

# ISM<sup>®</sup>'s 2025

## Executive Salary Guide

A Strategic Guide for Workforce Planning



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Attracting and retaining top supply chain talent requires more than just competitive salaries, it demands a deep understanding of what professionals truly value in their careers. As leaders prepare for 2026 budget planning, aligning compensation strategies with employee priorities is crucial for building resilient, high-performing teams.

The **Institute for Supply Management® (ISM®) 2025 Salary Survey** offers critical benchmarks on executive and leadership pay trends, helping organizations ensure their compensation packages remain competitive. This report provides actionable insights into salary expectations, bonus structures, long-term incentives, and employment decision factors shaping the future of supply chain leadership.

### Among this year's findings:

- VP-level salaries saw a 12% increase, now averaging \$257,823.
- Director salaries slightly declined (-2%) to \$182,973, while Manager salaries surged 12% to \$121,406.
- Certified professionals earn significantly more, with CPSM® holders averaging \$150,151.
- Work/life balance, job satisfaction, and supportive leadership rank alongside wages and benefits as the top factors influencing employment decisions.
- AI adoption is shaping executive priorities, with 51% of supply chain professionals agreeing that AI will enhance job performance.

This guide serves as a strategic resource for supply chain executives navigating hiring, retention, and salary negotiations in a shifting talent landscape. By integrating industry benchmarks with employee priorities, organizations can position themselves as employers of choice, ensuring long-term success and workforce stability in 2026 and beyond.

# Key Salary Trends for 2025

Below is a summary of compensation data across supply management positions, offering essential benchmarks for hiring, retention, and salary negotiations:

## Executive-Level Compensation Overview

Position	Average Salary	% Change YoY
Vice President & Above	\$257,823	+12%
Director	\$182,973	-2%
Manager	\$121,406	+12%
Experienced Practitioner (9+ years)	\$109,908	+10%
Emerging Practitioner (≤8 years)	\$74,364	-15%

Executives at VP-level saw double-digit growth, reinforcing the value of leadership expertise in an evolving supply chain landscape. Directors experienced a slight salary dip, while managers saw a strong 12% increase, signaling greater investment in mid-level leadership.

# Salary Benchmarks by Certification

Earning an ISM certification continues to provide long-term salary benefits. Below is a breakdown of average salaries based on certification status:

Certification	Average Salary
Certified Professional in Supply Management® (CPSM®)	\$150,151
Certified Professional in Supplier Diversity® (CPSD®)	\$140,724
Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP)	\$113,549
Six Sigma or Lean Six Sigma	\$125,824

## Gender Pay Gap in Supply Chain

While supply chain salaries have increased overall, gender-based disparities persist:

Category	Men	Women
Average Salary	\$144,384	\$107,878 (-4%)
Median Salary	\$134,356	\$96,500 (+5%)
Top 5% Earners	\$381,333	\$310,000 (-16%)

- Men's salaries increased by 3%, while women's salaries declined by 4%.
- Median compensation for women rose by 5%, but top female earners saw a 16% drop.
- The gender gap widens at senior levels, with VP+ men earning significantly more than their female counterparts.

These disparities highlight the need for equitable pay structures and greater representation of women in executive roles.

# Employment Decision Factors

The top factors influencing job decisions among supply chain professionals include:

- 1. **Wages**
- 2. **Work/life balance**
- 3. **Job satisfaction**
- 4. **Benefits package**
- 5. **Supportive management**

Understanding what drives retention helps supply chain executives shape competitive offers, ensuring both financial and workplace incentives meet employee expectations.

# Perception of AI Adoption

Supply chain leaders are increasingly investing in AI-driven solutions to enhance efficiency and decision-making. Here's how supply chain professionals view AI's impact:

Statement	Agree
AI will help me be better at my job	51.4%
AI is a good investment of money and resources	49.1%
AI will improve supply chain productivity by 2025	41.0%
Some colleagues worry AI will displace them	35.4%

Executives recognize AI's potential to enhance productivity, but concerns about workforce displacement remain. AI-driven automation is expected to reshape supply chain operations, making data-driven decision-making a priority.

# 2026 Planning: Recommended Salary Ranges

To support budget planning and workforce strategy for 2026, ISM recommends supply chain leaders benchmark salaries using historical growth rates. Below are suggested pay ranges based on current salary trends and projected increases:

Position	Projected 2026 Salary Range
VP & Above	\$275,000 - \$290,000
Director	\$180,000 - \$200,000
Manager	\$125,000 - \$140,000
Experienced Practitioner (9+ years)	\$115,000 - \$125,000
Emerging Practitioner (≤8 years)	\$80,000 - \$90,000

These projections align with historical salary increases, ensuring competitive compensation strategies as organizations adapt to talent market shifts in 2026.

## Final Thoughts: Why This Data Matters

Supply chain leaders must continuously evaluate salary trends while also addressing the factors that matter most to employees from work/life balance and job satisfaction to competitive benefits and career advancement. This Executive Salary Guide serves as a strategic tool for organizations preparing for 2026 workforce planning, providing insights that help leaders attract, retain, and reward top talent.

By leveraging data-driven compensation strategies, executives can enhance team performance, strengthen employee engagement, and secure long-term success in an evolving supply chain landscape.

**ISM members receive full access to the comprehensive 2025 Salary Survey, packed with detailed industry benchmarks, bonus structures, certification impacts, and workforce trends to support informed decision-making. To unlock the full report, visit [ISM's Salary Survey Research Center](#).**