



# JaMICHAEL SMITH

**COMPANY:** MARS Petcare, Inc.

**TITLE:** Commercial Operations Analyst

**TRAINING ORGANIZATION OR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY:**

Middle Tennessee State University (B.S.)  
Lipscomb University (M.S.)  
Information Systems

**CERTIFICATION/DEGREE:**

Value-Up Certified Problem Solver (equivalent to Six-Sigma) V-FAST facilitator (equivalent to Six-Sigma)



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**Q:** How did you select your certification program or college major?

**A:** My bachelors degree was received in another field that does not relate to Supply Chain/logistics, however my family had a big impact on me getting into SCM due to working in the Automotive industry for over 25 years. The last 5 years I spent my career at Nissan Motor manufacturing plant as Supply Chain Analyst and coordinated ground and air freight to receive material just in time for production. I have since transitioned to a new company MARS petcare corporate office where I am the Commercial Operations Analyst.

**Q:** What was the biggest influence in your selection of career pathway?

**A:** My biggest influence in my selection of my career pathway involved several co-workers as well as my mentor. My mentor helped me with personal and career growth opportunities to gain knowledge and to see the challenges faced internally and externally in Supply Chain Management. It involves a lot of team work and multitasking to get the job done!

**Q:** What attracted you to the transportation industry?

**A:** My attraction with transportation came with my primary job as a Supply Chain Analyst. It involved me communicating daily to internal transportation as well as transportation freight teams.

**Q:** What is your favorite aspect of your job?

**A:** My favorite aspect of my job is communicating and solving issues that arise. Everyday is different, and it involves analyzing different scenarios to ensure a countermeasure is put in place to avoid any disruptions in the future.

**Q:** How do you/your company make a positive impact on society/our community?

**A:** MARS Petcare corporate is very involved in the Middle Tennessee area with being a pet friendly work environment. MARS is a company that gives back and helps pets find a safe home after adopting.

**Q:** What's the most interesting thing you have been able to do in your professional career?

**A:** I would say working with cross-functional teams within the industry such as Logistics, Engineering, Manufacturing, Design Change Coordination, and purchasing to develop new tools to help all departments as well as our vendors with routing changes and load plans for freight.

**Q:** What makes you get up each morning excited about your profession?

**A:** I believe the ability to take strategic challenges and investigate the root causes to solve a problem. Being successful in your profession involves challenges and improving daily not only as an individual but also as a team.

**Q:** If you could go back to high school and select any elective course to take that would have better prepared you for college, what would it be?

**A:** I think I would have picked a leadership course, because being in the work industry you have to adapt to different personalities. One of the most important aspects with working with Supply Chain Management is being able to listen and communicate as needed and having a creative mind with solving issues.

**Q:** What advice would you share with students or anyone considering your profession?

**A:** I would recommend starting out in retail or customer service profession because it will help you interact with different people and address situations professionally. Once you accept a job in Supply Chain you will have the communication aspect of the job and working with different personalities.

