

MEMBERSHIP Matters

Keeping Pace with the Profession



Stan Chomrak,
CPIM, CIRM
Associate Director of
Supply Planning
Apotex Inc.

Stan Chomrak, CPIM, CIRM, is an exercise buff and dedicated member of his local running group. In fact, this past January, he was pleased to perform very well in a 5 kilometer race.

As associate director of supply planning at Apotex Inc., Chomrak is similarly committed to excelling in his career. He dedicates himself to continuous professional improvement and has achieved numerous personal business goals—many of which have been made possible because of his association with APICS.

Apotex is the largest Canadian-owned pharmaceutical company and develops, manufactures, and markets more than 260 generic pharmaceuticals in approximately 4,000 dosages and formats. Chomrak has worked for Apotex for the past five years, his current role involving the planning for all supply sites and distribution centers up to 24 months into the future. “We have multiple manufacturing sites and distribution centers, and we sell product in hundreds of different countries around the world, the majority of [product] being manufactured in Canada,” he says. “My job is to plan the supply for the entire organization and run that department.”

Apotex launched SAP enterprise software about six months before Chomrak started at the firm. “It was a difficult implementation, particularly as Apotex is a pharmaceutical company that is so tightly controlled,” Chomrak says. “I used my APICS knowledge to quickly learn SAP,

particularly the production planning module. I am viewed within the organization as an SAP area expert and hold many training sessions in the company.”

A new calling

Chomrak joined APICS in 1998 because he wanted to increase his knowledge in the operations management field. “When I changed my career, I saw APICS as a good way to build the knowledge that would be required,” he says. “Back then, I’d been in the workforce for 15 years; however, I had been in a completely different field. I had an opportunity to enter the supply chain end of the business, but [had neither] operational management experience, nor any type of production planning or supply planning experience.”

He says he earned his Certified in Production and Inventory Management (CPIM) certification soon after joining APICS and in no time saw the benefits the education would provide as he began his new career. A few years later, Chomrak read about the Certified in Integrated Resource Management (CIRM) designation and found it to be an “exceptional certification.”

“[The CIRM] was so broadly based and such a detailed and high-level certification. It provided me with greater knowledge at more of a senior management level and allowed me to move into more of a management- or director-level position,” he says. “I took the certification and am completely thrilled with it.”

In fact, Chomrak believes there is no bigger supporter of the CIRM program than he, and he says he is very sorry that more of his operations management colleagues didn’t pursue the credential. He genuinely believes that, without his certifications, he would

not have been able to achieve the position he has now. “[The certifications] give me a much broader understanding of how organizations work,” he says. “They’ve provided me with a broad base of knowledge that allows me to communicate and contribute within the organization.”

He says APICS also has made it possible for him to deal with fellow operations management professionals at a more senior level and across all areas of the business. He is able to more clearly understand what these colleagues do and how their job functions fit within the organization and the overall business strategy.

Knowledge and growth

A true believer in continuous education, Chomrak says he is considering beginning the process of attaining the latest APICS certification, the Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP). “I think the CSCP would be very good,” he says. “I might pursue [it] because I am a big fan of lifelong learning.”

Likewise, Chomrak is very enthusiastic about the APICS International

“When I changed my career, I saw APICS as a good way to build the knowledge that would be required.”

Conference and Exposition. “The conference I attended was phenomenal. I can’t speak highly enough about it,” he says. “All of the presentations were excellent, and the keynote speakers were phenomenal—just the coordination of it and everything that went into it was a huge success. I’d love to go to more of these events.” ■