**Employer Case Summary Rebecca Jenkins**

Rebecca Jenkins   -   Director   Core Management Logistics (CML)

**Mike:** Welcome to Coventry University and for taking part in this collaboration. Can you start by telling us a bit about yourself, what you do, what is your experience in business, about what role you take and where does it fit in the business.

**Rebecca:** I have over 30 years’ experience in business, I started in truck driving, and when I was 21 I decided to take my truck driving license and that got me into the world of logistics. After I got my license I thought I paid for this and I like being in a truck, it’s fun and I’m going to have a go at this and I delivered frozen chickens all over the country before the days of distribution centres and I did for about 9 months and I decided to work my way through logistics and I got a role in traffic management, after than I got in sales and I moved into more senior management positions and eventually I became MD of 6 companies? And that company was a 5 million turnover and I took it to a 15 million turnover. And sold it a number of years ago to Wincanton PLC? which are on the largest UK providers of logistics, warehouse and transporting. Now, I help companies grow their businesses learning from the things I got right and wrong. My current role is to work with CML logistics and I am fright director and I responsible for developing international side of the business, so we’re doing import/export products all around the world and we provide as one aspect as one side of the supply chain that CML offers its customers.

**Mike:** That’s great. It all started off with trucks and frozen chicken and it ended up being a multimillion business. Can you tell us a bit about what logistic companies do? We identify as being about transport but the word logistic is a particular word.

**Rebecca:** It does mean different things to different people, but my definition is of moving goods around the world in terms of providing a supply chain service. We have a customer that makes leather goods, handbags, Lulu Guinness, and we bring these goods from their point of manufacture, Spain, Italy and they come in the UK, we warehouse the product, when they came to international orders, they leave from us, we pack it, transport. Logistic represents the whole process from their point of manufacture to warehousing, packing and despatching to customers. Any part of that or the whole process.

**Mike:** One of the areas our students are interested in is leadership and how you understand leadership, team and company leadership.

**Rebecca:** From a team perspective leadership to me is different and any one has the potential and the capability of being a leader that don’t apply only to business, but from a business perspective, could be strategic, problem solving, leading a team, strategic thinking, great communicator, show to have emotional intelligence, to serve your team, to be collaborative, a number of those key elements that show you are good leader of people, you can make decisions and bring people with you and are accountable.

**Mike:** Transformational and transactional leadership, can you comment on where they are used in different circumstance?

**Rebecca:** Transformational leadership is about managing change, moving from a type of situation to being something that is different, for me is where you are able to deal with that change and understand the aspects around culture, bring the team with you, good communications skill. Transactional is more dictatorial is about giving direction on what things needs to be done rather than collaborating with the team.

**Mike:** Where are you with these? Do both have a place?

**Rebecca: I** am more in favour of the transformational leadership and I learned from my mistakes and past. This goes back to the 90s and I wanted to get Bodyshop as a business and looked at their business and their logistic and I did win the contract. Worked for them for about 1 year and I thought I did a great job for them and everything was going well. I was told at a very important meeting that I am very boring and the message behind it was that something more needs to be done even though it is a logistic company and the idea is to deliver goods. I learned that through working with the team in order to keep the contract and to improve their logistic, I worked with the whole team and manage to get on the roads their first natural gas vehicle that played in their policy and values. If the team is involved, on board they will support and will be with you.

**Mike:** Can you tell us a bit about the authority and accountability chain?

**Rebecca:** Board of directors and they are responsible for the direction of the company, they are the directors and shareholders, the shareholders have the ultimate responsibility as a board of directors, the directors have to responsibility for the growth and development and the strategy of the business, reporting into the board, are an executive board and their responsibility is to carry out the remit and the broad aims and strategic of the board.

**Mike:** Considering the previous story, you are very much in favour of employee empowerment and belonging, does that give a level of decision making to the employees?

**Rebecca:** It does, it is an essential part of working, it gets the best out of the people, people enjoy being given that level of responsibility and to show that they are encourages to come up with new ideas and to be prepare to chat with their bosses if something doesn’t feel right and have a level of responsibility around that and they are involved in the decision-making process.

**Mike:** Entrepreneurship is another aspect that our students are looking at, how do you see it in a business?

**Rebecca:** It is an amazing time to be an entrepreneur, there are so many opportunities that are available now with the digitalisation and there so many things that you can have access to that you couldn’t 10-15 years ago, you can get things do very inexpensively, you can talk through the internet, you can run your business from anywhere in the world videoconferencing and I think it’s more than interesting and exciting than it was and I think it’s more appreciated now.

**Mike:** Would you say that risk is part of the entrepreneurship?

**Rebecca:** It goes with the territory. If you’re going to be an entrepreneur, you have to take risks and sometimes put your house on the line in order to success as a business. I know people at CML that have done this and I have in the past.

**Mike:** I get that you quite like that aspect, you find it quite exciting?

**Rebecca:** It’s exciting and daunting. It’s both but I think if you focus on the opportunity and the upside is, rather than being a pessimist and if you would think of putting your house on the line, you would have a hard time and put yourself in a very difficult situation.

**Mike:** It’s known that change is part of the company life, how did you find that people respond to change, is there something that work better than other?

**Rebecca:** I think people respond very differently to change and I think that’s based on their experience in life, their approach to life and I think as a leader you have to be very conscious of that when you’re implanting something that’s going to impact them and have some sort of change and I think that’s why emotional intelligence is very important, you have to be aware that people will take change in different ways.

**Mike:** Can you expand on emotional intelligence?

**Rebecca:** Emotional intelligence for me is about understanding and seeing things from a different perspective and other individual’s’ perspective and understanding thinking about their feeling, how I going to impact them, hoe they might see the situation because different people see things in a different way and I think when given the time to that your approach will be different to different people. And it helps you as a manager and as leader to get the message across because you have considered the way people feel and will react. The other key things for me is, when delivering transformational change is you get that involvement, you’re not just presenting a change you’re saying how do you feel about it, it there a different way, just because I’m the leader doesn’t mean I have all the answers and I will encourage my team to come up with ideas because if they come up with ideas and they feel part of it they will embrace it much more readily than me imposing in it. When being force to accept a situation, no one is happy about it but we all like to be given the choice and fell like we are involved, fulfilled, committed to it and we have some buy in to it when you have change to deliver.

**Mike:** Thank you very much. Another area is communication; can you describe the communication systems and the decision-making process in your company?

**Rebecca:** Within CML, when we have major decision at board level, we are very clear about which of those messages and how those messages are cascaded throughout the business so that everybody I clear about what is being discussed. We can’t always share everything, we make sure there is a cascade communication going out and the managers are briefing their teams, you have to do it.

**Mike:** So, the method is going down the chain.

**Rebecca:** We do other things, such as family fun-days where we celebrate success, we issue newsletter about our achievements and things that are happening in the business. This morning I was talking to the manager and we spoke about making some videos and making some introductions around the business, we’re always increasing our communication because you can never do enough of it.

**Mike:** Right. Thank you. Next question is about the future, do you have a view of the future of the industry and this is looking at the internal and external opportunities, threats.

**Rebecca:** In logistics, there is going to be a revolution of digitisation and we are going to see trucks without drivers at some point in the future, probably in the next 5 years, that’s going to have an impact. At the moment, we gave a severe shortage of drivers so that might solve that problem, the truck driving population is aging and for a number of years I gave been involved in the logistic and for quite a long-time we haven’t cracked the ability to for it to be seen as an attractive industry for people to come and work in.

**Mike:** So, you’re saying that autonomous vehicles is something that can be considered strategically for the future?

**Rebecca:** Yes, and they are operating mode in trial mode in convoys of truck – when driving on the motorway is a different type of driving style to deliveries to high street. We’ve got to consider the impact of the environment that will impact the supply chain, we will continue to import as much as we do from the Far East or will there be an impact, will that be restricted in any way.

**Mike:** Are you talking about tariffs?

**Rebecca:** I am taking about tariffs and that whole environmental cost of shipping goods in from the Far East, I mean they are cheaply produced over there and when you think of the plastic and items produced in China and all that supply chain process to bring to the UK it’s really…

**Mike:** When looking at the carbon footprint of it, if it were much closer it would be less.

**Rebecca:** I wonder if that will come into play more, at CML we are trying to minimise our carbon footprint but when looking at the broader supply chain, within the world at some point it has to be some sort of impact on it.

**Mike:** There is Brexit and I did hesitate to bring it up because there are other things to talk about, and your business feels like it might have an impact.

**Rebecca:** It does have an impact and a lot of our customers and clients are very concerned about where to have their warehousing, do they need to be outside the UK, are they setting up satellites, I mean it’s a bit of a midfield and we are having some Brexit workshops for our clients to advise them about it. It’s just not clear.

**Mike:** If they decide the best warehousing position is in Europe as opposed to here that will make a huge difference to you.

**Rebecca:** It will have an impact because of the clients we work with might decide to shift some of their warehousing from the UK where we have over 500,000sq feet of warehousing in the UK where they are storing their products and they might say ‘we need to store our goods elsewhere’, but there will always be a demand for warehousing the UK just because we need to get product, move to storage and when it’s ordered, delivered. Will always be a demand for it but a lot of our suppliers ae questioning the need to have something on the continent as well as in the UK.

**Mike:** There is talk that Brexit could mean a lot more trade with other countries, do you see that as potential possibility.

**Rebecca:** That is a positive but it’s a bit unknown as it seems to be changing every week. I don’t feel like to comment on it.

**Mike:** It’s interesting and on the news, businesses are saying ‘give us something to go on’ and I can see how in your company that would be effective.

**Rebecca:** We have warehousing that’s bonded for customs that people can bring their goods in, store them, hold it under bond and only ay tax. It’s being on the delivery side of it. It has implications as well; I mean we cannot give clarity.

**Mike:** The last question is related to the international dimension; can you comment on the difference that need to be appreciate in working on the world?

**Rebecca:** I would like to go micro for a minute because in our warehouses we employ people from a range of different countries and that creates some barriers because we speak English, all the tasks, the signage is in English and so we are investing in training in English for our teams and we have a mixture of cultures in our warehouses and that’s something we had to embrace to ensure that the quality, regularity, consistency of labouring our warehouses is met. On a micro level is something we had to cinder. Then, on a macro level, we are an international supply chain provider and we are bringing a lot products from China, Far East, Vietnam, Bangladesh and that is something that we do on a regular basis but when thinking about providing warehousing for our clients outside our operation, in Leicestershire, in Magna Park, we look at collaborative opportunities, for example, I can think of one of clients that wants to expand into America and wants to find warehousing there and we said we will find a partner, we will source that we can work with and we can get that partner up to speed about your products, processes, etc. we can do as a collaborative approach.

**Mike:** Thank you very much. Could you give us a question for our students to consider in writing their reports?

**Rebecca:** I think a challenge I would like them to think about is: leadership is so important and you’ve got students who would aspire to become amazing leaders, I would like them to think about what traits they have as individuals that they could really develop to be the world class leader of the future.

**Mike:** That’s a very good question. Thank you.