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CIPS L4M8 Exam is assessed through a three-hour written examination, consisting of six questions that are based on pre-released case study material. The case study material is typically set in a real-world context, which allows candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding to practical situations. L4M8 Exam is designed to assess candidates' ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information, and to demonstrate their understanding of the key concepts and principles of procurement and supply management.

CIPS Procurement and Supply in Practice Sample Questions (Q141-Q146):

NEW QUESTION # 141

Describe three ways that hidden cost could present themselves within the logistics operation

Answer:

Explanation:

Hidden costs are costs that do not always present themselves at the onset of the project.

Logistics can provide a hidden cost within global sourcing. The movement of goods can generate risk within a localized supply chain, but the risk is greater within global sourcing. Within global sourcing there are usually many more aspects to the logistics operation, hidden cost associated with the logistics process includes,;1) delays that can be experienced after placing orders, 2) unclear and poor/incorrect communication that might affect the successes of the transaction, also 3) goods could be confiscated by customs for unseen reasons.

* Refer to the question column for response

NEW QUESTION # 142

Describe three ways in which a buyer could or test the market in other to assist with determining a need.

Answer:

Explanation:

Once the need has been understood, defined, justified and authorized, the next stages are to analyze and test the market. Analyzing and testing the market includes looking at the following

1. STEEPLE analysis
2. SWOT analysis
3. Porter's five forces
4. Level of suppliers competition
5. Supply and demand
6. Push and pull
7. Supplier segmentation
8. Product life cycle
9. Ansoff matrix
10. Early supplier involvement
11. Make or buy
12. Offshoring

1. Porter's five forces: The use of porter's five forces helps the procurement professional to understand the level of competition within the marketplace. Whether it is a monopoly, oligopoly, imperfect or perfect market. Knowing these will equip the organization to better negotiate a favorable price.

2. Supply and Demand: the procurement professional must also think about supply and demand as part of their market analysis when they receive a requisition. This economic factor has a significant effect on the prices charged and on the cost incurred.

3. Supplier segmentation: in this the procurement professional start to form an opinion of potential suppliers.. They can segment current suppliers into four categories, depending on their level of integration into an organization. This can help to inform the procurement professional of which type of supplier relationship that would be most appropriate.

NEW QUESTION # 143

What are the two options for the disposal of an asset if resale is not possible?

Answer:

Explanation:

Disposal of an asset is the final stage in the decommissioning process of a fixed asset.

When a fixed asset reaches the end of its useful or cost effective life time within an organization, the decision is made as to whether it should be removed from the premises or disposed off.

If the asset is truly at the end of its life, no longer fit for purpose, not cost effective to repair and is not able to be exchanged, then disposal is the only option; there are two options for disposal;

- 1) Take the asset to land fill site
- 2) Taking the asset to a recycling plant.

NEW QUESTION # 144

Describe three ways that hidden cost could present themselves within the logistics operation

Answer:

Explanation:

Hidden costs are costs that do not always present themselves at the onset of the project.

Logistics can provide a hidden cost within global sourcing. The movement of goods can generate risk within a localized supply chain, but the risk is greater within global sourcing. Within global sourcing there are usually many more aspects to the logistics operation, hidden cost associated with the logistics process includes; 1) delays that can be experienced after placing orders, 2) unclear and poor/incorrect communication that might affect the successes of the transaction, also 3) goods could be confiscated by customs for unseen reasons.

NEW QUESTION # 145

Analyse THREE benefits and TWO limitations of implementing structured procurement policies, processes and procedures at Nexar Consulting. (25 Marks) Nexar Consulting is a rapidly growing organisation that offers consultancy services across various sectors, including defence, aerospace, agriculture and education. Due to its expansion, Nexar has significantly increased its spending on recruitment, research, software and hardware infrastructure technology, and it has utilised numerous specialised subcontractors. During several internal meetings, a financial analyst has expressed concerns to Nexar colleagues about the current unpredictability of expenditures and the general inefficiency and ad hoc nature of the sourcing and procurement processes. The analyst pointed out that these issues prevent the company from meeting its strategic objectives efficiently and effectively. Despite the analyst's explanations that resources, time, and money are being wasted, colleagues continue to focus on their individual goals. Some colleagues argue that there are some advantages to the existing informal methods but there is no formal data to back up these statements. The financial analyst plans to formally address these concerns with the CEO and directors at the upcoming board meeting. They have proposed the appointment of a dedicated procurement team to develop and implement structured procurement policies, processes and procedures in line with a recognised set of procurement frameworks, such as those put forward by CIPS. However, the analyst knows they need to present a compelling business case to gain full support from the board for this initiative to be undertaken.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the answer in explanation below.

Explanation:

Structured procurement policies, processes and procedures are the formal rules and methods that guide how an organisation purchases goods and services. According to CIPS, procurement policy sets out the principles for how procurement should be conducted, while procurement procedures explain how tasks should be carried out in practice. CIPS also emphasises that procurement should be managed across the whole procurement cycle, from identifying needs through sourcing, contracting and supplier management.

At Nexar Consulting, procurement is currently informal, ad hoc and unpredictable. This has led to concerns about wasted time, wasted resources and poor alignment with strategic objectives. As Nexar is growing rapidly and buying more recruitment services, research, software, hardware and specialist subcontractor services, structured procurement would give the business greater control and consistency. However, although the benefits are significant, there are also some limitations that the board should consider before implementation.

Benefit 1: Improved cost control and spend visibility

One major benefit of structured procurement at Nexar would be improved control over expenditure. At present, the case states that expenditure is unpredictable and that sourcing activity is inefficient. This suggests that departments may be buying independently, without common approval routes, supplier frameworks, budget controls or spend analysis.

If Nexar introduces formal procurement policies and procedures, purchases would follow an agreed process.

For example, there could be standard requisition approvals, competitive quotation thresholds, preferred supplier lists and contract management controls. This would allow the organisation to monitor what is being bought, from whom, at what price and for what purpose. CIPS explains that spend analysis improves spend visibility, compliance and control, and helps organisations identify risks and opportunities while directing expenditure to where it adds value.

This would be especially valuable for Nexar because its spending has increased in several categories, including technology, recruitment and subcontractors. Structured procurement would make it easier to:

- * reduce duplicate purchasing
- * consolidate spend with fewer suppliers
- * negotiate better prices and terms

- * control maverick or off-contract spend
- * support budgeting and forecasting.

In analysis, this benefit is not only about saving money in the short term. It also supports better financial planning and stronger resource allocation. Since the financial analyst has already highlighted waste, a structured procurement system would help convert procurement from a reactive administrative activity into a value-adding business function. Therefore, improved spend visibility and cost control would directly support Nexar's strategic objective of operating more efficiently as it grows.

Benefit 2: Greater process efficiency and consistency across the organisation A second benefit is that structured procurement would create standardisation and consistency in how purchasing decisions are made. Nexar's current system is described as ad hoc, and colleagues appear to focus mainly on their own individual objectives. This can cause fragmented buying, unclear responsibilities and inconsistent supplier selection.

With structured policies and procedures, all departments would follow the same procurement route. CIPS notes that the procurement team oversees the steps of the procurement cycle, including market analysis, sourcing, negotiation, contracting and supplier relationship management. A defined cycle creates a more reliable and professional method for acquiring goods and services. For Nexar, this could improve efficiency in several ways:

- * staff would know exactly how to raise a purchasing need
- * standard documents and templates could reduce errors and delays
- * procurement lead times could become more predictable
- * roles and responsibilities would be clearer
- * procurement decisions would be easier to audit and review.

This matters because Nexar operates across several sectors, including defence, aerospace, agriculture and education. These are varied and potentially complex markets, so inconsistent purchasing methods could lead to confusion, poor supplier choices or service disruption. By implementing formal processes, the company would develop a repeatable method that improves internal coordination.

From an analytical perspective, consistency is important because it reduces waste caused by rework, unclear communication and duplication of effort. Informal procurement may appear flexible, but in a growing business it often becomes inefficient because each team reinvents the process. In contrast, a structured approach creates organisational discipline. As a result, Nexar would likely achieve faster and more reliable procurement outcomes, particularly as purchase volumes continue to rise.

Benefit 3: Better risk management, compliance and alignment with strategic objectives A third key benefit is that structured procurement would improve risk management and governance. CIPS states that procurement must identify, minimise and manage risks within the supply chain, including supply risk, demand risk, process risk and control risk.

At Nexar, the current informal approach creates several risks:

- * poor supplier due diligence
- * inconsistent contract terms
- * weak data security or technology purchasing decisions
- * overdependence on unsuitable subcontractors
- * lack of accountability over spending decisions.

These risks are especially relevant because Nexar buys software, hardware infrastructure and specialist subcontracted services. In sectors such as defence and aerospace, procurement errors can have significant operational, legal and reputational consequences. Structured procedures would help ensure that suppliers are assessed properly, approvals are documented, contracts are reviewed, and procurement decisions are aligned with company policy.

Structured procurement would also help Nexar link procurement activity to corporate strategy. The case states that current inefficiencies prevent the company from meeting its strategic objectives effectively and efficiently. With a procurement team following recognised frameworks such as those promoted by CIPS, purchasing decisions would be more likely to support business goals such as growth, quality, service continuity and responsible use of resources. CIPS recognises procurement as a contributor to organisational value-added strategies, not just a transactional function.

This benefit is significant because risk management and strategic alignment are often more valuable than simple price savings. A business may save money through informal buying in the short term, but if it suffers supplier failure, poor-quality services or non-compliant contracts, the long-term cost can be much higher.

Therefore, structured procurement would strengthen governance at Nexar and help the board make more informed, controlled and strategic decisions.

Limitation 1: Implementation costs and resource requirements

Despite these benefits, one limitation is that introducing structured procurement will require time, money and organisational resources. The financial analyst is proposing a dedicated procurement team, which means recruitment or redeployment costs, training costs, systems development and the creation of policies, procedures and templates.

For a rapidly growing company like Nexar, this may be seen as a burden in the short term. The board may worry that the business must invest in new people, new systems and change management before savings are realised. There may also be indirect costs, such as the time spent by managers attending training, adapting to new approval processes and working with procurement specialists.

This limitation is important because the benefits of structured procurement are often medium- to long-term, whereas the implementation costs are immediate. In other words, Nexar may have to absorb upfront expenditure before improved control and savings become visible. Some colleagues may therefore resist the proposal if they see it as extra bureaucracy without instant benefit. However, this limitation should be analysed carefully. Although implementation costs are real, they should be compared against the

existing waste identified by the financial analyst. If current informal procurement is already causing inefficient spending and missed strategic objectives, then the cost of doing nothing may be higher than the cost of implementing formal procurement. Even so, the short-term investment remains a genuine limitation that the board must consider.

Limitation 2: Possible resistance to change and reduced flexibility

A second limitation is that structured procurement can be viewed as bureaucratic and less flexible, particularly by staff who are used to informal buying. In the case, colleagues currently focus on their individual goals, and some believe the informal approach has advantages, even though no formal data supports this. This suggests there may be cultural resistance to central control.

When policies and procedures are introduced, employees may feel that:

- * purchasing takes longer due to approvals
- * they lose autonomy over supplier choice
- * procurement rules do not reflect urgent operational needs
- * innovation is restricted by standardisation.

This is a realistic limitation for Nexar because consultancy businesses often value speed, specialist knowledge and responsiveness. For example, a project manager may want to appoint a niche subcontractor quickly to meet a client deadline. If the new process is overly rigid, stakeholders may feel frustrated and may try to bypass the rules. This could reduce internal support for procurement and create conflict between departments and the new procurement team.

From an analytical point of view, the issue is not that structured procurement is inherently bad, but that poorly designed controls can slow decision-making. The challenge for Nexar would be to design policies that balance governance with commercial agility. For example, low-value routine purchases could follow a simplified process, while high-risk or high-value purchases require more formal control. Therefore, reduced flexibility is a limitation, especially during implementation, unless the procedures are proportionate and stakeholder needs are considered.

Conclusion

Overall, implementing structured procurement policies, processes and procedures at Nexar Consulting would bring major advantages. The three main benefits are better cost control and spend visibility, greater efficiency and consistency, and stronger risk management and strategic alignment. These benefits directly address the problems identified in the case, particularly unpredictable spending, inefficiency and failure to support organisational objectives. CIPS guidance supports the view that procurement should operate through a defined cycle, with clear policies, procedures, risk controls and spend analysis to add value across the organisation.

However, two limitations must also be recognised. These are the cost and resource burden of implementation and the risk of resistance or reduced flexibility. Even so, these limitations are manageable if Nexar introduces procurement in a phased and proportionate way, supported by leadership and stakeholder engagement.

In conclusion, the benefits are likely to outweigh the limitations. For a rapidly expanding organisation such as Nexar, structured procurement would provide a more professional, controlled and strategic approach to purchasing, helping the business achieve its objectives more effectively.

NEW QUESTION # 146

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