



Introduction

The word 'Logistics' has started to creep into more common usage in our spoken and written language. Phrases such as "Logistically it's very difficult" or "He works for a Logistics company" can often be heard. But what does this word 'Logistics' mean?

The term 'Logistics' is perceived differently by different people; ranging from transport to warehousing, operations management or distribution and storage; parts procurement; even the management of the complete supply chain and many many more.

The word dates back many centuries and is known to have been used often by Napoleon in the organisation of his various battles across Europe. He considered it key to his many successes and losses.

Even the many dictionaries that exist for the English language are unable to agree on a single definition for the word 'Logistics'. The definition that best covers the everyday usage of the word is

'The careful organisation of the details of a complex activity'

If we take this definition, we see that we are all, to a greater or lesser extent, involved in a Logistics activity. Be it in the work environment, at home or even during our leisure activities, we can all relate to this meaning of the word 'Logistics'.

However complex an activity may be, we have to be able to break it down into more straightforward issues in order for us to be able to manage them.

The use of a simple tool helps us to do just that. The easier the tool is, the more likely it is to be applied and thus bring about improvements in the organisation of these complex activities.

If it is used often enough, it becomes part our way of thinking, it becomes our mindset.

When logistical issues are analysed, it becomes apparent that they boil down to the same 8 elements. To resolve any logistical problem, it is important to ensure that these 8 elements are fully analysed. To do this effectively, the same 8 elements must be reapplied over and over again. It becomes a repetitive check until no detail is left unverified. It becomes a reflex to systematically analyse the 8 elements in detail.

These 8 elements are known as

The 8 P of a Logistics Mindset.