

Johnson Controls Builds an Award-Winning Learning System

By advancing its people, processes, technology and metrics with APICS education, Johnson Controls achieves supply chain excellence.

Goals

- Create a supply chain maturity model linked to operational performance
- Further develop employee talent by addressing skills gaps

Approach

- Implement SCOR to analyze and improve current performance
- Align with ASCM to launch the Supply Chain Academy, on-demand learning solutions to help employees improve performance and advance in their careers

Results

- APICS education mapped employee training to roles
- Employee confidence increased as more employees earned APICS certifications
- Johnson Controls' networks transformed into an efficient ecosystem that drives company growth

Johnson Controls is a global technology and industrial company with 130,000 employees serving customers in more than 150 countries. The organization designs, manufactures and delivers energy-efficient building solutions; automotive and advanced batteries for stop-start, hybrid and electric vehicles; and automobile seating components and systems. Johnson Controls supports all major automakers, supplying 50 million cars every year.

The Johnson Controls Operating System (JCOS) connects and integrates Johnson Controls' manufacturing operations, supplier distribution channels and customers. A key feature of the JCOS platform is supply chain excellence, which describes the company's journey to achieving a world-class supply chain. By advancing its people, processes, technology and metrics with APICS education, Johnson Controls leaders are enabling this excellence while driving positive customer experiences and superior business results. In fact, the initiative has been so successful that Johnson Controls earned the 2017 APICS Corporate Award of Excellence — Education.

"The supply chain excellence vision is about having a single Johnson Controls way of designing, integrating and optimizing end-to-end, demand-driven value chains to attain a sustainable competitive advantage for our customers and shareholders," says Lynn Ross, supply chain academy leader, manufacturing excellence for Johnson Controls.

The strategy is based on a set of structured, unified, and integrated activities and resources that create a culture of learning and excellence. Specific focus areas include

- the transformation of operations, management infrastructure, and mindsets and behaviors
- a maturity model framework consisting of strategy, planning, execution,
- compliance and empowered people
- the enabling capabilities of performance, technology and systems, and integration and collaboration
- supporting documents such as policies, standards and guidelines that describe the expectations for how to achieve excellence

Measuring performance

Johnson Controls decision-makers sought to create a solid supply chain maturity model that would be linked to operational performance based on standard processes and metrics. They chose to achieve this goal by building a strategic partnership with APICS. This enables them to tap into all the business benefits of APICS education and the Supply Chain Operations Reference (SCOR) model.

A Supply Chain Academy was started in order to offer APICS training and learning solutions to employees in one of 31 roles involved with Johnson Controls supply chain operations. "The Supply Chain Academy philosophy was created with employee capability-building in mind," Ross says. "By first establishing the structure for learning, we recognized the APICS content could be implemented efficiently and effectively. Without this methodology in place, the academy would not have been able to design, develop and launch learning programs within just six months."

The Supply Chain Academy features on-demand learning solutions that help employees improve performance and progress in their careers. The educational tool lives on a subpage of Johnson Controls' supply chain SharePoint site, so team members can easily tap into the APICS resources. Learning solutions are housed in a management system and structured as a pre-exam test-out option, the content and a final exam. This format enables Johnson Controls to measure the effectiveness of each training module. Individual, self-directed learning modules make it possible for employees to complete required training or certification programs based on their personal skills assessments. Evaluations are linked to the domain levels of each skill and provide a roadmap to filling the gaps.

"Establishment of the Supply Chain Academy is the latest milestone in the supply chain team's efforts to transform Johnson Controls' networks into an efficient ecosystem that helps drive our company's growth," says Jeff Williams, vice president of enterprise operations and engineering. "Through the APICS certification programs, our organization will learn to analyze current performance, plan for the improvements and continue to develop our talent and build capabilities."

Understanding supply chain

To address limitations surrounding awareness of what supply chain is, an overview e-learning course was produced to be used as a baseline. The course provides connections among supply chain networks, maturity models and the basic knowledge of how a supply chain network influences all functions within the company.

Ross says the academy also enables employees to better understand their job functions, the skills required to perform their roles successfully and the relevant principles. "APICS is an integral part of mapping training to roles," she adds.

Ricardo Estok, global manufacturing operations council, principle leader, Johnson Controls, says employee confidence also has increased as more people achieve APICS certification. "All the requirements on both knowledge and applied skills are effectively in place to perform in the subject matter for which employees are certified," he says. "Certification programs enable our organization to leverage one standard way of applied subject matter expertise to improve performance."

As Johnson Controls employees journey through APICS programs, the academy measures the outcomes. Ross explains that this is comprised of the completion ratios of assigned learning, measuring how employees are applying the education to their roles and coaching and mentoring others. "This life cycle assures the content is relevant to our employees, is measurable and remains aligned to gap closures," Ross says.

She adds that the initiative's ultimate success relies on Johnson Controls leadership's commitment to being a learning organization. "We look forward to strengthening our partnership with APICS because APICS educational programs and the SCOR model are essential to our supply chain excellence strategy, employee talent and sustainability," she says. "It is why we chose APICS as our partner and will continue building this relationship on our journey to supply chain excellence."

About ASCM

The Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) is the global leader in supply chain organizational transformation, innovation and leadership. As the largest non-profit association for supply chain, ASCM is an unbiased partner, connecting companies around the world to the newest thought leadership on all aspects of supply chain. ASCM is built on a foundation of APICS certification and training spanning 60 years. Now, ASCM is driving innovation in the industry with new products, services and partnerships that enable companies to further optimize their supply chains, secure their competitive advantage and positively impact their bottom lines. For more information, visit ascm.org.

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