



**STUDENT ACTIVATION**

# Strategic Sourcing Specialist

CHS is the largest farmer-owned cooperative in the United States and one of the biggest names in **agronomy**, energy, and grain processing. The process of finding and purchasing equipment, managing supplies and costs, and negotiating for materials and products can seem almost impossible. As a **Strategic Sourcing Specialist**, the goal is to reduce costs and delivery time and to improve the **supply chain** or purchasing operations of a company or business.

**Supply Chain:** A network between a company, its suppliers, and its end users.

## STRATEGIC SOURCING SPECIALIST

A **Strategic Sourcing Specialist** makes sure that the company is getting a product that they want at a price that is reasonable. They leverage the key suppliers in their industry to get the best materials and equipment. Their job duties include working with suppliers and vendors to negotiate contracts, and improving processes related to receiving parts and inventory. They often work with upper-level management to ensure the supply chains align with the company’s needs. They do periodic business reviews with key suppliers to ensure the business’ needs are met and that there is a clear expectation on both sides. These professionals can also be purchasing managers, so they deal with the request, the purchase order, and the invoice.<sup>1</sup>

## IS STRATEGIC SOURCING SPECIALIST A GOOD CAREER FOR ME?

| Me  | Strategic Sourcing Specialist   |
|---|---|
| I am organized, detail-oriented, and enjoy planning daily activities or events. | Strategic Sourcing Specialists are organized individuals whose job requires them to be detail-oriented. |
| Math is a subject that interests me, and I like to use data to solve problems.  | Strategic Sourcing Specialists use math and data to ensure business goals and needs are met.            |
| I am a great communicator and collaborator.                                     | Strategic Sourcing Specialists are strong communicators who negotiate with suppliers and vendors.       |

| How does this career help me?  | How does this career help the world?  |
|--|---|
| <p>When you visit a supermarket or grocery store, you can see the impact a Strategic Sourcing Specialist makes. They are responsible for ensuring that parts and products are available to keep the supply chain moving; the result is the abundance of goods available to consumers. <sup>2</sup></p> | <p>A healthy supply chain ensures that people around the world have access to goods and services they need to live healthy lives.</p> |

| What are some similar careers?  |
|---|
| <p><b>Inventory Control Specialists</b> manage inventory, equipment, and merchandise. They use their organizational skills to ensure efficiency within the company or organization they work for.</p> <p><b>Sourcing Managers</b> manage supplier relationships while creating and implementing sourcing strategies. They ensure quality assurance of products and collaborate across multiple teams to ensure product development is safe and stays on track.</p> <p><b>Supply Chain Analysts</b> use data to improve efficiency and reduce costs. This data helps them identify ways to improve the supply chain.</p> |

Here are some ways to practice the skills to be a successful **Strategic Sourcing Specialist**:

- Consider shadowing an inventory specialist or accountant at an organization in your community to observe how they use their skills every day.
- Ask your parent, guardian, or caregiver if you can help with your family budget or accounting. You might be able to identify ways that your family can be more efficient with their spending and saving.
- Research the global supply chain and analyze the movement of goods and services throughout the world. What happens when the supply chain has a disruption? How are people around the world impacted?

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/business-and-financial/purchasing-managers-buyers-and-purchasing-agents.htm#tab-4>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/career/Strategic-Sourcing-Specialist/What-Is-How-to-Become>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.salary.com/research/salary/listing/strategic-sourcing-specialist-salary>