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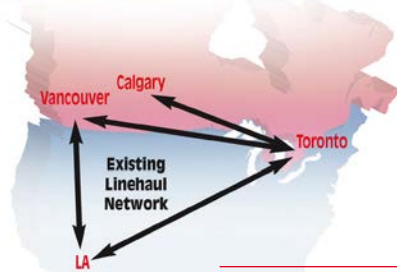




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What do women want?

I am often asked to explain what issues women in the trucking industry have that are different from men. The answer is, "none." Every one of the concerns that our members have affects both men and women.

So, why do women need their own association? They don't! Despite the name, "Women In Trucking," our membership is not limited to women. In fact, currently, seventeen percent of our members are men. You don't need to be a dog to support the humane society, do you? The Arbor Day Foundation doesn't require that you're a tree to fund their efforts.

Our members include anyone who supports our mission; Women In Trucking was established to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments and minimize obstacles.

Are there issues that are unique to women? No, but there are issues that affect women more than they affect men. These are some of the concerns we are focusing our efforts on and working to alleviate. Let's look at some of the top obstacles women face in the trucking industry.

The number one concern relates to image. The common perception by those who are not familiar with the trucking industry is that it's a man's world. There may be a greater percentage of men than women responsible for moving the nation's freight, but that doesn't mean that women aren't welcome. In fact, some of the most encouraging and supportive people in trucking are men!

Our goal is to let women know that there are great career opportunities in the trucking

industry, and they include driving, maintaining and managing the equipment (and drivers!). Often, when I tell women about the organization, they are curious, but when I start describing the potential opportunities available to them, they tell me they aren't "built" to drive a truck, or that they aren't mechanically minded enough to service an engine.

I tell them that they're wrong. I tell them they can learn and they are capable and most importantly, they are needed. Many people have the misperception that they are not welcome and wanted, and one of our goals is to change that image.

Another issue that is more important to women concerns safety. Women are more susceptible to violence than men. The US Department of Justice found that women are three times more likely to be raped than men, three times more likely to be stalked than men, and twice as likely to be injured during an assault than men. It is unfortunate, but violence against women is more prevalent, and so more women are more concerned about their physical safety.

This industry can't afford to lose women because they do not feel safe in their work environment. Everyone deserves to have the security to do their job, and whether their workplace is an office, a truck or a maintenance facility, our goal is to help women overcome some of the challenges they might face in ensuring that they are safe while they are on the job.

Cleanliness is another issue that has arisen more often for women. Truck stops are not as clean as many would like them to be, and

some of the rest room facilities at the loading docks haven't been cleaned in ages. We aren't claiming that men don't care about germs, but we have found that women often have higher standards for defining what is meant by "clean."

Harassment is an issue that women find to be more disconcerting than men. Many of our female members have told us that they are often verbally accosted by an anonymous male voice when they key the mic on their CB radio. Diane, an owner operator from Canada, said that she had been called some pretty nasty things when she talked on the CB. She turns it off except for the few occasions she needs it to communicate with a fellow driver.

Are men harassed on the CB, the answer is yes, they are. Are men concerned about cleanliness? Of course! Are men subjected to violence on the road? Yes, again.

Women In Trucking is not an association FOR women, it's ABOUT women and their success and support in this industry. You don't have to be a female to become a member.

Call us at 888-464-9482 or visit www.WomenInTrucking.org to join!

Ellen Voie

President/CEO/Founder of
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MAKING YOUR MILES COUNT

Robert D. Scheper



Making Your Miles Count: Success and Failure of Operators

I've been an Accountant and Consultant to independent Operators since 1492 (a joint venture with Christopher Columbus). During that time I've had the pleasure of meeting and working with many, very successful operators. There are some sharp operators that just before a meeting I have to pull up my socks and focus on my 'A' game. I've had meetings with husband and wives who have such harmony in financial understanding and management it puts my wife and I to shame. There are some amazing operators in our country.

I have been asked many times, what makes an operator successful? This is a question usually not answerable in one or two words. However, the simplest phrase would probably be "the willingness to take good advice". After interviewing hundreds and hundreds of operators I would say that phrase fits best. It's not the ability but the willingness to seek out and act on good advice. Everyone is able, but not everyone is willing. Some people fill their lives with too many conflicting priorities. Priorities such as: a new half ton, a sports car, a bass boat, vacations, chrome, impatience, emotionalism, gambling, alcohol or any other vice. All of these "priorities" usually conflict with good advice. It doesn't take

long into a conversation to find out if these "priorities" will overtake good advice.

Success and failure usually isn't determined by one decision. It's almost always a number of choices over a period of time. These decisions include: choice of carrier, choice of truck, tax method used, level of debt of the client and of course lifestyle (which includes many choices).

CHOICE OF CARRIER is dealt with in my second book "Making Your Miles Count: choosing a trucking company". It provides good advice about the independent operator industry from nearly every perspective and over a 16 year detailed study. It provides conclusions such as "...an operator must hold onto their truck for longer than their financing term in order to ensure earnings greater than the average company driver..." If an operator understands and accepts this advice they have a greater chance of success. If they reject the idea of driving an "old truck" their chances of success will statistically and significantly drop.

CHOICE OF TRUCK is critical to success (as I've just stated), especially when we consider the impact of maintenance and fuel economy (specifically the impact that pollution control devices have had).

TAX METHOD USED (or not used) can make a cash difference of \$10-12,000 per year, which is sometimes the difference between cash flow survival and NSF failure. Using non-taxable benefits (in my opinion) is critical in creating after tax wealth in the independent operator industry. This system was explained in my first book "Making Your Miles Count: taxes, taxes, taxes". If you go to our web site (under RESEARCH) you will find the only place in Canada that charts the difference between the two major tax methods used in this industry. You can also download a 2.5 hour seminar explaining the seven disadvantages of the system as well as over 40 standard questions.

DEBT LEVEL is not a comfortable topic to discuss with some people. Our society has submitted to outrageous levels of debt. People somehow believe that just because financing is available it must be ok... and the flawed logic is... "If it wasn't ok then it wouldn't be available". Society is constantly concerned about their credit scores, almost as if that's the measure of success. It's an assumption that is loaded with undisclosed consequences. The goal is not a high credit score but the ability to live without even knowing or caring about your credit score. Society's "wisdom" is heading south while claiming its going north. Debt must be aggressively managed and paid down rather than passively justified. Debt (any kind) is like sugar to a diabetic... too much (without it being burned off) will kill you!

LIFESTYLE is another related nitro glycerin topic. How much should you save/invest? Too many operators use their business to

increase their lifestyle rather than "getting ahead". Often times what society describes as "getting ahead" is simply increasing their personal spending. It's not what you make that counts... it's what you are able to keep. I'm a big fan of Dave Ramsey: get out of debt, aggressively build your wealth until your wealth alone provides you a living rather than your own effort. This requires personal sacrifice and commitment... something that society frowns on.

If you want success and better results you need to be willing to accept good advice and change what and how you do things. Do the research, think things through, get good counsel and above all avoid arrogance... it's a one way trip to failure.

About the Author:

Robert D. Scheper is a leading Accountant and Consultant to the Lease/Owner operator industry in Canada. His first book in the Making Your Miles Count series "taxes, taxes, taxes" was released in 2007. His firm exclusively serves Lease/Owner Operators across Canada. His second book "Choosing a Trucking company" is the most in-depth analysis of the operator industry available today. He has a Master degree (MBA) in financial management and has been serving the industry since he and his wife came off the road in 1993. His dedication, commitment and strong opinions can be read and heard in many articles and seminars. You can find him at www.makingyourmilescount.com or 1-877-987-9787.



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Speaking From Experience on Safety

Some recent data released by TCAinGauge has revealed, for a couple of reasons, some exciting information. First, by way of background, the Truckload Carriers Association's industry benchmarking program has been measuring individual company operating data for the truckload sector for well over a decade. Just recently, their new online offering has released data that at one time was held 'close to the vest' by the companies that participated in the program. The new anonymous offering has the capability to release some of this valuable benchmark information to the industry.

It is no surprise to me that the numbers reveal a direct correlation between better than average CSA Scores with a better than industry average operating ratio. Simply stated, safer carriers are more profitable companies. Not a big surprise to many of you I'm sure, but for those of you who have been skeptical, the proof is in the numbers.

Just ask the insurance industry and they are going to tell anyone interested that trucking companies with lower turnover have better than average loss claims ratios. Lower claims ratios result in lower insurance premiums. The TCAinGauge numbers also reveal a strong correlation between lower insurance costs to better operating ratios. Also interesting from the data is that there is little effect on

the numbers when it is looked at from a fleet size perspective. Once again if you're a safer fleet, with low CSA scores and few claims, it is quite likely that your bottom line is better than those carriers that do not have a focus on safety. It is also likely that they have turnover that is at the higher end of the scale.

I have an old saying that is appropriate for this situation. "There is nothing as elusive as an obvious fact". Does it not make sense that the likelihood that a carrier can offer ongoing training and coaching of its drivers when they are experiencing high turnover is almost impossible? Knowing this, does it also not make sense that safety must become a cornerstone value of your company, if it's not already?

When I ran a carrier, we took a 120% annual turnover rate to 20% per annum and safety was intricate to that success. Our safety department could and did ground any Driver or Owner Operator at any time that they deemed necessary, no matter how important the freight or customer involved. No question, no argument.

This safety effort was supported with a proactive approach to driver training and ongoing education. I recall that we had to do some training on progressive shifting so along with this training, we included a course

on advanced defensive driving techniques. We were concerned, to say the least, that our drivers might revolt. We thought they might feel slighted with us telling them how to shift. But in fact we experienced the exact opposite. We had many of them come to us afterwards and thank us for the training. That experience taught us a valuable lesson that still makes me shake my head today. How dare we think that our drivers might not want to learn and improve themselves in their chosen trade? After we wrapped our heads around this "obvious fact" we all got to work and our safety department designed a program we called the Road Knights Training Program.

This program was completely voluntary and was designed to offer the more experienced driving professional an avenue to be recognized by their peers as the crème de la crème of drivers in North America. Again, this was a totally voluntary program in our company and we saw many of our driving force take advantage of the opportunity of this additional training. After passing through the many layers of the training, they were awarded with the designation of Certified Road Knight and their trucks were decal'd appropriately. Participation in these courses and training was done by approximately 20% of our driving force. We had stand-alone terminals that they could use at their own time and pace when they could spare the time. It was great stuff.

We also participated in OTA's Road Knights program where a couple of our drivers represented the industry at various public and industry related events.

We were supporters of the Truckload Carriers Associations Highway Angels program. This effort was designed to recognize drivers who had gone above and beyond the call of duty in assisting the public. It might be an accident scene or a stranded car in some peril. Members of the public nominate the driver for recognition; they are given a plaque along with local and national media exposure for their deeds. We had what we called the hall of fame at our terminal where these plaques were all displayed. This doesn't begin to touch the numerous programs we had inside the walls of the building, things such as, Driver and Owner Operator of the month and of the year. We also had a longevity program, safe miles driven program, bursary program, tuition reimbursement, EAP etc.

These are just a couple examples of what can be done to promote and recognize your drivers for their performance and professionalism. Safety and safety training does not have to be a necessary evil if it can be made interesting and enjoyable and it must always be visible in your newsletters and on your bulletin boards. Celebrate loud and proud and remember that "Safety Pays".

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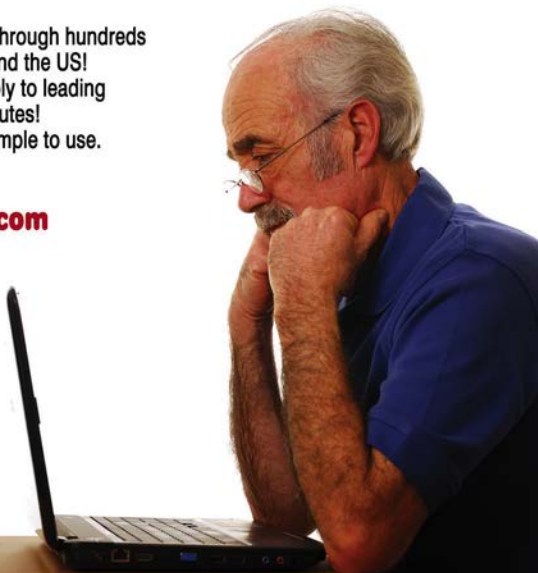
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Your Driver Pool Is the First Place to Look For a Good Instructor

Since minimum training standards for driver-instructors will not happen in the near future, how should a carrier find them? Have you looked in your own driver pool? What are the qualities that make a truck driver a good instructor? The answers may surprise you.

From my experience, the classic first mistake most carriers make is to ask the best truck driver or the real 'natural driver' to become an instructor. It is assumed that if a driver is really good then he/she would be a good instructor. Why not? Just think about this... How many of you have had a teacher who 'really knew his stuff' but was terrible at teaching the subject? I know I've had several of these mediocre teachers. In fact, people who are knowledgeable and learn very easily are often at a disadvantage to becoming teachers. Since learning comes so easy for them, they do not fully grasp the concept of breaking tasks into several small steps. Since they can usually skip many of the steps and still learn, they find it frustrating to teach someone. So the most important thing to remember is to not assume that a good truck driver will be a good instructor.

There are several cues that a carrier can look for when trying to identify potential instructors. Instead of looking for the 'natural driver', the carrier will have to look for the 'natural teacher'. This is a combination of behaviours and characteristics that are common to good instructors. There is also a good chance that this driver has a 'no accident' record. Think and look at your workforce with a different lens and you may find some very suitable teachers among them.

You should first look for a driver who actually likes people and respects them. It may sound obvious and a little simplistic but the driver must enjoy being around people and be sincerely interested in them. That is really the hallmark of a teacher... being attentive, interested and respectful. By being present, the instructor will observe the student's behaviour and then identify what is preventing learning. To see where the student is going wrong, one has to really stop and observe how the skill is being performed. By careful observation, the instructor can start to pin point where the skill is failing and why the student is losing confidence. Being corrected in a respectful manner is the cornerstone to teaching adult learners.

The ideal candidate must also be a person who wants to help and encourage others. This is the driver who everyone likes to talk to about a problem. They seek out this individual because they feel safe that their concerns will be taken seriously. In teaching, these skills translate into the ability to challenge students to see new solutions to problems in a kind and gentle way. When the student knows the instructor is approachable and understanding, they will naturally want to work harder and take risks without the fear of being ridiculed or criticized.

Look for the driver who has good communication skills. The carrier should identify a person who can resolve a conflict without resorting to outbursts and threats. This is the person who calmly solves issues by identifying the problem and suggesting solutions to resolve them. The end result is that problems have been worked out and everyone still feels ok. Teaching is all about establishing strong communication by asking questions, listening to verbal and non-verbal signals, giving clear instructions and providing feedback. All students want and need to know how they are doing and why they are not being successful. They will continually ask you why they have to do things your way. Communicating effectively will encourage learning.

Find the driver who is patient... with dispatchers, customers, other drivers and management. An essential skill for every

instructor is lots of patience. There is no limit to the number of times an instructor will have to repeat, repeat and repeat again. Then just when you think they've got it, they'll forget and you'll have to again repeat. A new skill is a weak skill. It requires constant practice and constant reminders. Yet students will not remember how many times they have asked the question or how often the instructor has repeated the instructions. Believe it or not, this calm and patient individual is currently in your workplace.

Look for the driver who is interested in the performance of the new drivers in your company. And it's probably also the person who has an innate need to 'give back'. They were helped by someone in the past to get that first job and as a result they have been successful in their career. Now they want to help and contribute to their industry in a different way. When you find drivers who possess the qualities and behaviours of a natural teacher, give them some help to get started. Provide them with teaching materials and tools so they can learn about this new profession. And pay them right. It's a hard job with many risks and challenges but it's also a very rewarding one.

Louise Philbin

Co-founder and Education Director
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Driver Turnover

I don't understand it. Why does it happen? What is the cause? What can we do to fix it? Whose fault is it anyway? Why is a driver so unhappy that they willingly spend up to two weeks of income to change jobs?

What a way to start an article - with a bunch of questions that I don't have answers to. If you want the answers, you are not going to find them here. But if you want to help me try and understand this problem, then let us work on it together. Because I just don't get it. I previously had a good job and quit after several years thinking that I was going to get a better one. But it never seems to work out like that. I'm not a truck driver anymore but in my personal life, I still change jobs. Well not anymore now that I'm self-employed. I have no one to complain to about my boss. So why should a driver be any different?

I really want to understand this issue. It costs our economy way more money than we can imagine. If a Driver or Owner Operator takes up to two weeks to find new work and get going with paid miles for the new company, what did that cost the driver and their family? For a driver it is about \$2,000 and for an Owner Operator it is somewhere around \$5,000 for the two weeks. Then there is the company. Studies show that it costs \$13,000 to hire/replace a driver/operator. That is a big hit to the company's bottom line. So whether you are a truck driver or a company owner, it is a big hit to the finances.

So why does it happen I ask? Before we can do anything about turnover, we have to

understand the 'Why'. Some people with jobs other than truck driving stay at one employer their whole working career. Others, like me, change jobs every 5 to 15 years. But for truck drivers, there is a large number that switch employment every two years. Here in Canada our turnover is much better than our southern friends but still, we have very high turnover and it costs us dearly. So why? What makes the driver spend a week or two of income to change jobs?

Here are some of the things I have been told and/or I believe to be true - but am I correct?

- The recruiter lied to me and didn't tell me the whole truth.
- I need more home time.
- My family/wife/husband needs me.
- I quit for more money at my new company.
- The dispatcher doesn't have any respect for me and the other drivers.
- The owner is making all the money and they are not sharing.
- Shippers/Receivers are making me wait too much and I don't get paid while I'm waiting.
- The equipment is terrible and not maintained.
- I don't like the shipping lanes the company has.
- The company tells me to break the laws and fudge my logbooks.
- They keep changing policies. For example, they are now making us go to Electronic Logging Devices.

Most of the above reasons are from the driver perspective. But drivers also get fired. The companies that I have been speaking to are telling me that the main reasons that they encourage drivers and operators to leave are:

- The driver had an at-fault collision
- The driver got another ticket (violation)
- The driver doesn't follow directions and instructions from dispatch very well.
- The driver is always leaving late for the delivery.
- The driver yelled at my customer.
- The driver fails to call into dispatch as per policy.
- The driver is an idiot. (This is my personal favorite. If this was a true statement, then the driver should never have been hired and I have serious concerns about the company's recruiting practices!)

When you last quit your job, do you remember why? If so, fire me off an email and let me know as I would really like to hear from you. If you are in management, please tell me why you dismissed your last several drivers. I'm interested and I want to hear from drivers and companies. I want to understand this issue so that we, as an industry, can start to fix it.

Stay safe out there.

Chris Harris

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