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CIPS L5M1 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand and Apply Approaches to Planning and Managing Work Groups or Teams: This section of the exam measures skills of Team Leaders and covers the dynamics and effectiveness of work groups or teams. Candidates are tested on understanding group vision, values, norms, and alignment, as well as formal and informal group structures. The syllabus includes strategies for developing effective teams, team roles, self-managed teams, virtual team management, diversity benefits, and conflict management. It also assesses knowledge of team development, learning integration, role congruence, and approaches for merging, disbanding, or changing teams.
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand and Apply Approaches to Managing Individuals: This section of the exam measures skills of HR Managers and focuses on managing individual behaviour effectively. It examines how differences in behavioural characteristics affect management style and approach, highlighting diversity, emotional intelligence, and assessment techniques for development. The section also covers the creation and management of knowledge, formal and informal learning processes, cognitive and behavioural learning theories, motivation theories including intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and factors influencing job satisfaction such as job design, collaboration, and flexible working arrangements.
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand, Analyse, and Apply Management and Organisational Approaches: This section of the exam measures skills of Operations Managers and covers the understanding and evaluation of organisational behaviour and management approaches. It assesses knowledge of individual and team behaviour, organisational structures, and the psychological contract, as well as factors like STEELED influences. Candidates are tested on traditional and contemporary management approaches, including administrative, scientific, and human relations methods, as well as postmodernism, socio-technical systems, and distributed leadership. The role of individuals, teams, and organisational culture in shaping behaviour is also evaluated.

Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the Application of Management Concepts and Principles in a Procurement and Supply Function: This section of the exam measures skills of Procurement Managers and focuses on applying management principles within procurement and supply operations. Candidates are tested on aligning team knowledge, skills, and behaviours with organisational strategy, defining the scope of operations, and developing teams. The syllabus also includes managing stakeholder relationships, building trust, promoting collaboration, fostering a culture of learning, sharing procurement knowledge, professional development, and the importance of personal behaviours such as unbiased decision-making, communication, creativity, and reflective practice to enhance procurement and supply effectiveness.
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CIPS Managing Teams and Individuals Sample Questions (Q33-Q38):

NEW QUESTION # 33

Explain what a 'bureaucratic' management style is (10 points). What are the advantages and disadvantages of this? (10 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

A bureaucratic management style is based on the theories of Max Weber, who described bureaucracy as a structured, rule-based and hierarchical way of organising work. In this style, managers rely heavily on formal rules, policies and procedures to direct employee behaviour. Decision-making authority follows a clear chain of command, and employees are expected to follow established processes without deviation. Job roles are highly specialised and responsibilities are clearly defined. The emphasis is on order, consistency and compliance rather than flexibility or creativity.

This approach is often seen in government departments, regulatory bodies, or large organisations where compliance, accountability and control are critical. For example, in procurement and supply, bureaucratic management may be applied in highly regulated environments such as public sector purchasing, where adherence to policies, legal frameworks and audit requirements is essential.

Advantages of the bureaucratic style include:

Clarity and consistency: clear rules and procedures mean employees know exactly what is expected of them.

Fairness and equality: decisions are made based on rules, not personal favouritism, reducing bias.

Accountability and control: strong documentation and audit trails improve transparency.

Efficiency in routine tasks: structured processes can streamline repetitive, transactional work (e.g., purchase-to-pay).

Disadvantages include:

Inflexibility: rigid rules make it difficult to adapt to change or unique situations.

Low motivation: workers may feel disempowered or demoralised by lack of autonomy.

Slow decision-making: multiple levels of approval can create delays.

Stifled innovation: focus on compliance discourages creativity and proactive problem-solving.

In conclusion, the bureaucratic management style is effective where consistency, compliance and control are needed, such as in regulated procurement activities. However, it can be limiting in dynamic environments where flexibility, innovation and speed of decision-making are essential. Successful managers may therefore adopt bureaucratic methods for governance but balance them with more adaptive styles for strategic and innovative work.

NEW QUESTION # 34

Discuss the importance of the following when entering a negotiation with a new supplier: curiosity, creative thinking, reflective analysis (25 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

When entering negotiations with a new supplier, a procurement professional must use a variety of interpersonal and cognitive skills to achieve the best outcome. Three important qualities are curiosity, creative thinking, and reflective analysis.

Curiosity (8-9 marks):

Curiosity means asking questions, exploring options, and seeking to understand the supplier's position. In a negotiation, curiosity allows the buyer to uncover the supplier's motivations, constraints, and priorities. For example, asking why a supplier has higher costs may reveal underlying logistics challenges, which could be solved collaboratively. Curiosity builds rapport, demonstrates interest, and helps procurement move beyond price to explore value-added benefits such as quality improvements or sustainability initiatives.

Creative Thinking (8-9 marks):

Creative thinking is about generating new solutions and finding alternatives to traditional approaches. In negotiation, this may involve looking for win-win outcomes rather than focusing only on cost. For example, instead of demanding lower prices, procurement could propose longer contracts, volume commitments, or joint innovation projects that benefit both parties. Creative thinking expands the scope of negotiation and helps develop more sustainable supplier relationships.

Reflective Analysis (8-9 marks):

Reflective analysis involves reviewing past experiences and learning from them to improve decision-making. Before negotiating, procurement professionals can reflect on what has worked or failed in previous negotiations. During the negotiation, reflective analysis helps assess whether strategies are effective and adapt accordingly. After the negotiation, reflection allows continuous improvement in approach. For example, a buyer may reflect on why a past supplier negotiation failed due to being too aggressive, and adjust by using more collaborative tactics with the new supplier.

Conclusion:

Curiosity helps procurement gather insights, creative thinking enables innovative solutions, and reflective analysis ensures continuous improvement. Together, these skills allow procurement professionals to build trust, secure better value, and establish strong long-term relationships with new suppliers.

NEW QUESTION # 35

What is meant by the 'systems approach' and 'contingency approach' to management? (20 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Theories of management provide different ways of understanding how organisations can be led effectively. Two important perspectives are the systems approach and the contingency approach. Both move beyond early "one best way" classical theories and instead highlight the complexity and adaptability required in modern organisations.

The systems approach views the organisation as an integrated whole made up of interdependent subsystems such as HR, finance, operations and procurement. It is based on systems theory, seeing organisations as "open systems" that interact with their external environment. Inputs such as people, information and resources are transformed into outputs such as products, services and stakeholder value. Feedback loops are essential to monitor performance and make adjustments. The key idea is synergy - the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. For example, in procurement, sourcing decisions influence not only supplier performance but also finance (budgets), operations (continuity), and CSR (sustainability). A systems approach ensures that procurement strategies are aligned to wider organisational goals and continuous improvement.

The contingency approach develops this idea further, arguing that there is no universal way to manage. Instead, the best approach depends on situational factors such as environment, size, technology, or workforce capability. It rejects "one-size-fits-all" rules and stresses that management must adapt. For example, in a stable market, a hierarchical structure with formal rules may work well, whereas in volatile markets, flexible and decentralised decision-making is more effective. In procurement, this could mean using strict process controls for routine, low-value items, but adopting agile, collaborative approaches when managing strategic supplier partnerships in uncertain global supply chains.

In comparison, the systems approach gives managers a holistic view of how different parts of the organisation connect and interact with the external environment, while the contingency approach emphasises adaptability and situational leadership. Together, they suggest that effective managers need both a broad systems perspective and the ability to tailor their approach depending on context. In conclusion, the systems approach stresses coordination, integration and feedback across the organisation, while the contingency approach stresses flexibility and the idea that "it depends." Both are highly relevant to procurement and supply leaders who must integrate across functions and adapt strategies to dynamic and uncertain supply environments.

NEW QUESTION # 36

ABC Ltd is a software development company and employs around 100 people. Its executive Board of Directors is considering investing more resources in employee development. Briefly describe what is meant by employee development and explain the positive impacts of lifelong learning (25 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Part A - Employee Development (5-8 marks):

Employee development refers to the ongoing process of improving staff knowledge, skills, and behaviours to enhance their performance and career progression. It includes both formal methods such as training courses, mentoring, and professional qualifications, and informal methods such as on-the-job learning, self-directed study, and peer collaboration. For ABC Ltd, employee development could mean providing software engineers with technical training, leadership coaching, or professional certifications to improve capability and engagement.

Part B - Positive Impacts of Lifelong Learning (15-18 marks):

Improved performance and productivity: Continuous learning ensures employees remain skilled in the latest technologies, enabling ABC Ltd to deliver innovative software solutions and maintain competitiveness.

Employee motivation and morale: When staff see the company investing in their development, they feel valued, which increases engagement and reduces alienation.

Retention and loyalty: Lifelong learning encourages employees to stay with the organisation as they see opportunities for growth, reducing turnover costs.

Adaptability and resilience: In fast-moving sectors such as software, continuous learning helps staff adapt to new tools, coding languages, and market changes, ensuring the business remains agile.

Innovation and creativity: Learning stimulates new ideas and problem-solving approaches, leading to more effective solutions in product development and project delivery.

Career progression and leadership pipeline: Lifelong learning develops not only technical skills but also soft skills such as communication, negotiation, and leadership, building the next generation of managers.

Conclusion:

Employee development is about building skills, knowledge, and behaviours to improve individual and organisational performance. Lifelong learning delivers multiple benefits, including productivity, innovation, motivation, and retention. For ABC Ltd, investing in continuous development will strengthen competitiveness, employee satisfaction, and long-term organisational success.

NEW QUESTION # 37

Caleb is the newly appointed CEO of Star Fish Limited, a company that manufactures and installs gym equipment. The company employs 100 people and has dedicated teams for Finance, Product Development and Procurement. Some staff work from the office and some staff work remotely from home. Contrast and provide an example of a formal and informal group that may form at this organisation. What factors should Caleb be aware of that can contribute to group formations? (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Formal vs Informal Groups (10-12 marks):

Formal groups are those deliberately created by management to achieve organisational objectives. They have defined structures, roles, and reporting lines. In Star Fish Ltd, examples include the Procurement Team, responsible for sourcing suppliers and managing contracts. This group has clear goals, formal leadership, and measurable outputs.

By contrast, informal groups arise naturally among employees based on social interactions, common interests, or personal relationships. They are not officially sanctioned but strongly influence behaviour. At Star Fish Ltd, an example could be a fitness club of employees who exercise together during breaks or a WhatsApp group among remote workers who support each other socially. These groups provide belonging and morale but may also resist management decisions if excluded.

Factors Influencing Group Formation (12-15 marks):

Common goals and tasks - People working on shared objectives, such as the Product Development Team working on new gym equipment, naturally form groups.

Geography and work arrangements - Staff working remotely may form virtual support groups, while office-based staff bond more through daily interactions.

Shared interests and values - Employees passionate about fitness or sustainability may form informal networks within the company.

Friendship and social needs - Based on Maslow's hierarchy, people seek belonging. Friendships often develop into informal groups.

Leadership and influence - Charismatic or respected individuals may attract followers, leading to informal group formation around their personality.

Organisational culture - A collaborative culture encourages group formation for teamwork, while a competitive culture may create cliques or rival groups.

Technology and communication platforms - With remote work, online groups (Teams, Slack, WhatsApp) facilitate informal interaction and knowledge sharing.

Conclusion:

At Star Fish Ltd, formal groups like the Procurement Department are designed to deliver organisational objectives, while informal groups such as fitness clubs or virtual chat groups form naturally. Caleb must recognise that both types of groups are powerful. Formal groups deliver results, but informal groups influence morale, motivation, and resistance to change. By understanding the factors driving group formation, Caleb can harness both to build cohesion, encourage collaboration, and support the organisation's success.

NEW QUESTION # 38

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