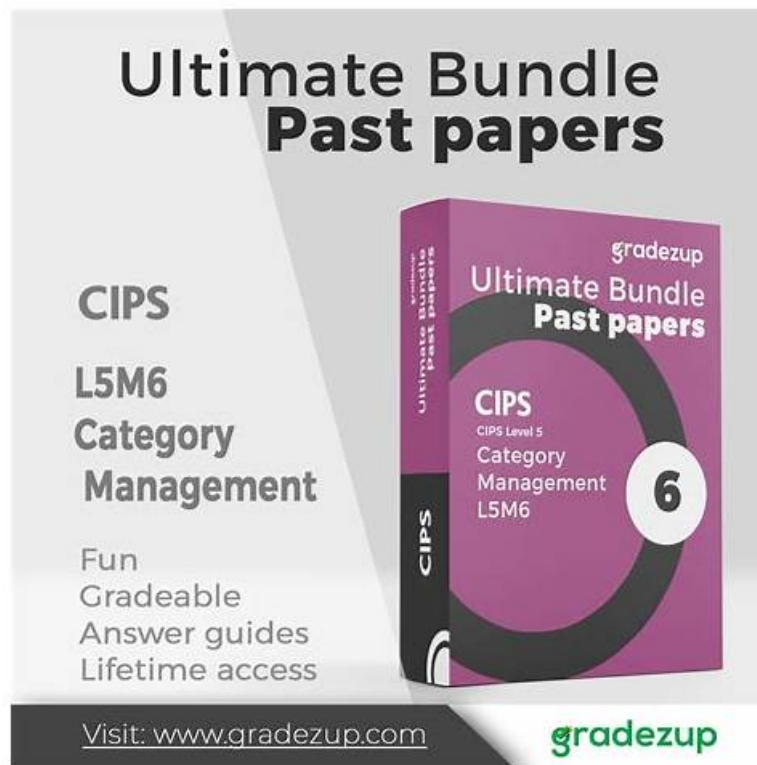


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CIPS Category Management Sample Questions (Q15-Q20):

NEW QUESTION # 15

Sarah is a Category Manager at a shoe manufacturer. She works with a key supplier of raw materials [leather and rubber] and is using a cost-out approach. Which type of relationship is most suited to this approach?

- **A. Strategic alliance**
- B. Closer tactical
- C. Arm's length
- D. Transactional

Answer: A

Explanation:

The most appropriate relationship type is a Strategic Alliance. The Cost-Out approach involves working closely with suppliers at the design and pre-production stages to eliminate unnecessary costs before they arise.

This requires high levels of trust, transparency, and collaboration.

A strategic alliance provides the framework for this partnership, allowing both buyer and supplier to share information, align objectives, and jointly innovate to reduce costs and increase value. For example, suppliers may suggest alternative materials or design modifications that lower costs without compromising quality.

By contrast:

* Arm's length and transactional relationships are too shallow to support cost-out collaboration.

* Closer tactical relationships allow more interaction but lack the depth of trust and shared strategy found in alliances.

Strategic alliances are therefore essential where the buyer needs suppliers to contribute their expertise, innovation, and commitment to achieving mutual cost savings and long-term value.

[Ref: CIPS L5M6 Study Guide, p.80 - Cost-out strategies and supplier relationships]

NEW QUESTION # 16

Bellatricks Ltd has four main categories of spend, each headed by a Category Manager. Below is a brief outline of each:

* Category Manager 1: Has a PhD and 15 years' experience. Very competent in developing specifications. Persuasion style built on knowledge, facts, and science.

* Category Manager 2: Meets deadlines, identifies actions, achieves goals. Assertive, self-assured, articulate.

* Category Manager 3: Strong soft skills, relates well to people, builds supplier relationships.

Motivates others by being passionate and creating shared purpose.

* Category Manager 4: Creative thinker, anticipates market changes, produces quick solutions. In negotiations, they see problems from multiple perspectives.

Task:

Complete the table by identifying each Category Manager's competency and style of persuasion when negotiating with suppliers.

Each response should only be used once.

Bellatricks Ltd - Drag & Drop Table



Category Manager	Competency	Style of Persuasion
Category Manager 1	—	—
Category Manager 2	—	—
Category Manager 3	—	—
Category Manager 4	—	—

Options to Place

Competencies	Styles of Persuasion
Functional Expert	Confidence
Influencer	Empathy
Innovator	Inspire
Results Seeker	Logic

Answer:

Explanation:

Bellatrix Ltd - Drag & Drop Table

Category Manager	Competency	Style of Persuasion
Category Manager 1	Functional Expert	Logic
Category Manager 2	Results Seeker	Confidence
Category Manager 3	Influencer	Inspire
Category Manager 4	Innovator	Empathy

Options to Place

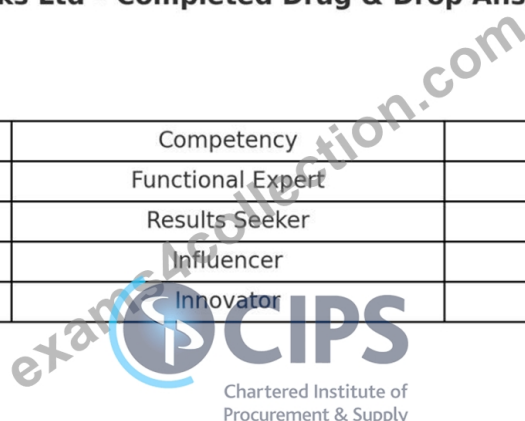
Competencies	Styles of Persuasion
Functional Expert	Confidence
Influencer	Empathy
Innovator	Inspire
Results Seeker	Logic



Explanation:

Bellatrix Ltd - Completed Drag & Drop Answer Key

Category Manager	Competency	Style of Persuasion
Manager 1	Functional Expert	Logic
Manager 2	Results Seeker	Confidence
Manager 3	Influencer	Inspire
Manager 4	Innovator	Empathy



Category Manager 1 # Competency: Functional Expert | Persuasion: Logic

This manager has a PhD, 15 years' experience and is confident developing specifications. That profile maps directly to Functional Expert-deep technical knowledge, standards, and specification ownership. In persuasion terms, the description "strong product knowledge, facts and science" signals a Logic style:

arguments are evidence-led (data, benchmarks, test results, TCO calculations). In supplier negotiations, this type will frame proposals around measurable outcomes and compliance to technical requirements, using structured evaluations and objective criteria. The benefit is credibility and clarity; the risk is over-focusing on technical detail at the expense of relationship nuance. In category work, this style suits complex, specification-driven buys (e.g., engineered components, regulated goods) where accuracy and verification matter most.

Category Manager 2 # Competency: Results Seeker | Persuasion: Confidence

"Meets deadlines, identifies actions, achieves goals; assertive, self-assured, articulate" are classic Results Seeker cues-task focus, milestone discipline, outcome accountability. The persuasion tone is Confidence:

clear asks, firm positions, and decisive proposals. In supplier meetings, this manager will set SMART targets (cost down %, on-time delivery, lead-time reduction), drive cadence (QBRs, action logs), and hold parties to commitments. The upside is momentum and delivery; the watch-out is risking supplier defensiveness if assertiveness isn't balanced with listening. This pairing works well for leverage or non-critical categories where execution speed, price movement and service levels are the primary value drivers.

Category Manager 3 # Competency: Influencer | Persuasion: Inspire

"Strong soft-skills... builds effective relationships... motivates others by being passionate and creating a shared sense of purpose" signals Influencer-credible relationship builder who aligns stakeholders and suppliers. Their persuasion style is Inspire: appeal to shared goals (innovation, sustainability, growth), energise cross-functional teams, and co-create solutions. In supplier negotiations, they'll use vision statements, win-win framing, and recognition to unlock discretionary effort (e.g., co-development, cost-out

workshops, service transformation). Strengths include engagement, change adoption and long-term partnership value; risks include under-weighting hard trade-offs if not supported by clear commercial guardrails. This pairing excels in strategic or transformation initiatives where collaboration is the multiplier.

Category Manager 4 # Competency: Innovator | Persuasion: Empathy

"Creative thinker... anticipates rapid changes... produces solutions quickly... sees problems from multiple points of view" matches Innovator-future-oriented, options-generating, comfortable with ambiguity. The persuasion fit is Empathy: actively understanding counterpart drivers (capacity, risk, margin pressures), connecting dots between perspectives, and shaping proposals that address mutual needs. In practice, this manager will run design-thinking workshops, scenario planning, and pilot trials, using supplier insights to re-frame requirements (e.g., modular specs, alternative materials, new service models). The advantage is differentiated value and resilience; the risk is scope drift if ideas aren't prioritised rigorously. This pairing is powerful in volatile markets and for categories needing redesign, sustainability shifts or new tech adoption.

NEW QUESTION # 17

Which of the following are key components to the success of a CFT (cross-functional team)? Select TWO.

- A. Members from at least 4 different functions are brought together
- B. All members have technical expertise in the area
- C. The CFT has an articulated purpose
- D. The team has endorsement from company leadership

Answer: C,D

Explanation:

Cross-Functional Teams (CFTs) are essential in category management, as they bring together expertise from different areas of the organisation. Their success depends on having a clear, articulated purpose and endorsement from leadership to ensure authority and resource allocation. It is not necessary to have exactly four functions (the guidance suggests three or more), nor for all members to have technical expertise-CFTs should balance technical, procurement, legal, and operational knowledge. Strong leadership support ensures the team's recommendations are implemented, while a clear purpose ensures alignment and focus. Without these, CFTs risk becoming unfocused discussion groups with limited impact.

Reference: CIPS L5M6 Study Guide, p.63

NEW QUESTION # 18

What is a 'black swan' event?

- A. A regularly occurring event
- B. An event that brings about a negative outcome
- C. An event that is planned for meticulously in advance
- D. An event that is random or unexpected

Answer: D

Explanation:

A black swan event is an unexpected and rare occurrence with significant impact. Examples include the 2013 horse meat scandal in the food industry, which was unforeseen and highly disruptive.

Reference: CIPS L5M6 Study Guide, p.104

NEW QUESTION # 19

What can the IACCM help a Category Manager with?

- A. Completing benchmarking
- B. Analysing the market
- C. Choosing the correct supplier
- D. Using the correct sourcing model

Answer: D

Explanation:

The International Association for ContractCommercial Management [IACCM], now known as WorldCC, provides frameworks to

help organisations select the most suitable sourcing and contracting models. For category managers, this is particularly valuable when deciding whether a transactional, relational, or investment-based model best fits the organisation's needs.

It does not directly choose suppliers or perform market analysis; rather, it guides decision-makers on the structural relationship with suppliers. For example, IACCM provides tools to decide whether to adopt outcome-based contracts, performance partnerships, or traditional transactional agreements.

Benchmarking may be a separate exercise, but sourcing models determine the governance and risk-sharing approach that underpins supplier relationships.

CIPS encourages procurement professionals to be familiar with IACCM's role, as it reinforces the need for strategic selection of sourcing models rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

[Ref: CIPS L5M6 Study Guide, p.31 - IACCM and sourcing model selection]

NEW QUESTION # 20

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