help everyone.

1. Develop and sustain *high emotional intelligence* (MS);
2. Have eyes for *quality* and promote the use of *secure channels* (EI);
3. *Put faces (human beings) to the data and be conscious of their safety.* (EI).
4. *Investing the time to present data in a way that is visual and easy to relate to-use data to tell supply chain story in a way that grabs the attention of decision makers and to move them into action* (MK).

Habit 5: Slow to speak, listens to others to decide on issues - To influence and help others, you must first actively listen to them and understand their situation and concerns stay humble and approachable.

1. Talk to *workers* to know their *challenges* and help them (AV);
2. Be sensitive to and respond to *user needs* (MS);
3. Having knowledge of supply chain tools is quite important. Having the capability to affect change with *internal and external stakeholders* will make good use of such tools (IV);

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July 2014

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4. Every Monday [or whatever suitable day] to *meet with key focal personnel of the supply team* to get updates of project progress, issues, challenges and recommended solutions, i.e. purchasing, warehouse, finance, distribution and HR (AV).

Habit 6: Encourages diversity and collaboration- focuses in the power of 1+1=3, a team oriented and opens himself/herself emotionally to work with other people- values cross functional relationships, keenly creates a strong team spirit, addresses conflicts directly, within the team. Positive minded, sees challenges as opportunities constantly seek new ways of doing things learning from each one, treats each one the same, no one person stands out other than the customer.

1. Establish a good communication strategy and channel with stakeholders that will be impacted by your services (AV);
2. Focus on human resource involved in supply chain activities and delivering medicines to people, from technical staff to support staff. For effective and efficient system, there should be continuous *motivation and encouragement of human resource involved in SCM* (HA);
3. Be effective at *collaborating within the organization and with those outside the organization* (IV).
4. "Communication for Decision Making". Have the skill to grab the attention of key stakeholders whenever an opportunity presents itself. Have own elevator pitch always handy (MK).
5. Speak the language of those we are looking to influence. E.g. if we are speaking to a program manager, or a doctor or a nurse then make the connection to service delivery and impact on health outcomes (MK).
6. Listen to and study your target audience; be it government, donors, partners, health workers, understand where their priorities lie and connect with these priorities (MK).

Habit 7: Embraces innovation - balancing experience and new talents, taking time to rejuvenate her/him to work better in the future.

1. Keep self - abreast with the *SCM developments* (AV);
2. Understands the supply chain *context* (MT);
3. Request to be *reinforced* routinely by the hierarchy (*refresh training and supervisions*) (FT).

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