

*Prompt: Think of a personal or public action, behavior, or activity that you engage in on a daily to weekly basis that has a local and perhaps regional or even global impact. Explain the reasons for your actions, the local or global consequences, and the challenges you encounter as you sustain or attempt to change what you do.*

When I think of a personal or public action, behavior or activity that I engage in on a daily to weekly basis that has a local and perhaps a regional or even global impact, the first thing that comes to mind is my professional job responsibilities. I work in a corporate office of one of the largest healthcare systems in the nation which encompass multiple hospitals, physician offices, clinics, hospices and alternative care facilities. We own facilities in seven different states throughout the nation. We employ over 43,000 people and service the people living in the general communities of the hospital systems.

My job responsibilities include working with large GPO (Group Purchasing Organizations) such as Consorta and Healthtrust. We manage the large contracts for medical supplies, facility maintenance, office supplies, office equipment, implants, food and nutrition, capital equipment, capital spend for building development, lab services, imaging and radiology services, custom contracts and operating room necessities for the hospital systems that are under our corporate purchasing management. I work with the manufacturers, vendors and distributors that represent the negotiated contracts under the Group Purchasing Organizations that we are a member of.

The reason that I believe my actions of job responsibilities make an impact locally and throughout the globe is because I negotiate and implement the major contracts for best pricing, terms and accessibility of products for the entire scope of our hospital systems. The manufacturers and vendors are not limited to being located within the United States. Many of our partnered vendors are located throughout different parts of the world. For instance, medical latex free gloves that are being used are manufactured in China. Another example of a manufacturer that is globally positioned is paper products. Many of the paper products are imported from China and South America.

When I negotiate better pricing, terms, freight, and other contract information, I reduce the amount of spend that a hospital system needs to pay to the manufacturers and vendors. By reducing the dollars that a hospital system needs to pay through the accounts payable system, we can save a large amount of money that can be spent to better service the people of the communities that use our hospitals, clinics, hospices, and alternative care facilities. When we save money, we are able to invest the money in better services, updated medical equipment, renovated facilities, and new construction. This benefits the general population and the charities that we support. Saving money on negotiated contracts affects improved patient care in many ways.

When I contact a vendor, manufacturer or distributor regarding the implementation of a major contract, I may include additional price leveling or negotiating based on heavy volume of product usage. Often, I speak directly to the National Account Manager and begin the communication process for open negotiation of pricing. Depending on the

annual usage of the products nationwide throughout our hospital systems, I am able to combine every facilities usage to show high volumes being used and have better leverage for reducing the pricing of the contracted items. I encourage the manufacturers and vendors to assist us with standardizing product base. As an example, instead of using fifteen different cotton balls, standardizing to the major sizes only reduces the number of different vendors being used. We may end up with only six major cotton ball sizes from one large vendor instead of the fifteen sizes from ten different vendors. There is a lot of negotiating power when the volume supports lower costs.

Along with negotiating product pricing, I am able to lower costs of freight for bulk purchase buys. I have the option of offering a blanket purchase order to a vendor for products that will be purchased by a hospital facility annually in exchange for lower prices and possibly no charge freight. There is a lot of heavy competition within the vendor and manufacturer arena so working for one of the largest healthcare systems has multiple advantages.

In summary, my current job responsibilities directly impacts local and global consequences. Due to the fact that the organization that I work for is so very large, there are few challenges other than a massive amount of additional negotiating and standardizing that still needs to be done. A very heavy workload that is thoroughly enjoyable and exciting.

