

# Fleet & careers

Carve out a successful career in fleet by learning from the best in the business. It might be just the helping hand you need

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# What makes a great fleet manager?

It's a complex and varied role, but what separates a great fleet operator from a good one? *Andrew Ryan* asks *Fleet News Awards* winners for their opinion



## SARAH GILDING

**Role:** Head of vehicle fleet management, South Yorkshire Police.

**Fleet News Awards CV:** Fleet of the year 251-1,000 vehicles, 2015.

**SG:** Great fleet managers need to have a number of qualities.

You need the ability to multi-task: as a fleet manager you are constantly juggling a

variety of demands from drivers, management and suppliers, to mention just a few. The art is not dropping the ball and keeping the fleet on the road, while managing costs, performance, etc.

You need to be adaptable to change. Fleet is constantly

developing with new technology, legislation, reductions in staff, budget cuts and requirements to meet savings targets. You must be able to not only keep up with the pace of change, but be ahead of the game.

A fleet manager needs excellent communication skills. Being able to communicate at all levels, both verbally and in writing, is paramount.

Great fleet managers also need leadership skills. The ability to lead and inspire a team toward a common goal is important. You also need to be a good decision-maker. As a fleet manager, you are called upon to make a variety of decisions, some on the spot.

It is important to have the confidence to take those decisions and stand by them.

■ Find out Sarah Gilding's fleet achievements in *The Last Word*, page 78.



## DAVID OLIVER

**Role:** Procurement manager, Red Bull.

**Fleet News Awards CV:** Fleet of the year up to 250 vehicles, 2014.

**DO:** Being a great fleet manager requires a wide variety of different qualities. But the ability to be curious and agile enough to react to so many changes from your business, its employees,

manufacturers and legislative and environmental requirements means you can keep your fleet at the forefront of best practice and future thinking. Having a clear understanding of your organisation's aims, your drivers'

wants and needs and the skills to marry these into a workable fleet-managed vision that you want to 'sell' to the senior management means you also need to be credible and influence all levels of your organisation.

To do this, a fleet manager should always be inquisitive and challenging of both his or her self and the raft of suppliers that help them deliver the vision.

An ability to see the driver, the journey and the vehicle as completely interlinked and not just cars and fuel will ensure you take a holistic view of fleet management, which in my experience is easier to translate into a strategy that the board will buy into.



## DALE EYNON

**Role:** Head of fleet services, Environment Agency.

**Fleet News Awards CV:** Fleet manager of the year, 2015, green fleet of the year, 2015.

**DE:** Having the right team of people around you is vital to great fleet management, so make sure you are recruiting, selecting and training the right people: don't

think you can do it all yourself.

I also think fleet managers need to be able to constantly look to the future and prepare themselves for what might be coming. It's not an industry that ever stays still, so someone's ability to look at the slightly bigger picture and look ahead and plan on that basis is an essential skill that you want to have.

In addition, an ability to manage suppliers is vital, although it's not an area you can get a lot of training for. Procurement will get a contract for you, but actually managing that supplier throughout the course of that contract is quite challenging, so you need to be very good at managing contracts.



### RORY MORGAN

**Role:** Head of logistics support - Western Europe, Iron Mountain.  
**Fleet News Awards CV:** Fleet of the year - up to 250 vehicles, 2015.

**RM:** Great fleet managers have the ability to embrace change and the exploration of opportunities to enhance the fleet, its drivers and the business.

They need to be open-minded regarding alternatives and/or new technology, but also have the capability to understand and take decisions based on their potential and if they deliver value and benefit.

*"It is important that fleet managers strive for continual improvement and learn from other fleet managers"*

*Larry Bannon, NHS Blood & Transport*



### LARRY BANNON

**Role:** National fleet services manager, NHS Blood & Transplant.

**Fleet News Awards CV:** Fleet News hall of fame inductee, 2015.

**LB:** Great fleet management is the skill of getting the basics right for such things as vehicle selection, specification, maintenance, replacement programmes, driver training, fuel management, etc., and developing them to high standards. I

believe a great fleet manager develops what I call 'management stamina' to keep reproducing high standards over and over again in a sustained manner over a number of years.

This builds the experience to drive ongoing good fleet management; and good fleet management includes introducing initiatives and sharing these initiatives with the fleet industry. I think it is important that fleet managers strive for continual improvement and learn from other fleet managers. But what is also important is innovation: doing something that works, that no one else has done before. I like to think that the distinction between implementing good initiatives and developing innovative ideas is the difference between good fleet management and great fleet management.

# FleetNews PORTFOLIO

WHAT WE DO IN YOUR INDUSTRY

## Fleet News magazine

The leading business publication for the fleet sector, offering insight, analysis, best practice and in-depth profiles of fleets and suppliers every fortnight. But don't take our word for it: 96% of readers say *Fleet News* is the most useful fleet publication (*Fleet News* reader survey). Every issue is packed with information that helps companies to run efficient and effective fleets – and our readership of 16,000 is restricted to named decision-makers, running fleets of 10-plus vehicles.

## Commercial Fleet magazine

*Commercial Fleet* offers insight into the world of light commercial vehicles and trucks to provide operators with detailed analysis on key topics such as operations, safety, remarketing and the environment. Case studies in every issue provide best practice advice to help you to improve your efficiency. The magazine is supported by the [commercialfleet.org](http://commercialfleet.org) website and events.



## Fleet events

*Fleet News* events are the biggest and best in the sector. Our annual awards night attracts more than 1,500 people; the FN50 Dinner sees 950 leasing, manufacturer, rental and supplier companies networking; Congress and *Commercial Fleet* Summit provide insight into key areas of fleet operation; monthly roundtables enable 10-15 fleets to discuss issues and share solutions.



## Driving Business magazine

This quarterly magazine is sent to managing directors and finance directors at 25,000 small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that are running fewer than 50 vehicles. Focusing on the key elements of running cars and vans, *Driving Business* provides practical advice to reduce cost and improve safety with a minimum of time and effort.

## Websites and newsletters

The *Fleet News* website is an extensive library of best practice advice, fleet case studies, news and tools. Compare car and van running costs, check how much tax employees will pay and find out which models use the least fuel with our easy-to-use tools. We also send *Ignition*, a monthly newsletter which contains car reviews and interviews not included with our print magazine.

## Fleet Leasing magazine

*Fleet Leasing* provides insight and analysis to board level executives, senior management and regional sales staff at contract hire and leasing companies. Its objective is to inform and educate about fleet trends, new models and technological developments, once a quarter, supported by a website regularly updated with the latest leasing news.

## Bespoke publications

Magazines, supplements, brochures and digital products are produced for commercial partners. These bespoke publications inform fleets about companies and topics relevant to their business. They include manufacturer and supplier reports, in which *Fleet News* journalists interview key personnel to unearth the developments of interest to fleet operators.



# 4 steps to achieving boardroom buy-in

Even the best ideas may not be adopted if not properly researched and presented, but there are steps you can take to enhance their chances of success. *Andrew Ryan* reports

**G**aining boardroom buy-in is essential to the success of any new fleet initiative: if it isn't backed by directors, then even a ground-breaking idea will not be introduced.

In addition, differing company cultures and management structures mean there is no guaranteed way to achieve approval. For example, some fleet managers may report directly to the board or a board member.

A growing number of companies take a different approach. They have introduced fleet steering committees, which comprise board members and other key stakeholders.

These board members are given a remit by the executive management board when empower them to make decisions on behalf of the company.

Siemens has adopted this approach. Paul Tate, commodity manager at Siemens says: "That allows us to streamline a lot of decisions in relation to fleet, so it makes sure that there is not a lot of debating over the same subject."

"You usually find that having a smaller audience allows discussion to take place with the result that we get to the right decisions sooner rather than later."

However, while management structures may vary, there are key lessons which can be applied to the vast majority of businesses.

*"When you're developing proposals and want to influence change, it's about understanding employers' objectives"*

*Simon Boggis,  
CEVA Logistics*

1

## UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Simon Boggis, chief procurement officer for Ceva Logistics, believes it is vital for fleet decision-makers to know their audience. "Know what is driving your company and what your CEO is looking for," he says.

"Many of those areas will be shared by different companies such as the cost of investment, the return on investment and what the risks are, but each individual business will have different priorities."

"For example, my company is owned by private equity. Cash is absolutely king for us, but a blue-chip, cash-rich pharmaceutical company may have a different driver."

"When you are developing proposals and you want to influence change, it's about understanding what your employer's goals and objectives are."

Members of Siemens's fleet steering committee have access to a locked social network where they can see proposals before the date of a board meeting, as well as provide feedback and ask questions.

"We can use this feedback to gain an insight into what they're looking for, so we can under-





stand what makes them tick and play to those strengths," says Tate.

He adds that, while cost is obviously an important consideration for a business, it is not the only factor a board looks at.

"The subject of the proposal determines where the board's focus is," says Tate.

"It could be cost, driver welfare or driver pain in relation to 'is that not putting complexity in? Will the driver like that?'"

"Some parts of our fleet policy are an employee benefit and if we put forward a proposal affecting something we use as an incentive for employee retention, the board may ask if we are diluting that benefit."

## 2

### CONSULT WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The views of all key stakeholders should be obtained prior to the presentation of any proposal, says Geoffrey Bray, chairman of the Fleet Industry Advisory Group.

"Ultimately, their views will become the cornerstone of the subsequent tendering process and any contract that will define the long-term efficiency and effectiveness of the fleet operation," he says.

"Depending on the size of the organisation, this could include input from departments such as procurement, finance, HR, legal, health and safety and environment.

"Such an approach ensures the proposal process is both well run and has a clearly defined and auditable objective."

Siemens uses its locked social network to allow its fleet steering committee to access information about a proposal.

"We found that giving the steering group access to what we are going to present allows its members to look at it, digest it and raise questions, so when we go into the meeting it is down to business; it is slick and keeps the conversation flowing," says Tate.

Boggis says fleet managers need to take a holistic view when putting together a proposal.

"In procurement, you can't say 'I can't get on with finance' – you need to get on with finance, it is the key to everything in a company," he says.

"You need to demonstrate that you don't want to, for example, run finance or IT – but you all bring different skills to the table.

"You also need to remember that your priorities may not always be your colleagues' priorities.

"The guy running the operations delivering the service to the customer may be looking at customer satisfaction, while we in procurement are looking at cost efficiency and the supply chain.

"This means that at you need to understand at the very start of it what you are trying to achieve, what the board's goals and objectives are, and align your thinking as to how



*"The key thing is not to baffle people with science when presenting a proposal: keep it simple"*

*Paul Tate, Siemens*

you can help deliver on those company goals. Then you can become an influencer: you are part of the solution, not part of the problem."

## 3

### KEEP THE PROPOSAL SIMPLE

"The key thing is not to baffle people with science when presenting a proposal: keep it simple," says Tate.

"The board members may not be fleet experts, so you will need to put the proposal in a format which is easy to understand.

"It should be factual, it shouldn't leave any area open which can be challenged, and you should go fully armed for any potential question."

Tate sometimes sends his presentations to his director with responsibility for the supply chain ahead of a board meeting for him to look at.

"He speaks to the board more than I do, so he may want to add additional questions," he adds.

"You have to prepare in minute detail because if you lose credibility with that audience it is very difficult to get back.

"A lot of it is about building trust. At times, things may not go 100% the way you want them to, but you should carry out a full risk analysis and show them the risks of that particular proposal.

"This way, if things don't work out how you want them to, the board can say 'well, we did know the risks but there have been a lot more positives than negatives with this initiative.'"

David Oliver, procurement manager at Red Bull, who is responsible for running his company's fleet, says his approach is to be transparent and to give board members the essential information they need to enable them to make a decision.

"If they want to ask more questions or to find out more, they know that we will have the answers," he says.

"In the past we've almost overblown it to show our knowledge and expertise, and the board has said 'just give us the top line and we'll ask if it doesn't make sense.'"

## 4

### KEEP THE BOARD INFORMED OF THE PROJECT'S PROGRESS

Developing trust between the board and the fleet operation is vital to gaining backing for future initiatives, so it is important that they are kept up-to-date with the progress of initiatives that have been introduced.

"I think the worst thing you can do is put something together that looks brilliant on paper and then the board doesn't hear about it again," says Oliver.

"They can either assume it's gone well and the fleet manager hasn't blown their own trumpet, or it's gone very badly and they're trying to keep it quiet."



For other examples of best practice, go to: [fleetnews.co.uk/best-practice](http://fleetnews.co.uk/best-practice)





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# Life after fleet

What happens to fleet managers who move into other areas? *Andrew Ryan* asked four ex-operators what they're up to now – and what they've learned



## FROM FLEET MANAGER TO IN-CAB CAMERA SPECIALIST

**Name** Simon Marsh  
**Current role** Managing director of TeleMGA (part of Markerstudy Group)  
**First fleet management role** Managing director at SMS Temp Critical  
**Positions since then** Director of World Courier, director of World Courier (Ground Europe), managing director of Smartwitness

Two fatal motorway accidents within three years became the catalyst for Simon Marsh to launch a new business creating dashboard cameras to protect drivers.

The incidents, which resulted in the death of members of staff and other road users, occurred while he was involved with managing a truck and van fleet of around 200 vehicles, operated by SMS Temp Critical, a company he owned.

His drivers were cleared of blame, but the incident focused Marsh's mind on safety. "I sold the business but became very interested in

developing products and systems to improve road and vehicle safety," he says.

This led him to set up in-cab camera company Smartwitness, which won a *Fleet News* Award for best new product or service in 2014.

Marsh says the most important skills for his future he learned while managing a fleet were "understanding the daily risks that drivers and companies experience, driver behaviour and how technology can directly improve road safety and reduce the running costs of fleets".

He advises fleet managers interested in following in his footsteps to develop a wide range of skills, including understanding different aspects of compliance and risk management.

Marsh is now managing director of TeleMGA, where he is responsible for all in-vehicle technology such as 3G/4G cameras (VisionTrack), commercial telematics and Zenith's first response emergency device.

## FROM FLEET MANAGER TO CHIEF PROCUREMENT OFFICER

**Name** Simon Boggis  
**Current role** Chief procurement officer/executive vice-president global procurement  
**First fleet management role** National fleet manager for TNT International  
**Positions since then** Group fleet procurement manager at TNT Express, head of purchasing for TNT Logistics, project director procurement for TNT1.

Simon Boggis has progressed from earning £4,500 a year in his first role at TNT (now Ceva Logistics) in 1984 to being responsible for a global spend of £2.6 billion at the same company.

The chief procurement officer ran the company's fleet between 1991 and 2002, during which time it grew from 1,250 vehicles (500 cars, 750 commercials) to more than 7,000 (1,600 cars, 1,000 vans and 4,500 commercials).

During this time he won five *Fleet News* Awards and says the skills learned during this period have been invaluable in his later career.

"My grounding in running a fleet of vehicles, such as challenging specifications, looking at KPIs and measuring performance, has served me well," says Boggis.

"I wanted to buy more than just vehicles and I think that it's a transferable skill: I apply the very same logic now when I'm buying, say, computers as I did when buying vehicles."

Boggis says the first step for a fleet manager moving to a different role is to identify what they want to do. "When you've done this, go and seek out opportunities and show those managers or prospective employer that what you have done in fleet management can be transferred into many other areas.

"Organisations such as the Chartered Institute for Purchasing and Supply can be useful, but I think people skills are also important: the ability to communicate, have confidence in what you do, to be able to listen to others around you, and to have the ability to influence the company were all things that enabled me to create change."







## FROM FLEET MANAGER TO DIRECTOR

**Name** Charlie Shields

**Current role** Executive director of central operations for DPD Group UK

**First fleet management role** Procurement assistant, National Carrier Contract Services (became Exel Logistics)

**Positions since then** Ground transport manager for British Airways, fleet engineer for Argos, general manager transport for Parceline (now DPD Group), to general manager risk and transport, to director of risk and transport, director of hubs, linehaul, risk and transport

Charlie Shields's first fleet role was in 1986, when he became procurement assistant for National Carrier Contract Services.

Now, as executive director of central operations for DPD Group UK, he has around 2,000 people working with him, and budgets of about £200 million.

"I never really moved away from fleet management," says Shields. "I just moved up and took on additional areas of responsibility."

He adds: "Fleet is rarely enough to get you a main board role nowadays and you need to diversify or branch out if you want to break through the 'fleet glass ceiling.'"

Shields did a part-time degree in business and finance and recommends that fleet managers wishing to progress should gain qualifications in specific areas, for example accountancy.

"Supplier management is an important and under-appreciated skill set," he says. "I see lots of situations where failure or weakness in this area causes issues."

"Good negotiation skills also seem to be hard to find, and are important in many work situations."

"However, the most important factors in succeeding in a work location will be your personal skills."

"I meet many senior managers and aspiring senior managers and they all tend to be cut from similar cloth: they work very hard, they make things happen and do what they say they are going to do."

## FROM FLEET MANAGER TO CONSULTANT

**Name** Paul Holmes

**Current role** Managing director, Fleet Managers Friend

**First fleet management role** Fleet manager, British Gas

**Positions since then**

Commercial manager at AA Workshop Services, AA head of business developments, head of AA Risk Management Solutions, fleet director at AA DriveTech, strategic account director risk at FMG

Former *Fleet News* fleet manager of the year Paul Holmes had more than 30 years' industry experience



when he launched his own fleet management consultancy business last year.

When he won the honour in 1999, Holmes was fleet manager from British Gas, a position he held from 1997 to 2002 and which saw him run a fleet of 14,000-15,000 cars and light commercial vehicles.

As fleet manager, he played a key due diligence role during the £1.1 billion acquisition of The AA and, after promotion to a sales and business development role, he held a variety of positions in AA Group, culminating in fleet director of AA DriveTech until 2012.

That year, Holmes was recruited by FMG as its strategic account director to

create a new business division, but left last year when he set up Fleet Managers Friend.

So what skills acquired while Holmes was a fleet manager have been the most important to him since leaving that role?

"The application of pragmatic solutions, understanding the market I am now selling into and gaining an understanding of what is important to a fleet manager," says Holmes.

He advises fleet managers looking to move into a different type of role to be proud of their achievements. They should also be able to demonstrate that they can work well under pressure, that they are organised and that they deliver results, by either meeting or beating budgets.



*"Sharing ideas and best practice is crucial – you can learn a lot from other fleet managers"*

*Ged Raymond, Autoglass*

Five fleet managers, with more than 160 years of industry experience, are retiring this year. *Ben Rooth* asks each of them to share their knowledge

**F**leet decision-makers have access to more learning resources than ever before, but there are still plenty of occasions when, as the adage says, there is no substitute for experience.

This year will see five long-serving fleet managers with 160 years' experience retire from their posts, including Ged Raymond, who had been responsible for Autoglass's fleet for 35 years.

"Fleet is a challenging business to work in, but I wouldn't want to have been involved in anything else," he says. "It's been an adventure; it's been brilliant and I hate to have retired. But it will now be an unbelievable journey for someone else."

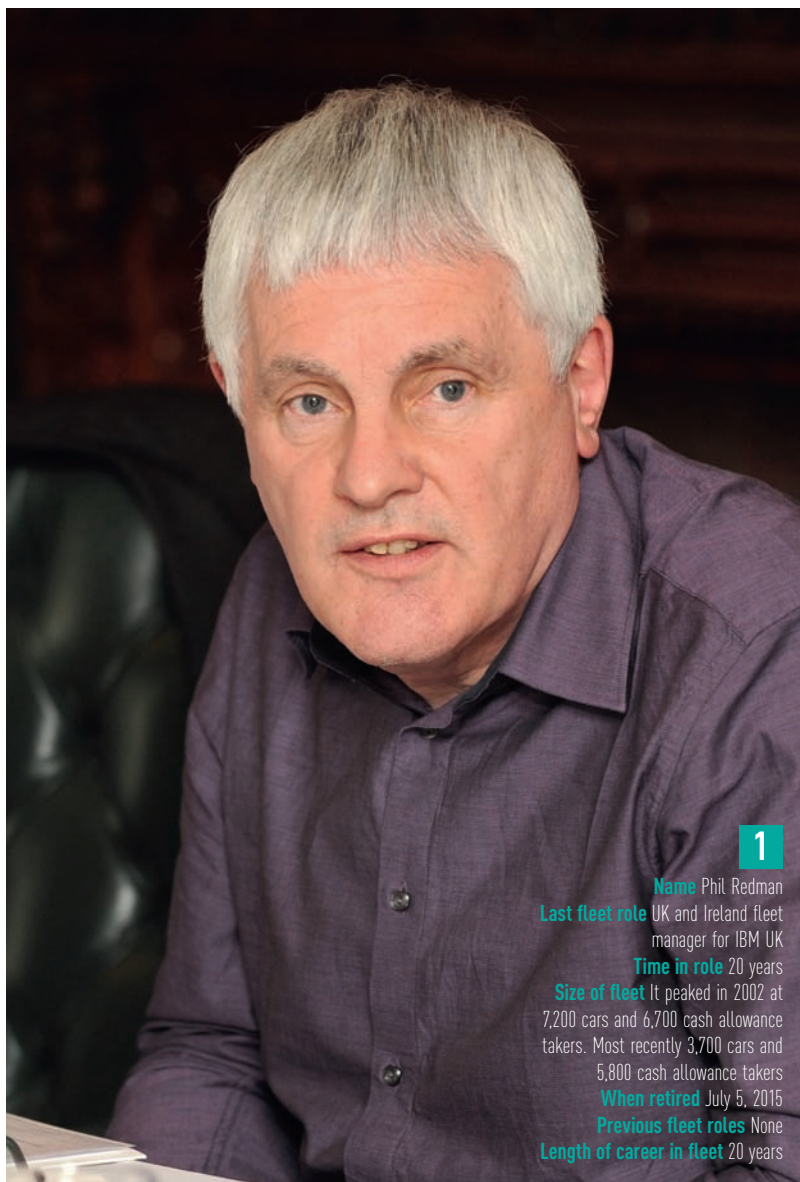
To provide help for less experienced fleet managers, we asked the retiring fleet operators about the lessons they have learned during their careers.

**How has the fleet manager's role changed during your career? What new skills have you had to learn?**

**Phil Redman:** The role has broadened considerably over the past 20 years – it now embraces HR, finance and purchasing functions. I became much more involved in policy setting and was very much aware of the need to keep abreast of legislative changes. In later years, I also found that there was a real need to get to know and work with European colleague fleet managers within the corporation.

**Dave Gill:** You have to be a tax expert now to advise drivers and keep a keen eye out for HMRC changes. You also need more appreciation of the HR side while also understanding risk assessments. So many people fly off into a blind panic and try and fix things they might not need to fix, but you just need to do the risk assessment. That part of the job has become much more formalised, rather than the days when health and safety just applied to people with chainsaws and the rest was unwritten common sense. Finally, you have to be an eco-warrior now. No choice. When I started this job I had pure Castrol R in my veins. Now I love BMW i3s. How times have changed.

**Paul Leaves:** I think that the biggest change for any fleet manager has been the arrival of computers and computerised technology. Over the past decade, vehicle diagnostics have taken what's possible in terms of identifying faults to a whole new level. It remains imperative for fleet managers to fully understand the tools that are now at their disposal.



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**Name** Phil Redman

**Last fleet role** UK and Ireland fleet manager for IBM UK

**Time in role** 20 years

**Size of fleet** It peaked in 2002 at 7,200 cars and 6,700 cash allowance takers. Most recently 3,700 cars and 5,800 cash allowance takers

**When retired** July 5, 2015

**Previous fleet roles** None

**Length of career in fleet** 20 years

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2



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**Rick Young:** The technological revolution that's unfolded over the past three decades has changed the way that fleet managers work beyond recognition. Computers have been at the heart of this revolution and the arrival of telematics has been of fundamental importance in terms of providing data. Make sure you learn how to use the technology – and what to do with that data.

**Ged Raymond:** I used to write everything on ledgers and the only entry that was in ink was a vehicle's registration number because everything else would change so I wrote it in pencil. There were no audit controls. Today everything is computerised, fully audited and the volume of data captured means vehicle utilisation and costs can be studied down to the nth degree. Fleet management is a lot easier today, although challenges remain and the job is more demanding due to the importance of compliance and ensuring vehicles are in pristine condition to present the right corporate image. But it is easier to look after 1,700 vehicles today than 300 back then, even though there is a lot more to do.

### Outsourcing has become more prevalent over the years – what advice would you give to fleet managers when dealing with suppliers?

**PR:** I am totally convinced that mutually agreed key performance indicators and service level agreements that reflect the needs of your business are key – in addition to a clear and unambiguous contract. Your needs will change, reflecting business strategy changes, so communicate these well in advance with your suppliers so they can help you implement effective changes. Meet regularly with suppliers and create an environment where the suppliers feel welcome to come forward with ideas to help you.

**DG:** Don't accept mediocrity. Expect the best. Work with your suppliers with positive suggestions if you need to criticise

**2 Name** Dave Gill  
**Last fleet role** Fleet manager has always been a sub-role of my main post as company accountant (1990-2003) and finance director (2003-2015) at JMC IT  
**Time in role** 25 years-ish in both roles  
**Size of fleet** Rising from around 10 in 1990 to 55 in 2015  
**When retired** July 31, 2015  
**Previous fleet roles** None – I worked for JMC for 32 years from 1983, in the accounts/fleet post from 1990  
**Length of career in fleet** 25 years

**3 Name** Ged Raymond  
**Last fleet role** Fleet manager at Autoglass  
**Time in role** 35 years  
**Size of fleet:** 1,700 (1,500 vans, 200 cars)  
**When retired** June 2015  
**Previous fleet roles** None  
**Length of career in fleet** 35 years

and see how responsive they are. I've been pleasantly surprised over the years how well our main providers listen and react; hats off to Lex Autolease who we've been with since about 1997.

**PL:** Personally, I'm not an advocate of outsourcing. I've always been of the opinion that it's possible to keep far greater control over what's happening within your fleet if you fully understand any issues that arise and subsequently deal with them yourself.

**RY:** Ensure that your supplier knows precisely what it is that you want to achieve and what their role is within that plan. Mutual trust with your supplier then needs to be established. And it's important to keep in regular contact with them.

**GR:** Build a good relationship with a supplier and trust each other. There is not much that I couldn't get done as a result of one telephone call.

Paperwork would follow, but suppliers trusted me and trust is important between people. Every fleet manager must develop trust with their own suppliers, but it has to be earned and that doesn't happen overnight.

### Where did you turn for extra information or training?

**PR:** I joined ACFO and gained valuable knowledge from the regional meetings and advice from experienced managers there. Stewart Whyte from Fleet Audits was particularly helpful and I put some of my internal fleet team members through some of their courses.

**DG:** In short, I've always found *Fleet News*, HMRC, accounting and budget bulletins from major accountancy firms, the HSE's website, manufacturer websites and fleet contacts immensely useful.

**PL:** I used the Freight Transport Association (FTA). I've always found that the support this organisation has provided and the accuracy of this information has been outstanding – particularly through its member advice centre. I've also



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made full use of the FTA's training facilities, not least its IRTEC technical training for engineers.

**RY:** I've always found it comforting to know that the FTA is a just a phone call away when it comes to providing the best possible advice. A few years ago, the FTA approached me to help set up its Van Excellence programme. I've always placed a premium on driver and vehicle safety, and it was a pleasure to help establish this.

**GR:** There was no guide to fleet management, so I developed things to make life easier for myself and the drivers.

**What do you wish you knew earlier in your career that would have helped you along the way?**

**PR:** A greater knowledge of how car manufacturers support car fleets and the depth of financial support terms available.

**DG:** I wish I'd known that crash-for-cash was going to be such a ruddy nuisance – I would have had all cars equipped with cameras. I also underestimated how useful manufacturer/dealer contacts were in addition to lease providers. Sometimes they were the only ones who could get the right answers.

**PL:** The one thing that I'd have advised my younger self to do is to always ask questions. But it's just as important that you actually listen to the answers and take that information onboard and act on it. Those employees who don't do this simply lose credibility.

**RY:** Fleet managers should embrace every opportunity for training. This might encompass everyday training in how to use computer packages, or more specific training into, for example, how to get the most from those telematics packages you have in place.

**What one piece of advice would you give to a new fleet manager to equip them for the future?**

**PR:** Find yourself an experienced fleet manager mentor and

**4 Name Rick Young  
Last fleet role** Fleet manager at Wakefield and District Housing

**Time in role** Nine years

**Size of fleet** 400 LCVs

**When retired:** May 2015

**Previous fleet roles** Hiway Express, between April 1979 and

December 2005, initially as a long-

distance HGV driver before becoming

transport supervisor in 1982. In May

1986, I became transport manager

and remained in this role until I

joined WDH in January 2006

**Overall length of career in fleet:**

40 years

**5 Name Paul Leaves  
Last fleet role** Transport manager for Hampshire County Council

**Time in role** Eight years

**Size of fleet** 650 vehicles, including

LGVs, LCVs, cars and other vehicles

**When retiring** October 31, 2015

**Previous fleet roles** I've worked

for Hampshire County Council in a

variety of different senior fleet-

related roles for the past 25 years.

Prior to that, I worked for Tarmac and

ran my own HGV business after being

apprenticed with London Transport

**Length of career in fleet**

40 years

don't be frightened to maximise your use of that relationship.

**DG:** I'm going to give two tips: first, be prepared for change.

The right solutions now will need constant review as your

fleet changes and tax rules update, the latter being a house

built on sand, so you need to shift with the sands. Fortunately,

there are many different solutions now for a more holistic

transport view than when I started. Make sure you consider

all the options including the HR effects.

Second, challenge things that you know in your gut are

wrong. Like some parking fines. Or a zero mph bump the

insurers are going to pay out £4,000 to the third party on

when neither car had a scratch. The world is only going to

get madder.

**PL:** If you want to be successful in your job then try and learn

something new every day. You might find yourself learning

from an apprentice who brings a new way of doing some-

thing or it might be from a fellow member of the senior

management team. But whatever the source, pick the best

things that are being done and introduce them into your

everyday role to keep improving the status quo.

**RY:** Don't ever be afraid to spend time understanding exactly

what it is that your organisation does with its fleet and what

it wants to accomplish in an ideal world. It's only when you

understand this that you can capture appropriate data, put

appropriate resources in place, improve efficiency and, ulti-

mately, make financial savings for your organisation.

**GR:** Sharing best practice and ideas is crucial. If you have a

problem the chances are that another fleet manager has

tackled the same issue and overcome it. You can learn a lot

by talking to other professional fleet managers. The fleet at

Autoglass operates efficiently because we looked at

demands and planned everything 20 weeks ahead of

requirement.

Advance planning is critical: be completely prepared for

the unexpected and act today, not tomorrow.