THE JOHN CLEMENTS
GUIDE TO
FMCG CAREERS
Getting in and Growing your Career
in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods Industry
Executive Summary

The John Clements Guide to FMCG Careers offers a comprehensive look at the fast moving consumer goods industry.

Covering topics like divisions and departments, major players, and various tips on how to prepare for a career in the field, it provides crucial information that every jobseeker looking to enter an FMCG corporation or business should know.

Additionally, it provides helpful insights and advice from leaders in the field, including experts and coaches from John Clements Consultants, Inc. and executives from the country’s biggest FMCG companies.

Through this guide, John Clements aims to empower all its valued jobseekers and prepare them for a fulfilling and satisfying career in the FMCG industry, armed with the information and guidance that they need.
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The Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry, also known as the Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) industry, deals with the production, distribution and marketing of consumer packaged goods.

Everyone on the planet has consumed or at least heard of consumer goods, whether or not they know specifically what these are. Tune in to primetime TV, and you’ll see a wide range of commercials for brands you’ve likely known since childhood. From Safeguard soap and Surf dishwashing liquid, to Lucky Me pancit canton and Colgate toothpaste, these brands are fixtures in the daily lives of Filipinos.

If you’ll notice, there are a few things that these goods have in common. They’re sold quickly and at low prices. They don’t usually last long and are available over-the-counter (that is, you don’t need a prescription, license or waiver to buy any of them). They have a short shelf life, and some of them may even be highly perishable. Most of all, you can find nearly all of these goods at your local supermarket, pharmacy or sari-sari store.

Some of the prime activities of the FMCG industry include selling, marketing, financing and purchasing, while some other departments include operations, supply chain, production and general management.
Through branding and product advertising, the FMCG industry is highly competitive. There is an imperative need for constant improvement when it comes to product development and design, as well as marketing and sales strategies. The bar is raised ever higher in this industry, as manufacturers and producers constantly set their sights on higher targets. Due to the industry’s growing participation in the world market, there a whole host of FMCG positions and vacancies.

Divisions and Departments in the Industry

**Marketing/Brand Management**: is the heart of the FMCG industry. This team ensures that a company’s current and prospective products are in tune with the needs of its market.

Marketers work closely with product developers, market researchers, advertising or PR agencies, and packaging designers. A unique combination of creativity, business-mindedness and organizational skills encompass the best kind of marketer.

Most FMCG CEOs spend much of their careers in the Marketing or Brand Management function.

**Product Development**: works closely with the marketing and manufacturing departments to improve and develop ingredients and products from concept to full-scale production.

From their output, process engineers specify the systems that will produce consistent, safe, and good-quality products with maximum efficiency.
Research and Development: focuses on responding to the needs of product and process development.

Ideally, the team should have access to outstanding pilot plant facilities and state-of-the-art equipment, modern laboratories and an extensive library and database. This way, they can better answer the needs of production and processing on an international scale.

Buyers: must guarantee the supply of basic ingredients throughout a prolonged period, commonly a year.

A buyer may typically have to travel all over the country, or even the world, to find the right ingredients at the best price. Buyers need to be good with figures and well-organized, and they should be able to develop partnerships with suppliers and negotiate the best deals.

Supply Chain: the goal is to exceed customers’ expectations in terms of service and quality, at the lowest cost. As companies grow increasingly more competitive and this goal continues to grow, consistent delivery is required to establish any FMCG company as an indispensable partner to its customers.

Working in supply chain often creates a deep understanding of how the business works, as there are a broad scope of career development opportunities in this department, such as customer service, logistics operations, and planning or project management.

Customer Logistics: contact with customers is very important, and customer service teams need to make sure everything runs smoothly for every consumer. This team works on e-business and supply chain development, there to anticipate and advise regarding what services customers will want in the future.
Production: comprises of a wide range of roles. This range includes but is not limited to planning and designing, operating complex machinery, managing and supervising the work of others, and engineering.

Quality Assurance: guarantees the consistently high quality of products. This team ensures that only products which satisfy the industry’s strict specification and hygiene requirements reach the distribution stage. Even afterward, quality is checked once more to ensure that products have not deteriorated or been damaged during transportation.

Engineering is further divided into designing, installing and ensuring the smooth productiveness of machinery.

FMCG companies manufacture products on a huge scale, and their operations are highly complex, which is why leading-edge production technologies are often involved. Additionally, most companies are also continually evolving and upgrading their processes to produce better products as well as minimize risk, so the scope and diversity of this division requires a wide range of technical and motivational skills.

Operations encompass shift management, quality and development, planning, health and safety, utilities management as well as packaging specialists and food technologists.

Working in manufacturing and engineering is challenging and fast moving; those early months in shift management make an excellent training ground for young graduate engineers. Many manufacturers often include mechanical, electrical and civil engineers.
Finance: provides input and advice for a wide variety of decisions across the business, both on local and international levels, as well as ensures that the business is under control and runs as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Information Systems (IT or IS): Working in this department is a big responsibility, as members need to have a deep understanding of the business as well as the needs of clients.

This team is tasked to deliver strategies through cutting-edge systems and technologies, constantly looking to be one step ahead, and constantly searching for a better system solution or business process. They are always available and eager to help, and their roles are numerous, from market statistics to accessing the Intranet.

IT/IS also plays an important role in anticipating, developing and implementing new systems to meet predicted needs.

Adapted from http://www.grb.uk.com/fmcg-industry-profile

Major Players in the Industry
What You Can Look Forward To in the FMCG Industry

There are a number of current and foreseeable trends affecting the global industry that you can benefit from as an entry-level employee.

**Big Data**
As the ability to acquire, store and process data continues to improve exponentially, a data explosion is underway. This includes social media-related brand engagement, which means that there will be greater emphasis placed on digital and technological positions and fields, such as IT and digital marketing.

**Speed of Social Media Information**
Because consumer information is now only a Google search away, expect more importance to be placed on online rather than offline advertising, market research and even selling. Being knowledgeable in online systems and software is a bug plus for any jobseeker.

**Online Grocery Shopping**
A number of major brick and mortar retailers now offer online shopping and delivery, and many smaller online retailers have also emerged. This new development affects the industry as a whole, and will surely mean a big change in job tasks and positions.
**Manufacturer Consolidation**
Due to the opening of mega factories in Asia and Eastern Europe affecting massive economies of scale, the cost of production has come down. Additionally aided by the increase in number of free trade zones and agreements, mega units placed near sources of raw materials and bigger markets are now prioritized over having factories all over the world.

**Ageing**
Because the ageing demographic (age 50 and over) has more money and will place a higher value on food quality, many brands will be aiming to appear relevant to this group of consumers.

However, the challenge will adapting this new target to their current marketing plans, all the while staying “cool” enough to attract younger consumers. This is especially advantageous for millennial jobseekers, who can add fresh concepts and strategies to the table, and further improve advertising and branding.

Trends adapted from  
https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/8-mega-trends-affecting-global-fmcg-cpg-industry-vikram-khanna
Preparation Yourself for the FMCG Industry

The FMCG industry creates a wide range of job opportunities. This industry is a stable, diverse, challenging and high profile industry providing a wide range of job categories.

Given that entry-level job applicants do not yet have the experience, hiring companies normally look for applicants who have the right soft skills and personal capabilities, such as leadership and relationship building, flexibility, and the ability to think and act decisively. Graduates of most degree subjects are welcomed, with strong numerical and analytical degrees considered an advantage.

If you think you have these qualities, why not consider a career in this industrious, highly relevant industry?

Benefits and Rewards of the FMCG Industry

Your Ideal Career Path

FMCGs are an enormously dynamic sphere of the business world in which graduates are able to gain excellent rewards and benefits. Some FMCGs offer fast-track career progression, which means graduates often get the chance to work in different
departments to see how the product goes from development to manufacturing to distribution. You will always have the opportunity to move elsewhere within the company and work with different clients.

The major players in FMCGs run graduate training programs, and in most cases fresh graduates can specify whether they want to apply to the commercial (marketing, sales, etc.) or operational (finance, IT) stream.

In other cases, graduates join a general scheme designed to test their abilities in different fields, and at the end of the training period they’ll know where they would work best. If you’ve chosen sales or marketing, one of the best routes into these careers is via a graduate training scheme run by a leading brand owner, as these are among the most highly regarded.

Corporations like Nestle, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, GlaxoSmithKline, Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola and Colgate-Palmolive all offer various management training programs that give fresh graduates, college students, and interns a chance to experience the industry firsthand and gain an edge over other jobseekers by equipping themselves with the skills and knowledge necessary to gain a headstart in the company.

Advice from Our Experts

Professional Tips from Our Consultants and Advisors

“Jobseekers need to be able to thrive in a fast-paced environment, have flexible thinking and an innovative approach. At the same time they need to be organised and able to multi-task (or at least demonstrate their adaptability). Most of all, they should be committed to the quality of the brand and have a good understanding of the FMCG industry. Academic record and work experience are important, as with all industries, but teamwork, communication skills, innovation and initiative are particularly valued. A range of extra-curricular initiatives and interests on your CV that goes beyond studies is another important factor to
consider.” – Hazel Tolentino, Senior Consultant at John Clements Consultants, Inc.

Words of Wisdom from Leaders in the Industry

Fama Francisco is the President for Global Feminine Care in Procter & Gamble, which is currently the world’s leading consumer goods company. Prior to becoming the corporation’s first Asian female President, she was already its highest ranking and only Asian female general manager. She leads operations, innovation and brand building for P&G’s Feminine Care business, which includes brands like Always/Whisper, Always Discreet, Tampax, and Naturella.

Having been a pioneer and innovator in the industry for over 20 years, she holds a strong record of sustained business results as well as a deep understanding of the Feminine and Baby Care categories of FMCG. (Biography adapted from Fama Francisco’s LinkedIn [profile](#))

In an interview with ABS-CBN, Francisco offered her two cents on entering the FMCG industry, and what there is to expect:

“[P&G] will be bringing the best innovation ever,” Fama said, noting that P&G has been in the Philippines for 82 years. “You know the Philippines is growing in itself, as a community and society, and I think we need more Filipino talents to really understand the insights here in the Philippines, develop marketing programs, sales programs that cater to the Filipinos, and I don’t see that taking away at all from jobs that we do in the US.”
Ready for a Career in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods Industry?

Now that you’ve gotten to know the industry, join our talent community to get the latest updates on jobs and openings! You’ll also get announcements, newsletters and more tips on getting the career you’ve always wanted.

And if you’re ready to enter the fast moving consumer goods industry, make sure to check out JC3, our online portal for jobs and careers. We’re sure to have the perfect job for you!

JOIN OUR TALENT COMMUNITY
Visit http://careers.johnclements.com