

# Steven E. Smith

## Chief Operating Officer ■ Director of Operations

### Global Manufacturing, Operations, & Distribution

---

- **Deliver Operational Performance & Profitability**
- **Improve Productivity, Efficiency & Quality**
- **Enhance Customer Fulfillment & Relationships**

Executive career in operations and manufacturing management spans world-class enterprises, multinational manufacturing organizations, and entrepreneurial ventures, with consistent success in improving performance and profitability. National and global customers have included Johnson & Johnson, Kraft, Wal-Mart, Target, Kmart, Tesco, BHS, Carrefour, and Prima.

Extensive International and Pacific Rim experience. Accustomed to directing cross-border operations and managing multicultural workforces. Lived and worked in Hong Kong.

Frequently chosen to attack complex, mission-critical business issues. Proficient in leveraging organizational resources — people, capital, plants, suppliers, shippers, strategic partners — to reduce / control costs, improve operational performance, and meet customer demands.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

---

Characterized by senior management and peers as a strong, decisive, hands-on manager — analytical, innovative, dedicated, quick thinking, and tenacious — with exceptional problem-solving and decision-making skills. Known as a talented team builder, motivator, mentor, and leader — as proven by commitment and loyalty demonstrated by cross-functional teams. Abilities include:

- P&L and Operations Management
- Startup, Restructure & Culture Change
- Multi-Site Manufacturing Management
- Production, Throughput & Quality Improvement
- Global & Multi-Channel Distribution
- Supplier Negotiations & Relations
- Global Sourcing & Supply Chain
- Domestic & International Sourcing
- Executive Decision Support
- Contract Manufacturing
- IT Strategies, Solutions & Projects
- Internal & External Customer Relations

## EXECUTIVE EXPERIENCE

---

### VICE PRESIDENT

Operations, Headquarters, 1995 to 2003

Commonwealth Toy & Novelty Company, Inc., New York, NY

1993 to February 2003

### MANAGING DIRECTOR

Far East Operations, Hong Kong, 1993 to 1995

*Executive team member, reporting directly to the president of this \$60 million international manufacturer and distributor of specialty products marketed to major retailers and mass merchants including Wal-Mart, Target, Kmart, ToysRUs, Tesco, BHS, Carrefour, and Prima throughout North America, Europe, South Africa, Australia, and Japan.*

### Global Operations & Supply Chain Overview

Held P&L accountability for multinational manufacturing organization, overseeing up to twelve contract manufacturing facilities and sales / operations support offices in Hong Kong and China. Administered / controlled all Far East budget line items for office leases, office equipment, computers / LAN's, staff (acquisition, training, retaining, motivating), materials, and product manufacture / shipment from Asia. Direct / indirect reports in Hong Kong, China, and Shanghai included multinational staff of two operations managers, one senior manager, and 30+ merchandisers, customer liaisons, and quality control / shipping staff.

Directed materials sourcing and supply chain activities — sourcing vendors, negotiating price, administering contracts, analyzing vendor quality / performance, and managing supplier relationships / payments. Approved production schedule, tracked / analyzed daily throughput, and intervened to resolve issues. Played frontline role in building and managing 15 to 20 critical relationships with key accounts' Asian offices. Worked with local shipping staff to ensure on-time booking and delivery.

Set-up Shanghai area, including all factory relationships. Initiated and developed associations with two major factories in Guangdong Province in South China. Managed relationships with existing contract manufacturers / vendors in Thailand, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

## *Executive Experience / Commonwealth / continued*

Worked with president to reduce up-front design costs and improve gross margins from 5% to 25%, while offering lower sell prices to large discounters (Wal-Mart, Tesco). Set up Wal-Mart quotes database, allowing Commonwealth to issue clean quotations. Consistently involved key aspects of product development and inside sales force activities including pre-offer product reviews, (cost issues, “size-value” relationship, and competitive analysis).

Visited factories daily to review samples / production status. Toured production floors to solve quality problems, improve design, and standardize output to consistent excellence. Handled majority of packaging design and suggested many changes to save cost and ship a quality product with good shelf value. Worked with testing labs in US and Asia. Believe that “there is always a better way.”

## **REPRESENTATIVE RESULTS**

**Credited with personal contributions to improving enterprise decision support, internal / external customer service, profitability, and operational performance through a series of decisive management interventions including:**

- *Delivered 10% improvement in profit margins and 25% reduction in COGS* by transferring production from Thailand to China, controlling materials costs, and systematically closing offices in South Korea (1995), Sri Lanka (1998) and Thailand (1999).
- *Improved staff performance in critical areas* — sourcing, negotiating, scheduling, time management, shipping document generation — through effective training / cross-training, time management, coaching, and motivation.
- *Worked with outside consultants to design, design, develop, and deploy enterprise-wide Order Tracking System* delivering access / transfer of critical production, finance, and customer information among all remote offices and corporate headquarters. Project-managed creation of user manual and installation at corporate headquarters in New York, and then in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Shanghai.
- *Raised profit margin 8%* on single \$4 million order through effective materials sourcing. Located lower cost sources of materials without changing performance or quality.
- *Redesigned commercial (Microsoft Access) software* with customized inventory, quoting, order entry, and tracking features to meet the specific needs of key customers — Target and Wal-Mart, and ToysRUs.

## **PRESIDENT**

**Soft Paws, Inc., Visalia, CA  
1990 to 1993**

*Top-ranking executive holding full decision-making authority for all aspects of business operations — strategic planning, P&L, corporate finance, product design / development, sales, marketing, staffing, customer relations — for national toy supplier. Developed, produced, and marketed product line to the premium and incentive customer segment.*

## **REPRESENTATIVE RESULTS**

**Contributed strong leadership to an entrepreneurial venture doing business in a highly competitive marketplace.**

- *Authored and executed business plan. Managed every aspect of operational startup* — strategic planning, financing, organizational infrastructure, new business development, targeted marketing, product distribution, alliance / relationship building.
- *Secured contracts to supply premium products to nationally recognized manufacturer brands* — Kraft Foods (macaroni and cheese “Dinosaur”), Johnson & Johnson (Raid “bug”), Proffitt’s (annual Christmas promotion) — and incentive / identity items for major corporations.

Note: sold business to accept recruitment offer from CEO of Commonwealth.

## *Executive Experience, continued*

### **PLANT MANAGER / SENIOR MANAGER, QC**

Lindsay California Plant

**Dakin, Inc., Brisbane, CA**

**1977 to 1990**

*Performed plant management and quality control functions within high-growth — \$35 million to \$200+ million over 13 years — manufacturing, sales, and distribution enterprise (branded products sold to Hallmark and other leading giftware retailers).*

Held \$6 million annual P&L accountability for operations in a high-volume (\$10 million annual wholesale value) domestic manufacturing facility (five-day / two-shift job-shop environment) and provided on-site oversight (with frequent travel) to contract manufacturers in Mexico and Haiti.

Led team of six managers (production floor, shift, office) and provided indirect oversight to up to 250 non-union production personnel. Managed and performed all materials purchasing, using JIT philosophy. Reported to VP Manufacturing.

### **REPRESENTATIVE RESULTS**

#### **Recognized for personal contributions to profitability, operational performance, product quality, and customer fulfillment.**

- *Chosen by senior executive team to manage startup of new factories* in Philippines, Brazil, Greece, and Australia — production floor design, capital equipment acquisition, materials purchasing, and staffing.
- *Member of M&A team performing* site inspections and due diligence of potential acquisition candidates.
- *Led Lindsay plant to rank as #1 in the company* for quality, year-over-year through consistent and thorough process control.
- *Improved profit margins from 25% to 35%* by better controlling materials usage and scrap; reducing direct labor cost by paying incentive rather than fixed wages; lowering overhead; and estimating up front costs more accurately.

### **EARLY EXPERIENCE**

---

*Managed production scheduling for multinational manufacturing organization — factories in Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong — producing globally recognized branded products. Demonstrated skills in product design, development and planning.*

### **REPRESENTATIVE RESULTS**

#### **Advanced through technical and managerial positions with the Mattel Corporation.**

- *Key player in \$6 million / 5.7 million piece order commitment and fulfillment* of branded item for Shell Oil. Evaluated tooling and schedules in Hong Kong factory, selecting models / colors by reviewing tooling availability for inactive models. Coordinated tooling refurbishment and Hong Kong production schedule. Shipped the order on time and on budget.
- *Negated inefficient system and lengthy bottlenecks that slowed development time* by convincing firm's customs department to pursue and obtain US Customs exception to import pre-production samples for review at headquarters.

### **EDUCATION**

---

#### **MBA — Concentration in Quantitative Studies**

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, Seattle, WA

#### **BS — Business Administration**

FRESNO STATE COLLEGE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, Fresno, CA