

# CAREER SPOTLIGHT

**Effi-Svende Dammenhain** | Head of Supply Chain and Logistics



## Tell us about your career at Saint-Gobain so far

I joined Saint-Gobain Weber in Telford as a stock controller in September 2016 on a 12-month contract. It was my responsibility to improve the stock accuracy on site by implementing standards and working closely with stakeholders. My next permanent role was Supply Chain Coordinator where I continued working with the Weber Telford team. In June 2018, I was promoted to Supply Chain Distribution Manager and for the first time I was given the responsibility to manage people. In this role I managed the warehouse and logistics teams for Weber sites in England as well as transport related business activities. This February I was promoted to Head of Supply Chain and Logistics for Weber.

## Tell us about your role

As Head of Supply Chain and Logistics I set and implement the overall supply chain and logistics strategy for Weber, creating a common vision of customer first and world-class manufacturing mentality amongst colleagues. It is my responsibility to ensure that teams have what they need to exceed internal and external customer expectations. I also work and interact closely with external stakeholders as well and the wider Saint-Gobain supply chain network.

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## What made you want to work in your function and how did you start your career in this?

I have always been interested in the “bigger picture” of processes and operations. When I completed my Abitur (A-levels) in Germany, I wasn't quite sure what this would look like as a role. I studied for a Bachelor in Business Studies to provide a foundation until I figured out what to do. I undertook a number of internships – this is common in Germany. This gave me a wonderful insight into the entire supply chain from sales, purchasing, logistics to warehousing and customer service. I completed a Masters in Supply Chain Management at Aston University. I was happy to put all of my energy into this course, and it did pay off in the end. After this, I began working for Saint-Gobain Weber.

## What advice would you give to someone hoping to start a career in your profession?

Expect the unexpected. A day in logistics and supply chain is never the same as the next and is very difficult to plan. This can be challenging at times but it's certainly never boring! It is a fast-paced environment and quick decision making is a must. At the same time, it is important to keep the bigger picture in mind.



## What kind of skills and characteristics do you need to succeed in your role?

You need to be organised, communicate and listen. Technical understanding and project management skills are key for my role. It is also helpful to understand data and have the ability to analyse, as well as an understanding of IT systems and how they can support supply chain operations. Finally, you need to understand global changes to be successful in my profession.

## Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

I see myself still working in supply chain with a strong focus on future-proof technologies, such as Industry 4.0, automation, and reducing carbon emissions. I'll also be keeping an open mind for international opportunities.

## How has Saint-Gobain supported you to develop in your role?

The development opportunities at Saint-Gobain are wonderful. As a self-driven person asking for development opportunities, there have only been positive responses. I believe if someone wants to achieve something and is willing to put the effort and work into it, there are almost no boundaries within Saint-Gobain.



## What challenges have you faced during your career and how have you overcome these?

Projects that involve change to existing structures are always challenging. Stakeholders need to get involved throughout the process and I need to convince them of the advantages of change. I believe in open communication with everyone involved and I clearly explain the benefits for everyone.

## What's your favourite thing about working for Saint-Gobain?

The people and the opportunities. I love my job at Weber and Saint-Gobain and this is mainly because of the people I work with. Additionally, I think the opportunities to grow and develop at Saint-Gobain are almost endless. Not only are there so many different businesses and roles available but the group is also represented in 68 countries across the globe.

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## Who do you find inspirational and why?

I find people inspirational who are keen to make an impact and change a current situation. The Austrian F1 driver and entrepreneur Niki Lauda once said: “I don't believe in blaming others for failure. I am the only one who can change my circumstances”. This quote summarises what an inspirational person is for me. All of my line managers so far have been inspirational, strong and successful leaders and I know I wouldn't be where I am today without their guidance. The support and belief my managers had in me and the opportunities I have been given inspire and highly motivate me to be the best version of myself every day. At home, I am surrounded by encouraging, successful and loving family members who always strive to improve and make the best out of a situation. I've been taught that there is always room for improvement and that I am the master of my own destiny.