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## CIPS L5M1 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li></ul>
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li></ul>
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li></ul>

Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
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## CIPS Managing Teams and Individuals Sample Questions (Q16-Q21):

### NEW QUESTION # 16

Describe THREE ways in which a procurement professional could be biased when selecting suppliers to work with (15 points).  
What are the benefits of remaining unbiased when selecting suppliers? (10 points).

#### Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Part A - Three Ways a Procurement Professional Could Be Biased (15 marks):

Personal Relationships / Conflicts of Interest:

A buyer may favour a supplier due to friendship, family connection, or long-standing personal ties. For example, awarding a contract to a supplier owned by a relative, even if another supplier offers better value. This undermines fairness and can damage organisational reputation.

Preference for Incumbent Suppliers (Status Quo Bias):

Professionals may repeatedly select the same suppliers simply because they are familiar, ignoring new entrants who could provide better innovation, cost savings, or sustainability. This limits competition and supplier diversity.

Cultural or Geographical Bias:

A procurement professional may favour local suppliers over international ones, or show unconscious bias against suppliers from certain regions. While local sourcing can have benefits, excluding other suppliers without objective evaluation reduces fairness and potentially increases costs.

(Other possible biases include brand preference, ignoring SMEs, or favouring suppliers who provide personal benefits - but only three are required for full marks.) Part B - Benefits of Remaining Unbiased (10 marks):

Remaining unbiased means making supplier decisions based on objective, transparent, and fair criteria such as cost, quality, delivery performance, risk, and sustainability. The benefits include:

Fairness and Transparency: All suppliers have equal opportunity, protecting the organisation's integrity and compliance with regulations.

Best Value for Money: Objective evaluation ensures the chosen supplier offers the best mix of cost, quality, and service.

Encouraging Innovation: By considering a wider pool of suppliers, procurement can benefit from new ideas and technologies.

Ethical Compliance: Avoids corruption, fraud, or bribery, maintaining alignment with the CIPS Code of Conduct.

Reputation and Trust: Stakeholders and the market see the organisation as professional and ethical, which strengthens long-term supplier relationships.

Conclusion:

Procurement professionals may show bias through personal relationships, favouring incumbents, or cultural preferences. Remaining unbiased ensures decisions are fair, transparent, and ethical, leading to better value, innovation, and stronger supplier trust. This supports both organisational objectives and the professional standards of procurement.

### NEW QUESTION # 17

Discuss 5 characteristics of an effective working group (25 points).

#### Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

An effective working group is one that is able to achieve its objectives while maintaining good relationships among its members. Groups that function well display certain characteristics that ensure high performance and motivation. Five key characteristics are discussed below.

The first characteristic is clear objectives and purpose. An effective group understands what it is working towards and has shared goals. For example, in procurement, a category management group with a clear objective to deliver savings and sustainability improvements will be more focused and aligned.

The second characteristic is good communication. Open, honest, and regular communication allows group members to share ideas, raise concerns, and coordinate their activities. In procurement, effective communication between buyers, finance, and operations ensures that sourcing projects meet business needs.

The third is defined roles and responsibilities. Members of an effective group know what is expected of them and how their work contributes to the group's success. This reduces conflict and duplication of effort. For example, one procurement professional may lead supplier negotiations while another manages contract compliance.

Fourthly, trust and mutual respect are essential. Members of effective groups value each other's contributions and support one another. This creates psychological safety, meaning individuals are more willing to share ideas and take risks. In procurement, this could involve trusting colleagues to manage parts of a tender process without interference.

Finally, an effective group demonstrates strong leadership and motivation. A good leader sets direction, supports members, and creates a balance between task and people needs. Leadership also ensures the group stays motivated, particularly during challenges.

### NEW QUESTION # 18

Contrast different ways in which an individual can learn new skills/knowledge (15 points). Describe a factor which may influence how individuals learn a new skill/knowledge (10 points).

#### Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Individuals learn in different ways, and managers must understand these methods to develop their teams effectively.

One method is formal learning, such as classroom courses, e-learning, or qualifications like CIPS. This gives structured knowledge and ensures consistency, but it may lack immediate workplace application.

A second method is on-the-job learning, where skills are developed through daily tasks, job rotation or shadowing. This is practical and tailored to the workplace but may be inconsistent without good supervision.

A third approach is experiential learning, based on Kolb's cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualisation and testing. For example, a buyer may learn negotiation skills by practising in a live supplier meeting, reflecting on performance, and then improving.

Another method is social learning, as described by Bandura

a. Individuals learn by observing and modelling others' behaviour. In procurement, junior staff may observe how senior colleagues manage supplier relationships and copy effective practices.

Finally, there is self-directed learning, where individuals take initiative through reading, research or online courses. This builds independence but requires strong personal motivation.

In contrast, formal learning is structured and standardised, while experiential and social learning are more practical and situational. On-the-job learning blends practice with support, whereas self-directed learning provides autonomy but less guidance. Most organisations use a mix of these methods to ensure balanced development.

One important factor that influences learning is an individual's learning style. According to Honey and Mumford, some people are activists (learn best by doing), others are reflectors (learn by observing and thinking), theorists (prefer analysing concepts), or pragmatists (want to apply ideas in practice). For example, in procurement training, an activist may benefit from a role-play negotiation, while a theorist may prefer studying sourcing models before application. Managers who recognise learning styles can tailor development activities to individual preferences, making learning more effective.

In conclusion, individuals can learn through formal, on-the-job, experiential, social, or self-directed approaches, each with strengths and weaknesses. Learning effectiveness depends on personal factors such as style, and managers who understand these differences can create development opportunities that are both motivating and productive.

### NEW QUESTION # 19

Sayed manages a team of 3 procurement assistants within a window fabrication company - Glassy Bits Ltd. The company has been operating for 30 years and the procurement team is still paper-based. The three members of staff have been with the company for at least 10 years and are very comfortable with the way things operate. To procure items such as PVC plastic and glass to make the windows they usually phone suppliers and send paper POs which Sayed approves with a physical signature. Sayed believes efficiencies can be gained from 'going digital' and introducing e-procurement systems. He is worried at how the team may react to such a big change. Discuss the emotional stages that the team may go through when experiencing this change, and how Sayed should act in order to help navigate the team through the change. (25 points).

#### Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

When major change is introduced, employees often experience strong emotions. The Change Curve, based on Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's grief model, describes the stages staff may go through when faced with organisational change.

The first stage is Shock/Denial. The procurement assistants may initially resist the idea of e-procurement, insisting that the paper-based system "has always worked." Sayed should communicate openly about why the change is needed and provide clear facts about its benefits.

The second stage is Anger/Resistance. Staff may feel threatened, fearing loss of control or concern that they will not have the skills to manage digital systems. They may complain or openly resist. At this point, Sayed should listen empathetically, address concerns, and provide reassurance that training and support will be available.

The third stage is Exploration/Acceptance. Gradually, staff begin to see potential benefits, such as less paperwork and faster processes. Curiosity grows, and employees start experimenting with the new system. Here, Sayed should encourage participation, offer pilot training, and allow staff to test the system in a safe environment.

The fourth stage is Commitment/Integration. Once staff feel competent and confident, they fully adopt the change. At this stage, Sayed should reinforce the success, recognise achievements, and celebrate improvements, such as reduced errors or faster ordering.

How Sayed Should Act:

Communicate clearly - explain why digitalisation is important (efficiency, accuracy, competitiveness).

Provide training and support - ensure assistants feel capable of using the new e-procurement tools.

Involve the team - allow staff to give feedback on system design or pilot trials to increase buy-in.

Be empathetic and patient - acknowledge fears and provide reassurance during resistance.

Reinforce success - highlight early wins and show how the change benefits both the team and the organisation.

Conclusion:

The team is likely to experience stages of shock, anger, exploration, and eventual commitment as they move through the change curve. Sayed must act as a supportive leader by communicating openly, offering training, involving staff, and recognising progress. This approach will help the team transition smoothly to e-procurement and ensure the change is successful.

### NEW QUESTION # 20

ABC Ltd is a software development company and employs around 100 people. It's 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,

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.

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