Since earning his Bachelor of Science in Marketing from the VCU School of Business in December 2004, John Comstock’s career has included positions in account management, marketing management, and sales management with Fortune 100 company UPS.

“I started my career while participating in an internship program through the VCU School of Business at McKesson Medical-Surgical and gained valuable insight to corporate sales and marketing. Once I graduated from VCU, I worked on a few political campaigns while going through the interview process at UPS. I was able to start as a Sales Representative at UPS in April 2005,” he says.

Comstock found sales rewarding for a number of reasons. “I was able to meet entrepreneurs all over the Richmond area in their homes and businesses, and listen to their goals,” he says. “This was when I decided UPS was an excellent place for me because I’d be able to facilitate global commerce for the smallest businesses. It was amazing to watch customers grow from a garage into 100,000 square foot warehouses.”

In October 2005, he moved into an Account Executive position with UPS. Two years later, he became a Senior Account Executive and managed a UPS account base worth $9.5 million, working with large companies such as Geico, Dynamic Brands, and Evergreen Enterprises.

From 2012 – 2015, Comstock worked in the marketing and management side of operations for UPS, as Small Business Marketing Manager for the Mid-Atlantic and Customer Profitability Manager. In March 2015, he became UPS’s Area Sales Manager for Richmond, where he is responsible for account base of over $44 million of middle market customers – usually in the $0-$300k range of supply chain spending.

“I really do love UPS and what we do. We are an incredibly ethical company with unmatched supply chain solutions. We enter every negotiation with integrity, and that is important to me. I love my new role as Area Sales Manager, because I get to work with salespeople in a coaching and mentoring role while helping them grow our business,” says Comstock. “I still get to work with customers of all sizes and it is a pleasure to watch customers grow, as well as help our newer salespeople grow and become more comfortable in their role.”

Comstock says VCU’s Marketing Department left him well prepared. “I found that the topics covered in my marketing classes were extremely relevant to me and my future career and gave me a leg up on other schools’ graduates. My professors’ experience gave them the ability to show what the top companies were...
doing, and what the future trends were. That helped me understand the strategic direction a company needs to take to remain successful."

What can current students do to ensure their own success? “The best advice I can and do give marketing majors is be flexible and not afraid. When you start at a company, understand your business and your industry and the needs of customers you may come in contact with in daily. There’s no shame in working your way up from the bottom. Listen to people who have done the job before you and never be afraid to fail. Companies are not looking for perfection. They are looking for future leaders. Always look for opportunities to teach, mentor and coach because that will help you be a better manager and leader.”