



1. Tell us a little about yourself. Name, occupation, how long you've lived in Miami, something folks may not know about you...

My name is Romaine Seguin and I serve as President for the Americas Region at UPS. My current role is what brought me to Miami, where I have lived since September of 2010.

Something that people might not know about me is that I started my career with UPS loading and unloading packages as a way to stay fit. This was back when I was in college, where the job not only helped me cover my expenses as a student, but it also shaped a philosophy that I still have today and that is, "define your sky."

This simply means to define where you want to be in life and outline your blueprint on how you plan to get there. I was the first person in my family to attend college, but that was not my sky...that was just the beginning. I have redefined my sky at every position I've achieved, and that has brought me to where I am today. Although I must admit that the most fun job I had within the company was when I was a UPS truck driver delivering packages.

2. How did you first get involved with The Beacon Council? Why The Beacon Council versus another organization?

I have always been a believer of the impact of public-private partnerships, so when I arrived in Miami and started getting acquainted with the business community, I heard about The Beacon Council and their impact to Miami's business and economic landscape.

I think that The Beacon Council and UPS have a lot in common. At UPS we aim to help customers of all sizes achieve their goals. Just like The Beacon Council facilitates local, national and international business growth, UPS enables its customers to meet their objectives and be successful.

3. What are (Greater) Miami's top business assets? Why is Miami the best place for your business?

For a global company like UPS, as well as hundreds of other businesses in the international sector, Miami's proximity to Latin America and the Caribbean is a key strategic asset that makes this community the ideal location for international commerce in the western hemisphere.

Our operation in Miami enables these businesses to successfully link their logistics supply chains in Latin America and the Caribbean to the rest of the world.

Our city is a paramount global gateway where billions of dollars in business flows through Miami to other markets worldwide. For example, Miami International Airport handles 84% of all air imports and 81% of all exports from Latin America and Caribbean region. MIA serves as the primary hub for distribution of perishable products, high-tech commodities, telecommunications equipment, textiles, pharmaceuticals and industrial machinery. Source: Miami-Dade Aviation Department.

For example, during this year's Valentine's Day season, UPS moved more than 100 million flowers or 9 million pounds of blooms to consumers all around the U.S. Many of the flowers were carried from countries in Latin American, primarily Colombia and Ecuador.

In addition to MIA, the Dante B. Fascell Port of Miami-Dade also serves as a pivotal connecting point between the Americas and the rest of the world where the location is the #1 container port in Florida and the world's leading port for cruise line passenger traffic.

4. What are Miami's biggest challenges?

One of Miami's major challenges is income inequality and poverty, which has contributed to the local market's ability to attract and retain talent. I believe that there are bright, young professionals coming out from Miami's universities, however the high cost of living makes them explore other cities where starting their careers may be easier.

Another major challenge is traffic. The lack of efficient public transportation options and faulty infrastructure such as damaged roads and highways has led to a dependency in commuter vehicles, which has added to Miami's congested roadway problem.

5. What's next for your business/industry?

As I mentioned before, UPS aims to deliver value to customers as we help them expand their businesses. For this, we must be aware of the major trends affecting Latin American businesses. From my point of view, there are four major factors to consider: the rising middle class, the importance of emerging markets, ecommerce and healthcare.

UPS views emerging markets as the frontier of opportunity. Places where we can bring logistics to customers and help them grow their businesses. Especially in emerging markets, logistics is an engine for global growth and economic opportunity. I'm optimistic about Latin America because I've seen firsthand the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit of so many of our customers. I'm convinced we haven't begun to tap the potential of the millions of small- and mid-sized Latin American companies that are part of the new "entrepreneurial economy." In the entrepreneurial economy, global trade becomes everyday business.

The growing middle class in Latin America and around the world is anxious to take advantage of the goods and services the Internet now puts at their fingertips. So we see great opportunities in the rise in retail spending, and the “business-to-consumer” – or B-to-C market. We believe our unmatched network, portfolio and logistics expertise gives businesses small and large a competitive advantage in this global marketplace.

Another area where our network and experience are making a difference for customers is healthcare. Demographic trends are changing the healthcare industry.

You may have seen this statistic: In 2000, the number of people worldwide aged 60 or older was roughly 606 million. By 2050, this number will be close to 2 billion. There is going to be tremendous demand for affordable, efficient healthcare services. By 2018, seven of the top 10 pharma products -- based on sales revenue -- will be biologics, which require cold-chain storage and transportation.

This means they need to travel within tightly specified temperature ranges in order to ensure the efficacy of the medicine. At the same time, regulations are escalating and cost pressures are mounting throughout the healthcare industry. This could mean new opportunities in home healthcare – among them, delivering products to the elderly so they can stay in their homes longer.

With these cost pressures come the need for greater efficiencies, especially in supply chains.

UPS is helping companies find value and create competitive advantages through resources such as multi-client facilities, which allow companies to use only the space they need and solutions for temperature-controlled shipments.

We have made major investments to support healthcare. We now have more than 3,000 people with healthcare expertise and more than 2,000 people trained in temperature-sensitive product handling.

6. What do you like best about living in Miami?

Everything! I love the weather. I am a runner and avid sports fan, so Miami allows me to enjoy the outdoors, whether it's participating in sports as an athlete or partake in a game as a spectator.

From a business perspective, I really enjoy the multicultural aspect of Miami's business environment. The city is truly a melting pot and I think that so many different cultures and experiences really benefit the business environment. As the “Capital of Latin America” Miami allows me to be in constant contact with colleagues and customers who really understand the region and from whom I learn. I travel extensively to the region, and Miami offers excellent options to fly to everywhere, not only in Latin America, but around the world.