



**Edgar the International Trade Specialist:
Embargoes**

Who is Edgar?

Hello, my name is Edgar, and I am a international trade specialist!

An international trade specialist is an expert on how countries trade with one another. "International" literally means "between nations." It is a word used to describe the relationships that exist between nations across the globe.

"Trade" means to buy or sell goods or services. A good is a physical item that is bought or sold, like a watch or iPhone. A service is an action or experience that is sold without a physical item, such as shipping services.

Countries and companies work together to ship goods across the world on trains, planes, ships, and trucks. These shipping services are bought and sold just like goods.

An international trade specialist monitors how countries across the globe buy and sell each other's goods or services.



As an international trade specialist, I make sure that businesses follow international trade laws. International trade laws are rules that stop illegal trade activities. Governments across the globe create these laws to make sure all trade activities are safe for all people, nations, and businesses involved. For example, the laws make sure that potentially dangerous materials or contaminated foods are not traded. Check out the next page to see some examples of illegal trade activities.

Examples of Illegal Trade Activities

Buying or Selling Endangered Plants and Animals

Endangered plants and animals are struggling to survive in the wild. This means that the species might not exist in the future. Countries work together to make sure people are not buying or selling these animals or plants. For example, it is illegal to sell and buy a giant panda or a black rhino.



Buying or Selling Nuclear Weapons

Very dangerous weapons are also illegal to buy and sell. Some countries are in trouble with others because of trading nuclear weapons. When one country wants to punish another for illegal trade activity, they might issue an embargo. An embargo is an official ban on trade with a particular country. For example, the United States currently has an embargo placed on North Korea. Oils, metals, machines, and farming products cannot be shipped to North Korea.



Think about it: What would happen if there weren't international trade laws to prevent illegal activities from happening?

Tools I Use at Work

Check out a few tools that I use in my job!

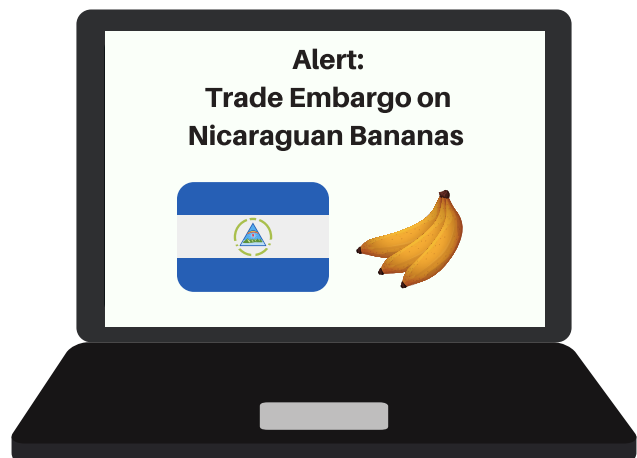
Virtual Conference Tools

I constantly have meetings with people around the world. Since we cannot always visit each other in person, we use virtual conference tools. These tools allow people to have face-to-face meetings using video technologies on computers. A few examples include FaceTime, Skype, and Google Hangouts.



Automated Trade Management Software

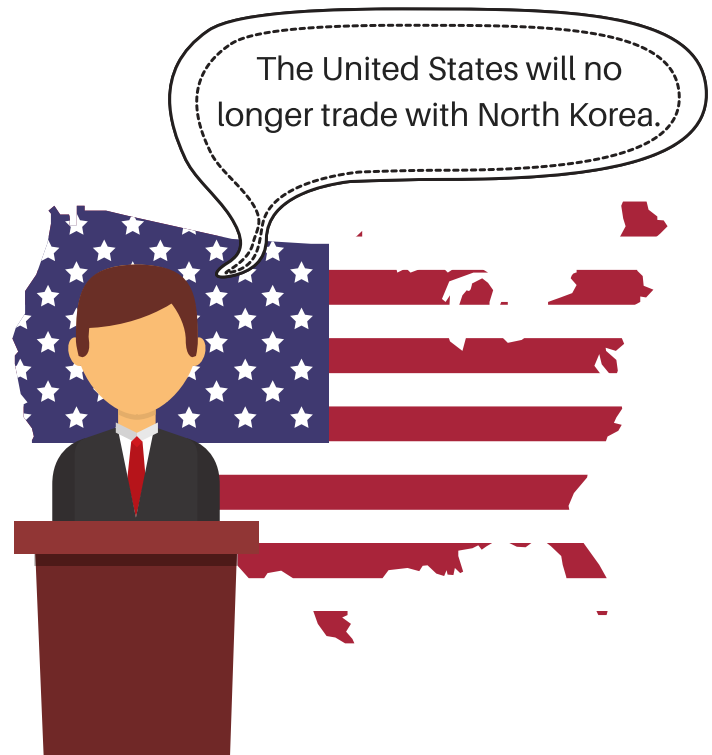
This is a computer program that informs companies about new laws or regulations. For example, if international trade specialists are informed about a new embargo on importing bananas from Nicaragua, companies will have to find a new country to buy bananas from.



What I am Working On

Right now, I am studying how embargoes affect nations that trade goods and services. Here is an example:

In December 2017, President Donald Trump issued an embargo on North Korea. The embargo meant that the United States could no longer export goods, such as oil and weapons, to North Korea.



This embargo was in response to North Korea's continued effort to create nuclear weapons, which are extremely powerful weapons that can destroy entire cities. The United States government did not want North Korea to have any nuclear weapons, so it decided to stop all trade with North Korea.



Effects of Embargoes

Check out how this embargo has affected people at international, national, and local levels.

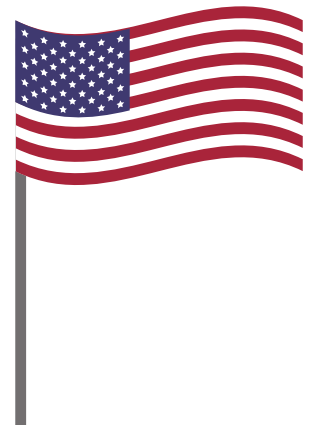
Effect on an International Level:

Since the United States is such a well-respected and powerful country, other countries usually follow its lead. Since President Trump first issued the embargo, many countries have followed his lead. This creates tensions between the U.S. and other countries who still trade with North Korea, such as Russia and China.



Effect on a National Level:

Many experts believe the embargo has done little to stop the North Korean nuclear weapons program. In fact, some say the embargo has made North Korea even more focused on its military. The North Korean government has also become increasingly anti-American as a result of the embargo.



Effect on a Local Level:

Embargoes are supposed to target government officials, but they often hurt ordinary people. Embargoes are felt most by families that are already struggling to survive. Some people claim that the U.S. embargo has forced many North Korean families into poverty and starvation. Without food imports, North Koreans must rely on their own crops for food. This is a problem because recent droughts are preventing food from growing. Without outside sources of food, many North Koreans have suffered.

