What Makes a Successful Shipper of Choice?

In a world where we constantly mention the “Amazon Effect” and enhanced customer service, it’s important to remember that customer service goes both ways. Carriers ask what does the shipper (customer) want, but as shippers we should also ask how to be a better partner with our carriers who keep our products moving accurately, efficiently and in a timely manner. As recently discussed at the TCC Business Development Symposium, we should ask “why”, and in this instance, why a carrier chooses one shipper as a “Shipper of Choice” vs. another.

Inbound Logistics listed 10 ways to be carrier friendly in a 1/27/16 article, “Becoming a Shipper of Choice”. The following list gives us some good ideas about what a carrier looks for in a preferred shipper:

1. Offer a flexible delivery window
2. Pay invoices on time
3. Give complete orders
4. Provide options for late drivers
5. Supply a drop and hook program
6. Streamline driver arrival and departure times
7. Avoid micromanaging carriers under contract
8. Use a web-based portal for appointments
9. Establish standing appointments for regular deliveries
10. Treat carriers like customers

A strong relationship between the carrier and shipper is key to a successful business and the timely movement of goods. There are times when freight is plentiful and others when freight is tight, so it’s important to build a strong relationship for the long-term vs. using a short-term strategy. Metrics used to measure not only the carrier performance, but that of the shipper, are important in this process.

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