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Publisher Peter Charboneau peter@otrgroup.ca

General Manager/ Editor-in-Chief Ed Novoa ed@otrgroup.ca

Director of Operations

Cathryn Charboneau

cathryn@otrgroup.ca

Account Executive

Luke Zentil

luke@otrgroup.ca

J.C. Arseneault jc@otrgroup.ca Account Executive

Account Executive

Earle Madden earle@otrgroup.ca

Graphic Design & Advertising Top Shelf Graphics david@tsgraphics.ca

Controller Estela Navarrete estela@otrgroup.ca

#### 18 Parkglen Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K2G 3G9 1.800.416.8712 • 613.224.9947 Fax: 613.224.8825 Email: otr@otrgroup.ca Toronto Office: advertising information 416.763.5966 Montreal Office: 438.289.1186 438.289.1186 Worker More 438.289.1186 Worker More 438.289.1186 Worker More 438.289.1186 Montreal Office: 438.280 Montreal Office: 438.2

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**Carrier Profile** 

## Payne Transportation L.P. Celebrates 15 Years of Trucking

It was the spring of 2000 and there was a lot of uncertainty in the future of Tom Payne Sr. with his employer, Tri-Line Freight Systems, based in Calgary, Alberta. The company was just purchased by TCT and after nearly 30 years of employment and close to 10 as President & CEO, Tom found himself in a precarious spot. His son, Tom Jr. was also employed with Tri-Line in Winnipeg and like his father, was not at ease with the recent announcement of purchase. Tom Jr. was looking at opportunities when Sr. called and said he's too young to retire and wanted to work together. Tom and his wife Gail quickly moved home to Winnipeg and they started Payne Transportation.

To say Tom Payne Sr.'s reputation precedes him in Canadian Trucking circles would be an understatement yet, even he was surprised and somewhat taken back by the level of support the new company received by former coworkers at Tri-line.

The initial response was great. So great that Tom called his friend and competitor, Murray Mullen, CEO of Mullen Group Ltd. to see if Murray still had an interest in working together and investing in the newly formed company, Payne Transportation. Together with Murray, Tom now had the IT and financial support necessary to get started.

Payne hired 30 owner operators in the first 30 days and 20 more each of the next 4 months. They opened branch offices in Edmonton and Montreal within those months and needed the financial support from their new investor to take advantage of growth opportunities. All of this occurred in the first 6 months of business and in a market that was very difficult for trucking companies to grow due to the shortage of drivers and owner operators. Tom remembers the bank asking, "How are you going to get started and grow when no one else can at this time?" Tom knew and their partner knew.

It was now time to take a deep breath and work on creating sustainability. The team spent the next year improving efficiencies, lowering cost and building a strong company for the future. Tom Sr. was a finalist for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in recognition of vision, leadership and achievement in building a growing and dynamic business.

In 2005, Payne Transportation purchased 17 acres in the new Brookside Industrial Park and designed and built their nearly 50,000 square foot facility. This project was Tom Sr.'s pride and joy and he took great pleasure in overseeing the project. It is one of the city's finest transportation facilities. This happened during the same year Tom Sr. agreed to sell the remaining, majority shares to the Mullen Group. Tom Sr. retired in 2008 and Tom Jr. was appointed the company's new President.

Payne Transportation continues building the company based on their mission, vision and values. It grew with acquisitions of smaller companies and they continued to hire owner operators due to their continued strong reputation.

Their value statement is a replica of every lesson Tom Jr. learned from his dad... integrity, honesty and excellence in everything they do. Tom says that they begin every staff meeting by reviewing all three statements.

We asked Tom Jr. what it is like interacting with the Mullen Group. He replied, "They give great value, experience and advice. They also provide valuable benchmarking on items like



Tom Payne Jr. and Tom Payne Sr.

safety and financial results. In 2012 we won the Mullen Group's Grand Prize Safety Award, affectionately called 'The Bear' which was a great honor". Tom feels it's important to give back to the industry and was an active member of the Manitoba Trucking Association (Past President) and currently he is on the executive Board of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

Currently Payne operates 200 power units (60 dry van, 60 specialized, 10 LTL & 70 in the open deck operation). They have no plans to grow the fleet this year as they recognize that the oil & gas industry is slowing and much of what they do ends in Alberta. They are planning on a slow, oil & gas recovery.

July 3rd, 2015 celebrates the 15th anniversary of their first load as Payne Transportation. They are planning a private lunch for the staff and maybe a gala in the fall. They gave watches to the staff at year 5 and gold rings at year 10 and are considering what to do this year to recognize year 15.

Tom Jr. wanted to comment on the Executive team that has been together and helped build one of Canada's leading, transportation solution providers. Here is what he told us about them:

"Pauline Wiebe Peters, CPA – Vice President, Finance & Administration - Pauline has spent 15 years not only perfecting her skill set as an accountant but also learning the business. This is critical for understanding processes, reducing costs and being an integral part of our overall success. (Never having to replace your controller, is why I can come to work smiling every day says Tom). Joe Storozuk – Vice President, Business Development & Customer Service - Joe also began with us on day 1 and brought years of sales experience to our team. Our customers haven't seen any turnover at Payne, especially from the executive level. Joe has been the face of Payne to most of those clients. (Tom says he has worked with Joe for over 20 years and considers him his friend).

Jason McNicholl – Vice President, Operations & Logistics – Tom first met Jason when he was still working for a competitor. He was young and aggressive and very bright about our business. He quickly impressed me enough that I thought we had to find a spot for him on our team. Jason began over 14 years ago as our Operations Manager for the Winnipeg branch and quickly proved his value. He has worked hard and earned the respect of not only his co-workers but of our largest customers. (Tom also considers Jason to be one of his closest friends).

Robin Veldkamp – Director, Administration -Robin is my sister and has also been with us since day 1. She started where we all did, with our foot in the door, so to speak and she earned her way to a leadership role with hard work and the respect of everyone around her including all of our Owner Operators who she works closely with. She is easily Pauline's right hand person. (And Tom counts on her too).

Thanks to the team listed above the company has been very successful and has grown so that we could find room for Thomas McKee – Vice President, Driver Services and Innovations. Thomas is another example of finding a spot for someone you just sense will add value to the team. We added Thomas in recruiting and he ascended to his current role by becoming someone that we (the team) didn't want to lose. His value extends well beyond driver services and into being an important cog in the wheel".

Tom's final thought was of his father. "He is still a most respected man for all of our Owner Operators and after 35 years of guidance from him, I truly believe that I am a reflection of my dad".



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Robert D. Scheper

## Choosing a Trucking Company: Insurance Deductibles

If a Carrier has operators on their fleet they automatically have an insurance policy with specific deductibles and terms. Not all terms, however, are the same. Some carriers "self-insure" to a certain dollar figure (say \$25,000) and then are covered for anything above that by insurance companies. Other carriers have the insurance companies cover everything above the deductible. Operators should understand what they are covered for and what they are not covered for. In some cases it may determine your financial survival.

Though insurance costs can and should be charted and then compared with the competition, comparing deductibles may require a little more than simple number crunching. First, there is a separate formula that should be used to bring different deductibles to the same level. For instance: if one carrier contract provides a \$5000 deductible for the truck, \$5000 for the trailer and \$5000 for cargo (\$15,000 max) while another carrier provides \$3000 deductible (max), the operator risk is significantly higher in the former contract. To compare contract

apples to contract apples, the operator must find a deductible buy-down policy and then add that monthly operating cost to the former carrier contract.

However, not all comparisons are this simple or this extreme. Though most deductibles are similar in dollar amounts (varying only a couple thousand dollars) it must be associated with the understanding that some operators seem to have more insurance claims than others.

If an operator has driven 25 years without any claims at all, they may view deductibles much differently than an operator who has driven at three carriers in five years and has three claims during that time. It is for this reason that charting Carrier deductibles may be a debatable issue within some operator circles. It may depend on who the operator is or even who the carrier is.

I just talked with an operator who is working through an insurance claim. They were sent to a pickup where the shipper loaded (and secured) the freight without the operator being present (it was not allowed). The load shifted during the trip and damaged a portion of





the freight. At the trip destination the damaged freight was set aside and claimed at \$3091 (the deductible was \$3000). The Carrier refused to acknowledge the lack of control the operator had in securing the product and proceeded with an in house claim. In addition, the damaged product obviously had market salvage value (due to its nature and who picked it up) and the Carrier refused to acknowledge any compensation regarding it. \$3091 was deducted from the operator statement.

Upon further research there were other significant issues. This particular shipper was notorious for damaged freight (5-8+%) of shipments). The Carrier never (or possibly rarely) sent company the shipper, trucks to only lease/owner operators. There were several operators on the fleet who unconditionally refused those loads suffered some sort (and of consequences because of it). This Carrier also hosts considerable driver turnover.

There is a different Carrier that had an operator damage a corner of a trailer (estimated about \$1000-\$1200+). The operator confessed his damage to the carrier and left the repairs in the Carrier's control. The Carrier had their own body shop and decided, instead of replacing the whole corner panel (which is very expensive) that they would simply patch the hole nicely. After several months the operator returned to the manager and asked why he was not billed for the cost? The manager stated that this time, there would be no charge. The Carrier had a reputation for one of its policies wherein, approximately 25% of all small/medium size damage claims are to be "free". It was not policy... it was done randomly at managers discretion.

These two examples expose more than just a numerical contractual difference. It reflects different Carrier attitudes that cannot be factored into operator contracts. Operators must weigh the ethics and operational "heart" of the Carrier they plan on driving for. Do they operate with a measure of grace, or an attitude of greed? In the end it once again boils down to trust; is the Carrier worthy of your trust? Do they deserve your effort, contribution and power?

Robert D Scheper operates an accounting and consulting firm in Steinbach, Manitoba. He has a Masters Degree in Business Administration and is the author of the Book "Making Your Miles Count: taxes, taxes, taxes" (now available on CD). You can find him at www.thrconsulting.ca and thrconsulting.blogspot.com or at 1-877-987-9787. You can e-mail bim at: robert@thrconsulting.ca.



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Rav I. Haight

# Choices

One of the most difficult concepts I have tried to grasp over the past number of years and the one I have cherished the most is this one, "I am in this position because I chose to be here. I take 100% responsibility for me".

I am not trying to get too heavy on you here but think about it. The situation you are in with your family, friends and your carrier are because you choose to be in those situations, good or bad. There are no chains that keep you where you're at. You are in charge of you. Simple concept right? Well, if this is true then why do we seem to be so hell bent on sticking with the ordinary in our lives when the extraordinary is within our grasp? We all have the power to change if we are motivated to do so.

So if you are not happy with your current carrier and you are contemplating making a change what do you do now? Many drivers will simply look through the ads and make a short list of carriers to call and see what they have to say. They might listen to what their buddies have to say about where they're working, listen to the CB rumor mill etc. Each of these little bits of reconnaissance has some limited value.

What I am asking is what have you done to make the place you are at now a success and why is it bad? Ask yourself, what can I control in this situation and what can I do to minimize my cost of operation and maximize my profit? If you haven't done this exercise then you haven't given yourself the opportunity to succeed and feel good about the quality of job you do.

So what can you control as an Owner Operator? You control many significant operating expenses such as your MPG. Is it as high as you can possibly get it? You control your maintenance cost. Are you doing everything necessary to minimize this expense? Do you have a good relationship with the shop that does your work? Do you handle as many roadside minimal breakdowns as you can by yourself by carrying your own tools, grease etc.?

Do you have a good accountant and financial support staffs that knows trucking and can offer advice when needed? Is your finance cost in line with what it should be? How is your relationship with your dispatcher? Is it cooperative or aggressive? Are your living expenses outside your truck operating cost reasonable?

Now look at what you can't control. You cannot control the amount of miles you are offered - if there aren't enough for you to make a living you will need to move on ASAP. You can't control certain cost the carrier is probably going to pass on to you that might include your base plates, insurance cost etc.

Let's try doing it this way. Grab a piece of paper and draw a line vertically down the middle of the page. On one side list all of your fixed expenses - your truck payment, base plate and insurance if it is a set amount. On the other side list all your variable expenses; fuel, maintenance, on road meals, cell bills, tolls etc. When you have finished collecting all the items that you pay to run your business, fill in the dollars that each one of these cost you each month. Try not to go into shock as you see the numbers all in one spot. It can be shocking but please be honest with each entry. After you have done this, look at each item.

On the fixed side try and see if everything listed is in line with what you know about the industry. Although these items might have a fixed payment schedule attached to them you should still feel comfortable that they are reasonable. If you're not sure then your financial advisor should be able to help you here.

On the variable side, this is quite often where the savings can be found. These items are within your control and every opportunity should be explored to ensure that these items are minimized. Obviously you don't want to go cheap on your maintenance cost and bring on a big expense later. So when I say minimize I mean don't be penny cheap and dollar stupid. What I also mean is that you have to be comfortable that all the expenses involved in what it costs to run your truck (business) are in line and that you are doing your best at all times to keep these under control. Plus you always have an eye on how to further reduce them.

I am not trying to talk anyone out

of leaving the carrier that they are currently at. What I am trying to do is slow down the Owner Operators who have had 5 jobs in 5 years and cannot understand why everyone's always picking on them. Look in the mirror. One of the reasons you became an Owner Operator is for the independence. When you made that decision you became a small business person. Are you sure you are acting like one?

One of the miracles of trucking is the maze of different pay packages that exist in this business. No two are alike and they all have their own little nuances that can make or break the Owner Operator.

One of the biggest mistakes people make is to believe that bigger is better. It may very well be that the carrier that advertises the highest gross will not be the carrier that will put the most in your pocket. Shop wisely and investigate what processes and offerings each carrier has available to the Owner Operator that might help you reduce your variable cost. Some carriers offer reduced shop rates. Some might offer discount group offerings on cell phones, fuel, health benefits. Whatever, it will be helpful to investigate it all and see what might be available to you that you can leverage off to help you succeed.

So do your homework driver and make a solid decision!

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Chris Harris Safety Dawg Safety Dawg Inc. chris@safetydawg.com

### *Is Sleep Apnea a Problem In the Trucking Industry?*

It is interesting to see what some of my fellow trucking safety professionals are discussing. There is currently an online discussion group talking about whether obstructed sleep apnea (OSA) testing should be made mandatory. As you might guess, the opinions are wide and varied. I have seen some statistics stating that a range from 15% to over 30% of professional truck drivers are afflicted with some form of sleep apnea. Even at 15%, that means there are millions of sleepy truck drivers operating commercial units every day. Some of my colleagues believe we should be tested for it. Of course, others believe that more government intervention, more rules and more regulations are not what the trucking industry needs. And here I am, right in the middle.

Because sleep apnea affects men more than women and because it happens most often to men who are older than 44 years of age, it is a disease that really targets the trucking industry. I say targets because of course, our industry is mostly male and it has an ever aging population. The average age in trucking is older than most industries. These statistics, along with the way our truck drivers are required to work, such as evening and overnight work, ever-changing bedtimes and the need sometimes to work even when tired also creates sleep apnea.

So what is sleep apnea? It is when your body stops breathing for 10 seconds or longer during your sleep. Everyone has some apnea events while they sleep. 5 to 7 apnea events in an hour are normal. I suffer from sleep apnea and I can tell you that when I was tested I had what is referred to as 'moderate' sleep apnea. I had 37 apnea events per hour. My body's reaction to this while I'm asleep is to say, 'start breathing!' These apnea events prevent me from getting the deep restful sleep that my body requires. As soon as I began using a CPAP machine my apnea events dropped to 2 to 3 per hour. That is well within the normal range. As a result of treatment, I feel much better and have my energy back.



Getting back on topic, do I think we should have mandatory sleep apnea testing? NO. I do believe that we need some form of 'screening' for our drivers. Screening would not be testing. Screening could simply be a questionnaire or other process and the results of the questionnaire/process would then indicate whether the driver may have a sleeping disorder. If this was the case, it would tell the safety professional to recommend to the driver that further testing is required by a medical person, someone who is a professional in the topic of OSA.

Because of the high rate of sleep apnea in our industry, I do believe that we need to take some form of action to address the risk. And it is a large risk. Sleep apnea affects many more drivers than drug and alcohol abuse and yet, the results are often similar. If a driver has sleep apnea, he or she may effectively be impaired. Their reaction time and judgment may not be as sound as it would normally be and in fact, it is similar to their reaction time if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

A year ago the United States government was seriously considering mandating sleep apnea testing. This seems to have been moved to the back burner as I don't see anything in the news about it recently. This means that we, the trucking industry need to address this concern. I do believe it is a major risk to our industry that affects many drivers. If the industry were to step forth and introduce either screening or testing we could make a positive impact on both driver's health and perhaps safety on the roads. After all, isn't that what we safety professionals are supposed to do? Are we not to look after our drivers and work to improve their health? If we do, the results will be safer roads! *Chris Harris* 

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Ellen Voie President/CEO/Founder of Women In Trucking, Inc.

### Is Perfectionism Holding Women Back in Transportation Leadership Roles?

Author Ann Wilson Schaef calls perfectionism "self-abuse of the highest order." It could be a factor in why there are so few women in leadership roles in transportation.

Although it has become more common for companies to promote women into management areas, there is still work to be done to increase the percentage in transportation. For most industries, women comprise over half of senior leaders, but in the trucking industry, we're at about fourteen percent today.

Sure, trucking has traditionally been a male dominated area, but so were other occupations such as law and medicine that have tilted the numbers into more positive ones for women.

Maybe there are some things we can point to right now that will help us bring more women, and untapped potential, into the trucking industry.

First, be aware that women are less likely to even apply for a higher position, as research by Hewlett Packard found that women feel they must have 100 percent of the job requirements before they will apply. For men, they'll go for the role if they meet sixty percent of the stated requirements.



Also, research by Babcock and Laschever found that women do not negotiate their salaries, and accept whatever is offered. To add to this dilemma, a 2011 McKinsey report found that women are often promoted based on their accomplishments, while men are promoted for their potential.

Add all this to a traditionally male dominated industry and you've got a mixture of women with less confidence in their abilities and a culture that's not always sensitive to these issues.

Women are typically more prone to perfectionism as learned in childhood. We are the people pleasers who spend more time interacting verbally and focusing on collaboration than our brothers. We are the caregivers. We learned that it's not nice to brag about our accomplishments and as the minority in this industry, we are aware that we are representing women who will come along behind us once we've blazed a trail for them.

So, how does perfectionism harm our careers? Kathy Caprino, a success coach and author, cites five ways this need to be perfect is detrimental to our careers:

- 1. You're difficult to be with as your need to be perfect alienates your co-workers.
- 2. You hurt people with your critical and judgmental thinking.
- 3. It taints your ability to manage people, as your standard of perfect is what you strive for.
- 4. It crimps your creativity, because the creative process makes you uncomfortable.
- 5. Your need for perfection pushes people away.

Elizabeth Scott, a stress management expert cites these ways to identify whether you or a colleague are suffering from perfectionism.

- 1. Do you set goals and only accept a specific accomplishment? Anything less is failure?
- Do you focus on small mistakes and forget the overall task and its goal?
- 3. Are you pushing or pulling? Perfectionists are pushed toward a goal through fear of not reaching it, where high achievers are pulled toward a goal with the desire to make progress in the right direction.
- 4. Are your standards unrealistic?
- 5. Do you become depressed if you fall short of a goal?

- 6. Do you procrastinate because you are afraid of failure?
- Are you defensive? Perfectionists aren't as likely to view criticism as a way of making better decisions.
- 8. Do you have low self-esteem? Perfectionists are often selfcritical and unhappy which leads to lower self-esteem.

Author Laura Vanderkam has written numerous books about the traits of successful people. She claims the "key to making myself happy is NOT to be a perfectionist."

Instead, we need to convince ourselves that it's okay to apply for a higher position even if we don't meet ALL of the criteria. We need to start the negotiation process in regard to salaries and benefits before we accept a position and we need to point out our accomplishments and successes to be sure they are noted.

We need to stop expecting perfectionism from ourselves and learn to become more confident in what we can bring to this industry.

Ellen Voie President/CEO of Women In Trucking, Inc. ellen@womenintrucking.org www.womenintrucking.org

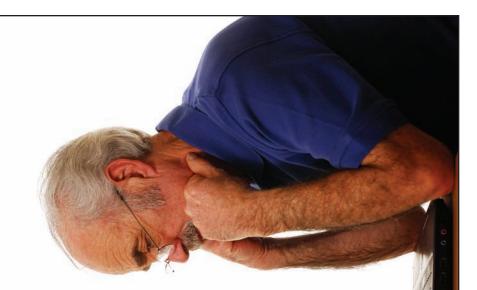


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Ed Novoa General Manager, OTR Group ed@otrgroup.ca

### *Online Training can be Leveraged*

In today's work environment, everyone is wearing multiple hats. Who can say, "I think I'll take tomorrow off, I really have nothing to do at work"?

Over the past three years, online training/communication has been front and centre for me. I have spoken with more than 200 carriers about this topic, and through the course of the discussion, this adage is true across the board; in today's business environment, everyone is short on time. Is there a tool that can bridge the gap between wanting to accomplish more without being given more time with which to do it?

Online training is a tool. As with any other tool, it is most useful when used for its intended purpose. I do not believe there is a one-size fits all solution. This is something that has to be considered carefully; it needs a vision and buy-in at all levels of a company.

Let's investigate the online phenomenon first. According to ComScore (www.comscore.com) Canadians are among the top of the world in Internet engagement. If you are interested, I can share the PDF for you, or you can sign up and download it at http://www.comscore.com/Insights/Presenta tions-and-Whitepapers/2015/2015-Canada-Digital-Future-in-Focus-Webinar.

Over 70% of truckers use the internet, mostly now by mobile phone. http://www.gobytrucknews.com/driversgoing-mobile/123.

With respect to the actual act of deploying and receiving training online, companies have many things to consider up front. Questions like: How will you compensate your drivers for this activity? Are there incentives you can offer? What will you do to facilitate access for your drivers? How will you track and monitor activity? If you are currently using or are considering using an online training tool for your drivers, what will you do to augment the education for your "inside the walls" staff? It has been mentioned often that ensuring driver support staff understand the daily challenges that drivers face is important.

As you venture further down this road, and you've discovered, analyzed and implemented your tool of choice, you may discover that you can implement parts of it in other areas such as orientation, remedial training, Standard Operating Procedures training, etc. It may become a communication tool for you that goes beyond the norm.

The vision completed, always remember that online training was never intended to replace the human element. Your company's culture will help dictate the extent of your use of this new tool, should you decide to go this route.

I speak almost weekly with Allan Hicks, VP of Safety at B.R. Williams Trucking, Inc. in Alabama, in a round table we have regarding online training. With his permission, I am including this quote: "I used to reach 60% of my drivers every 90 days, now I reach 95% of my drivers every 30 days".

I used to joke that the Internet is just a fad, it will go away. I encourage you to get ahead of the curve and get online to communicate with your drivers. Be pro-active not reactive, you don't want to be scrambling to "catchup" with your competitors.

Ed Novoa General Manager, OTR Group ed@otrgroup.ca

