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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"> • 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.
Topic 3	<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 4	<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 STEEPLED 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.

CIPS Managing Teams and Individuals Sample Questions (Q33-Q38):

NEW QUESTION # 33

Describe 4 reasons why groups may form within an organisation. (25 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Groups are an essential feature of organisational life. A group can be defined as two or more individuals who interact and work together to achieve a purpose. Groups may be formally created by management or may form informally through social interaction. There are several reasons why groups form in organisations.

The first reason is task and goal achievement. Formal groups are created to achieve organisational objectives that require collaboration. For example, in procurement, a cross-functional sourcing group may be formed to run a tender process involving operations, finance, and procurement staff. Individuals form these groups because working together helps them achieve outcomes that they could not accomplish alone.

The second reason is social and psychological needs. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, people seek belonging and relationships. Informal groups often form to meet these needs, providing friendship, support, and a sense of identity. In Star Fish Ltd, for instance, employees working remotely may form a social group using Teams or WhatsApp to stay connected and reduce feelings of isolation.

The third reason is safety and security. Groups can give members confidence and protection when facing uncertainty or change. For example, during organisational restructuring, employees may form informal groups to share information and support each other, making them feel less vulnerable. In procurement, staff may collaborate in groups to manage supplier risks or market volatility.

The fourth reason is power and influence. Groups provide individuals with a stronger collective voice. Trade unions are a formal example, but informal groups can also lobby management or resist unpopular changes. In procurement, buyers might form a group to influence senior managers on issues such as introducing sustainable sourcing practices. By forming groups, individuals can increase their bargaining power and impact decisions.

In conclusion, groups form for task achievement, to satisfy social needs, to provide security, and to increase power and influence. Managers must understand these dynamics because groups can both support organisational objectives and create challenges if informal groups resist change. Effective leaders harness the benefits of group formation while addressing the risks to ensure both cohesion and productivity.

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

Describe 5 stages of the lifecycle of a group (25 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

The lifecycle of a group is often described using Tuckman's Five Stages of Group Development. This model explains how groups evolve over time, moving from initial formation to effective performance. The five stages are as follows:

1. Forming:

At this stage, the group is coming together for the first time. Members are polite, cautious, and uncertain of their roles. There is little conflict, but people look to the leader for guidance. For example, a new procurement project team might be established to source a new supplier. At this point, roles are unclear, and members rely on the manager to set objectives.

2. Storming:

As individuals begin to assert themselves, conflict often emerges. Differences in working styles, personalities, or priorities can lead to tension. In procurement, this might involve disagreements between finance and operations about whether to prioritise cost savings or quality. The leader's role here is to manage conflict and keep the team focused on objectives.

3. Norming:

Once conflicts are resolved, the group begins to establish shared norms, values, and ways of working. Roles and responsibilities become clearer, and collaboration improves. In a procurement context, the team may agree on supplier evaluation criteria and work more cohesively to achieve sourcing outcomes.

4. Performing:

The group is now fully functional and works effectively towards its goals. Members trust each other, communication flows well, and productivity is high. For example, the procurement team may now run tendering processes efficiently, negotiate with suppliers, and deliver strong results with minimal supervision.

5. Adjourning (or Mourning):

When the task is complete, the group disbands. This can cause feelings of loss for members who valued the team, but it also creates an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned. In procurement, this could involve completing a sourcing project, closing supplier contracts, and disbanding the cross-functional team after a lessons-learned review.

Conclusion:

The five stages of group development - forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning - describe how teams evolve over time. Understanding this lifecycle helps managers support their teams at each stage, managing conflict in storming, reinforcing collaboration in norming, and maximising results during performing. In procurement, applying Tuckman's model ensures that cross-functional teams move quickly from formation to high performance, delivering greater value to the organisation.

NEW QUESTION # 36

Explain what is meant by a heterogeneous / diverse workforce and explain one personality model that a manager could use to investigate the personalities within his/her team (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

A heterogeneous or diverse workforce refers to a group of employees with varied characteristics, backgrounds, and perspectives. Diversity can relate to visible differences such as age, gender, ethnicity, or disability, as well as invisible factors like personality, values, experiences, and thinking styles. A diverse workforce is valuable because it brings multiple perspectives, creativity, and innovation, which can improve decision-making and problem-solving. However, it can also create challenges in communication, conflict management, and team cohesion if not managed effectively.

In procurement and supply management, diversity can mean having team members from different professional disciplines, cultural backgrounds, or experience levels. This mix can lead to better supplier negotiations, innovation in category strategies, and greater sensitivity to global ethical standards. For managers, the challenge lies in understanding and leveraging individual differences to build cohesive, high-performing teams.

One useful personality model for understanding team members is the Big Five Personality Traits (OCEAN model). This model is widely accepted in psychology and provides a framework for identifying personality differences across five dimensions:

Openness to Experience - measures creativity, curiosity, and willingness to try new things. In procurement, high openness could support innovation in supplier strategies.

Conscientiousness - relates to organisation, responsibility, and dependability. A conscientious buyer is likely to follow compliance rules and deliver accurate work.

Extraversion - reflects sociability, assertiveness, and energy. Extroverts may excel in supplier negotiations and stakeholder engagement.

Agreeableness - indicates cooperation, empathy, and trust. Highly agreeable individuals may be effective in collaboration but could avoid conflict even when necessary.

Neuroticism (Emotional Stability) - refers to sensitivity to stress and emotional control. Low neuroticism (high stability) is ideal in high-pressure procurement negotiations.

By applying this model, a manager can gain insights into the personalities of their team, allocate roles effectively, and provide tailored support. For example, a procurement leader may assign highly conscientious individuals to compliance-heavy processes, while extroverts may be placed in supplier-facing roles.

The use of the Big Five also helps managers balance team dynamics, identify potential conflict, and design training or coaching interventions. Understanding personality traits supports motivation strategies (e.g., Herzberg, Maslow), builds stronger communication, and enhances trust within diverse teams.

In conclusion, a heterogeneous workforce brings significant benefits but requires skilful management to harness its potential. The Big Five Personality Traits provide a structured and evidence-based tool for understanding individuals, enabling managers to lead diverse teams more effectively and align strengths with organisational goals.

NEW QUESTION # 37

Kevin is the Head of Procurement at a manufacturing company and oversees the work of a team of 32 procurement professionals. The different people within his team have a varying level of knowledge and skills and they all work on different projects, some of which are more important than others. Based on Kevin's concern for the team member's performance and his concern for the task they are completing, describe FIVE leadership styles Kevin could employ. Your answer may make reference to Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid (25 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid highlights five leadership styles based on two dimensions: concern for people and concern for task. Kevin can use different styles depending on the skills of his team and the importance of each project.

Impoverished Management (Low task/Low people)

This style shows little concern for people or performance. Kevin would provide minimal guidance or support, essentially leaving the team to their own devices. While not usually effective, it may be applied temporarily where staff are highly capable and self-motivated, or in less critical projects where close oversight is not needed.

Country Club Management (High people/Low task)

Here, Kevin shows strong concern for people but little focus on results. He prioritises team harmony, morale, and relationships. This could be used with a new or inexperienced team to build confidence and trust, but it risks low performance if project deadlines or targets are missed.

Task Management (High task/Low people)

This style focuses heavily on performance, structure, and efficiency, with little attention to employee needs. Kevin might use this in high-pressure procurement projects, such as negotiating urgent supply contracts, where results are critical. However, overuse can demotivate staff and create high turnover.

Middle-of-the-Road Management (Medium task/Medium people)

This is a balanced approach where Kevin gives some attention to both people and results but does not excel in either. It produces average performance and morale. Kevin might use this style for steady projects with moderate importance, though it risks mediocrity if not adapted when situations demand more.

Team Management (High task/High people)

This is considered the most effective style, where Kevin drives high performance while also motivating and supporting his team. He involves employees in decision-making, sets challenging goals, and encourages collaboration. For example, in strategic procurement projects, Kevin could adopt this style to achieve strong results while also developing his team's skills.

By switching between these styles, Kevin can match leadership behaviours to the skills of his team and the importance of the task. For example, urgent, high-value contracts may need task management, while long-term development projects may benefit from team management.

Conclusion:

Blake and Mouton's grid provides five leadership styles - impoverished, country club, task-focused, middle-of-the-road, and team management. Each has strengths and weaknesses, and Kevin's role as Head of Procurement is to adapt his approach depending on the project demands and the skills of his team members. By applying situational leadership, he can ensure both high performance and team engagement.

NEW QUESTION # 38

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