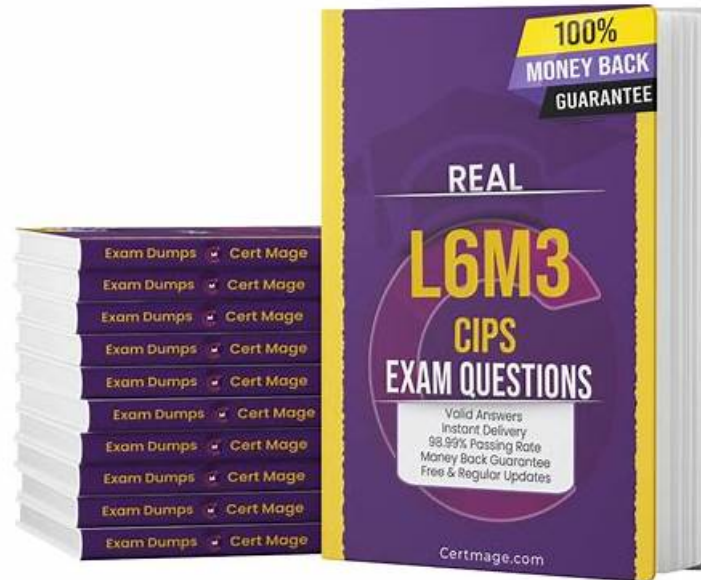


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CIPS L6M3 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how strategic supply chain management can support corporate business strategy: This section of the exam measures the skills of Supply Chain Managers and covers how strategic supply chain management aligns with corporate and business strategies. It examines the relationship between supply chain operations and corporate objectives, focusing on how supply chain decisions affect profitability, performance, and risk. Candidates are also evaluated on their ability to create competitive advantages through cost efficiency, outsourcing, and global sourcing strategies while assessing how changes in markets, technologies, and global conditions impact supply chain performance and sustainability.
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and apply methods to measure, improve and optimise supply chain performance: This section of the exam measures the skills of Logistics Directors and focuses on tools and methods to evaluate and enhance supply chain performance. It emphasizes the link between supply chain operations and corporate success, with particular attention to value creation, reporting, and demand alignment. The section also assesses the use of KPIs, benchmarking, technology, and systems integration for measuring and optimizing supply chain performance. Candidates are required to understand models for network optimization, risk management, and collaboration methods such as CPFR and BPR. It concludes with assessing tools that achieve strategic fit between supply chain design and business strategy, as well as identifying challenges like globalization, technological changes, and sustainability pressures in maintaining long-term alignment.

Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and apply supply chain design tools and techniques. This section of the exam measures the skills of Operations Analysts and focuses on using supply chain design principles to achieve efficiency and responsiveness. It includes segmentation of customers and suppliers, management of product and service mixes, and tiered supply chain strategies. The section assesses understanding of network design, value chains, logistics, and reverse logistics. Candidates are expected to evaluate distribution systems, physical network configuration, and transportation management while comparing lean and agile supply chain models to improve demand planning, forecasting, and responsiveness using technology.
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and apply techniques to achieve effective strategic supply chain management: This section of the exam measures the skills of Procurement Specialists and covers collaborative and data-driven methods for managing supply chains. It explores the evolution from transactional approaches to collaborative frameworks like PADI and the use of shared services. Candidates are tested on stakeholder communication, resource planning, and managing change effectively. The section also includes performance measurement through KPIs, balanced scorecards, and surveys, as well as methods for developing skills, knowledge management, and continuous improvement within supply chain teams and supplier networks.

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CIPS Global Strategic Supply Chain Management Sample Questions (Q11-Q16):

NEW QUESTION # 11

Global supply chains are increasingly exposed to risks such as climate change, digital disruption, and geopolitical instability.

Answer:

Explanation:

Explain what is meant by supply chain resilience, and discuss FIVE strategies a global organisation can implement to improve resilience while maintaining efficiency and competitiveness.

NEW QUESTION # 12

Describe seven wastes that can be found in the supply chain and explain how a company can eliminate wastes.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

In supply chain management, waste refers to any activity or resource that does not add value to the product or service from the customer's perspective.

The concept originates from the Lean philosophy (specifically the Toyota Production System) and identifies seven classic types of waste, known in Japanese as "Muda." Eliminating waste is essential for achieving efficiency, reducing costs, improving quality, and enhancing overall value creation in the supply chain.

1. The Seven Wastes in the Supply Chain (The '7 Muda')

(i) Overproduction

Definition: Producing more than is required or before it is needed.

Impact: Creates excess inventory, storage costs, and potential obsolescence.

Example: A supplier manufacturing paper products ahead of actual demand, leading to warehouse overflow.

Elimination Methods:

- * Implement Just-in-Time (JIT) production systems.
- * Improve demand forecasting accuracy.
- * Use pull-based scheduling driven by actual customer demand.

(ii) Waiting

Definition: Idle time when materials, components, or information are waiting for the next process step.

Impact: Reduces process flow efficiency and increases lead time.

Example: Goods waiting for quality inspection, transport, or approval.

Elimination Methods:

- * Streamline process flow through value stream mapping.
- * Balance workloads to minimise bottlenecks.
- * Improve coordination between functions (procurement, production, logistics).

(iii) Transportation

Definition: Unnecessary movement of materials or products between locations.

Impact: Increases fuel costs, carbon footprint, and risk of damage.

Example: Shipping goods between multiple warehouses before final delivery.

Elimination Methods:

- * Optimise distribution networks and warehouse locations.
- * Use route planning software to reduce mileage.
- * Consolidate shipments and use cross-docking.

(iv) Excess Inventory

Definition: Holding more raw materials, work-in-progress (WIP), or finished goods than necessary.

Impact: Ties up working capital, increases storage costs, and risks obsolescence.

Example: A retailer keeping surplus seasonal stock that becomes outdated.

Elimination Methods:

- * Apply Kanban systems to control stock levels.
- * Use demand-driven replenishment strategies.
- * Improve supplier lead-time reliability and forecasting accuracy.

(v) Over-Processing

Definition: Performing more work or adding more features than the customer requires.

Impact: Increases cost and complexity without adding value.

Example: Applying unnecessary packaging or inspections that don't affect customer satisfaction.

Elimination Methods:

- * Use Value Stream Mapping to identify non-value-adding steps.
- * Standardise processes to match customer requirements.
- * Implement continuous improvement (Kaizen) to simplify workflows.

(vi) Motion

Definition: Unnecessary movement of people or equipment within a process.

Impact: Reduces productivity and can lead to fatigue or safety risks.

Example: Warehouse staff walking long distances between pick locations due to poor layout.

Elimination Methods:

- * Optimise workspace and warehouse layout.
- * Introduce ergonomic and automation solutions (e.g., conveyor systems, pick-to-light technology).
- * Train staff in efficient work practices.

(vii) Defects

Definition: Products or services that do not meet quality standards, requiring rework, repair, or disposal.

Impact: Increases cost, delays deliveries, and damages reputation.

Example: Incorrectly printed paper batches requiring reprinting and re-shipment.

Elimination Methods:

- * Implement Total Quality Management (TQM) and Six Sigma.
- * Conduct root cause analysis (e.g., Fishbone or 5 Whys).
- * Improve supplier quality assurance and process control.

2. Additional Waste in Modern Supply Chains (The "8th Waste")

Many modern supply chains also recognise an eighth waste - underutilisation of people's talent and creativity.

Failing to engage employees in problem-solving and continuous improvement can limit innovation and performance.

Elimination Methods:

- * Empower employees to suggest improvements (Kaizen culture).
- * Provide training and recognition programmes.
- * Encourage cross-functional collaboration.

3. How a Company Can Systematically Eliminate Waste

To effectively eliminate waste, an organisation should adopt a structured Lean management framework that integrates tools, culture, and measurement.

(i) Value Stream Mapping (VSM)

- * Map the end-to-end supply chain process to visualise value-adding and non-value-adding activities.
- * Identify and prioritise areas for waste reduction.

(ii) Continuous Improvement (Kaizen)

- * Involve employees at all levels in identifying inefficiencies.
- * Encourage small, frequent improvements that lead to long-term gains.

(iii) Standardisation and 5S Methodology

- * Apply 5S (Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardise, Sustain) to maintain order, cleanliness, and process discipline.

(iv) Demand-Driven Planning

- * Implement JIT and pull systems based on real-time customer demand to reduce overproduction and excess stock.

(v) Supplier and Partner Collaboration

- * Work with suppliers to align deliveries, share forecasts, and reduce unnecessary transport or packaging.

(vi) Performance Measurement and KPIs

- * Use Lean performance metrics such as Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE), Inventory Turnover, and On-Time Delivery to monitor and sustain improvements.

4. Strategic Benefits of Waste Elimination

- * Cost Reduction: Lower operational and logistics costs.
- * Improved Lead Times: Faster flow from supplier to customer.
- * Quality Enhancement: Fewer defects and higher customer satisfaction.
- * Employee Engagement: Empowered workforce contributing to innovation.
- * Sustainability: Reduced waste and emissions align with ESG objectives.
- * Competitive Advantage: A lean, efficient supply chain delivers superior value at lower cost.

5. Summary

In summary, these seven wastes—overproduction, waiting, transportation, inventory, over-processing, motion, and defects—represent inefficiencies that do not add value for customers.

By systematically applying Lean tools such as Value Stream Mapping, JIT, Kaizen, and 5S, companies can identify and eliminate these wastes, creating a supply chain that is faster, more efficient, and customer-focused.

Eliminating waste not only reduces costs but also strengthens the organisation's resilience, quality, and sustainability, thereby improving overall strategic performance.

NEW QUESTION # 13

Discuss the impact of globalisation on supply chains.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

Globalisation refers to the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of economies, markets, and people across the world. In the context of supply chain management, it means that goods, services, capital, and information now flow freely across borders, allowing organisations to operate on a truly international scale.

While globalisation has brought significant opportunities for efficiency, market access, and innovation, it has also introduced new complexities, risks, and ethical responsibilities that supply chain managers must manage strategically.

1. Positive Impacts of Globalisation on Supply Chains

(i) Access to Global Markets and Customers

Globalisation allows companies to sell to new markets and expand their customer base beyond domestic borders. This drives growth, diversification, and higher profitability.

Example: A UK-based manufacturer can sell products to Asia, Africa, and North America through global distribution channels and e-commerce platforms.

(ii) Global Sourcing and Cost Advantages

One of the most significant effects of globalisation is the ability to source materials and components from low-cost countries.

Organisations can leverage comparative advantages in labour, raw materials, and production costs.

Example: Apparel and consumer goods companies sourcing from China, Vietnam, or Bangladesh to achieve lower production costs.

(iii) Specialisation and Economies of Scale

Globalisation enables firms and regions to specialise in what they do best, improving productivity and efficiency.

By concentrating production in specific locations and consolidating logistics, organisations can achieve economies of scale, lower unit costs, and standardised quality.

(iv) Technological Integration and Digital Connectivity

Advances in communication and digital technology - a direct outcome of globalisation - have enhanced supply chain visibility, coordination, and responsiveness.

Real-time tracking, ERP systems, and data analytics allow global supply chains to function seamlessly across continents.

(v) Innovation and Knowledge Transfer

Global partnerships promote innovation through shared knowledge, research collaboration, and exposure to diverse practices.

Multinational enterprises often adopt best practices learned in one region and apply them globally, improving overall efficiency and competitiveness.

2. Negative Impacts of Globalisation on Supply Chains

(i) Increased Supply Chain Complexity

Operating across multiple countries introduces complexity in logistics, customs, tariffs, language, and culture.

Managing extended supply chains requires sophisticated systems and coordination to maintain efficiency and compliance.

(ii) Exposure to Political and Economic Risks

Global supply chains are highly vulnerable to geopolitical instability, trade wars, sanctions, and currency fluctuations.

Example: Brexit, the U.S.-China trade tensions, and conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war have disrupted global supply routes and increased costs.

(iii) Supply Chain Disruptions and Vulnerability

Globalisation has led to long, multi-tiered supply chains that are sensitive to disruptions. Events such as pandemics (e.g., COVID-19), port congestion, and natural disasters can cause severe global shortages.

The COVID-19 crisis exposed overdependence on single countries for critical products like semiconductors and medical supplies.

(iv) Environmental Impact

Global transportation networks contribute to significant carbon emissions. The environmental cost of shipping and air freight conflicts with sustainability objectives, leading to pressure for greener logistics solutions.

Sourcing materials globally also increases ecological footprints through deforestation, pollution, and resource depletion.

(v) Ethical and Social Challenges

Globalisation raises concerns about labour exploitation, unsafe working conditions, and human rights violations in developing countries.

Organisations are now held accountable for ethical sourcing, fair trade, and modern slavery compliance across global supply networks.

(vi) Supply Chain Visibility and Control Issues

As supply chains extend across continents and multiple tiers of suppliers, maintaining visibility becomes more difficult. A lack of transparency can lead to compliance failures, quality problems, or reputational damage.

3. Strategic Responses to Globalisation

To manage the effects of globalisation, organisations are adopting new strategies such as:

(i) Regionalisation and Nearshoring

Reducing dependency on distant suppliers by bringing production closer to key markets, improving agility and reducing transport emissions.

(ii) Supplier Diversification and Risk Management

Building a multi-source strategy to avoid overreliance on a single country or region.

(iii) Investment in Digital Supply Chain Technology

Adopting blockchain, AI, and IoT to improve visibility, traceability, and real-time decision-making across global networks.

(iv) Sustainability and Ethical Sourcing Initiatives

Implementing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards to ensure responsible global operations.

(v) Strategic Collaboration and Relationship Management

Strengthening long-term partnerships with suppliers and logistics providers to build trust, transparency, and mutual resilience.

4. Advantages and Disadvantages Summary

Advantages

Disadvantages

Access to global suppliers and customers

Greater risk exposure (political, economic, environmental)

Lower production and sourcing costs

Longer, more complex supply chains

Innovation and knowledge exchange

Visibility and ethical compliance challenges

Economies of scale

Environmental impact from global logistics

Diversification and growth

Increased disruption risk from global events

5. Summary

In summary, globalisation has profoundly reshaped supply chain management. It has expanded market opportunities, improved efficiency, and driven innovation - but at the same time introduced complexity, ethical challenges, and risk exposure.

To succeed in a globalised world, supply chain professionals must adopt strategic, technology-enabled, and sustainable

approaches that balance cost efficiency with resilience and corporate responsibility. Effective global supply chains are those that are integrated, transparent, agile, and ethical, ensuring long-term competitiveness in an increasingly interconnected world.

NEW QUESTION # 14

XYZ Ltd is a large hotel chain with 32 hotels located around the United Kingdom. It has traditionally allowed different hotel managers to run their own procurement and supply chain operations. The new CEO is considering adopting a Shared Services model. Describe what is meant by this and 3 models of Shared Services that could be adopted. Evaluate which strategy would be best for the CEO to implement.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

A Shared Services Model refers to the centralisation and consolidation of common business functions—such as procurement, finance, HR, or IT—into a single, specialised service unit that serves multiple divisions or business locations within an organisation. Instead of each hotel operating independently, shared services allow XYZ Ltd to standardise processes, reduce duplication, improve efficiency, and leverage economies of scale across all 32 hotels.

This approach transforms procurement and supply chain operations from fragmented, location-based management to a strategically coordinated and value-driven function that supports the entire organisation.

1. Meaning of a Shared Services Model

In a shared services environment:

- * Core operational functions are delivered from a central unit ("shared service centre") that provides services to multiple business units.

- * The focus is on process efficiency, cost savings, standardisation, and service quality.

- * It operates with a customer-service mindset, where internal stakeholders (e.g., hotel managers) are treated as clients.

For XYZ Ltd, this could mean establishing a central procurement and supply chain management function that handles supplier sourcing, contract management, and logistics for all hotels across the UK.

2. Three Models of Shared Services

There are several ways a shared services approach can be structured. The three most relevant models for XYZ Ltd are:

(i) Centralised Shared Services Model

Description:

All procurement and supply chain activities are managed from a single central location, such as a head office or shared service centre.

Decision-making authority and operational control are consolidated.

Advantages:

- * Economies of scale through consolidated purchasing.
- * Standardised processes and policies across all hotels.
- * Strong governance and strategic alignment with corporate objectives.
- * Greater negotiation leverage with suppliers due to volume consolidation.

Disadvantages:

- * Reduced flexibility and responsiveness at local (hotel) level.
- * Risk of slower decision-making due to central approvals.
- * Potential disconnection from local supplier relationships and needs.

Example:

XYZ's central procurement team manages all contracts for food, cleaning supplies, maintenance, and IT services for every hotel.

(ii) Centre of Excellence (CoE) or Hybrid Model

Description:

A hybrid model combines centralised control with local flexibility.

Core strategic functions (such as supplier selection, contract negotiation, and category management) are centralised, while local hotel managers retain control over operational decisions (e.g., ordering and replenishment).

Advantages:

- * Balances efficiency with flexibility.
- * Local hotels benefit from strategic supplier arrangements but retain some autonomy.
- * Facilitates knowledge sharing and continuous improvement.
- * Encourages collaboration between central and local teams.

Disadvantages:

- * More complex governance structure.
- * Requires strong coordination and communication between central and local units.

Example:

The central team negotiates national contracts with key suppliers (e.g., food distributors, linen suppliers), while local hotels place orders within those contracts based on demand.

(iii) Outsourced Shared Services Model

Description:

Procurement and supply chain management functions are outsourced to an external service provider or specialist procurement organisation.

The external partner manages sourcing, contracting, and logistics on behalf of XYZ Ltd.

Advantages:

- * Access to specialist expertise, technology, and global supplier networks.
- * Reduced internal administrative burden.
- * Can lead to significant cost savings and process improvement.

Disadvantages:

- * Loss of control over internal processes and supplier relationships.
- * Risk of misalignment with company culture or service standards.
- * Dependency on third-party performance and contractual terms.

Example:

XYZ outsources procurement of non-core categories (e.g., office supplies, cleaning chemicals) to a procurement service company while retaining internal control of key strategic sourcing.

3. Evaluation of the Models

Model

Advantages

Disadvantages

Suitability for XYZ Ltd

Centralised

Strong cost savings, standardisation, and control

May reduce local responsiveness

Suitable for standard, high-volume items (e.g., toiletries, linens)

Hybrid (CoE)

Combines strategic alignment with local flexibility

Requires robust coordination

Best overall fit for mixed hotel operations

Outsourced

Access to expertise and scalability

Loss of control, dependence on third party

Suitable for non-core categories only

4. Recommended Strategy for XYZ Ltd

The Hybrid (Centre of Excellence) model would be the most suitable strategy for XYZ Ltd.

Justification:

* It provides centralised control over key strategic procurement activities (e.g., supplier contracts, tendering, sustainability standards), ensuring consistency and cost savings.

* At the same time, it allows local hotel managers to retain autonomy over day-to-day ordering, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness to customer needs.

* It supports collaboration and knowledge sharing, enabling best practices to be transferred across locations.

* The hybrid model aligns with the service-oriented nature of the hospitality industry, where local customer requirements and regional supplier availability can vary significantly.

Implementation Considerations:

* Establish a central Shared Services Centre for procurement, supply chain analytics, and supplier management.

* Introduce a standardised e-procurement system accessible to all hotel locations.

* Define clear governance policies for which decisions are made centrally vs locally.

* Develop KPIs (cost savings, service quality, supplier performance) to measure success.

* Provide training for local managers to use shared systems effectively.

5. Strategic Benefits of Adopting a Shared Services Model

* **Cost Efficiency:** Consolidation of purchases increases buying power and reduces duplication.

* **Process Standardisation:** Consistent procurement practices improve compliance and control.

* **Data Visibility:** Centralised data enables better analytics and supplier performance tracking.

* **Strategic Focus:** Local managers can focus on customer service rather than administrative procurement.

* **Scalability:** The model supports future growth, acquisitions, or expansion into new markets.

6. Summary

In summary, a Shared Services Model centralises common business functions to drive efficiency, consistency, and cost savings across multiple business units.

For XYZ Ltd, the most effective approach would be the Hybrid (Centre of Excellence) model, as it balances central strategic control

with local operational flexibility - essential in the hotel industry.

By implementing this model, the CEO can achieve greater cost efficiency, standardisation, supplier leverage, and data transparency, while maintaining the agility needed to meet customer expectations across all 32 hotels.

NEW QUESTION # 15

Describe 4 internal and 4 external risks that can affect the supply chain. How should a supply chain manager deal with risks?

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

Supply chains operate within complex global networks and are exposed to a wide range of internal and external risks that can disrupt operations, increase costs, and damage reputation.

A strategic supply chain manager must identify, assess, and mitigate these risks proactively to ensure resilience and continuity.

1. Internal Risks

(i) Process Risk

This arises from inefficiencies or failures in internal processes such as production, quality control, or logistics.

Examples include machinery breakdowns, inaccurate demand forecasting, or delays in internal approvals.

Such risks can lead to stockouts, increased costs, and loss of customer trust.

Management approach: Apply process mapping, continuous improvement (Kaizen), and quality management systems (ISO 9001) to minimise process variability and strengthen internal controls.

(ii) Resource Risk

Internal resource shortages—such as lack of skilled labour, insufficient raw materials, or financial constraints—can affect production capacity.

Management approach: Build flexible workforce planning, maintain adequate working capital, and develop dual sourcing strategies to ensure material availability.

(iii) Information and Systems Risk

Failures in IT systems, cyber-attacks, data loss, or inaccurate information flows can paralyse decision-making and disrupt coordination with suppliers and customers.

Management approach: Invest in robust IT infrastructure, implement cybersecurity measures, and maintain real-time visibility through digital supply chain platforms.

(iv) Management and Governance Risk

Poor leadership, unclear accountability, or lack of cross-functional coordination can lead to strategic misalignment and poor risk responses.

Management approach: Strengthen governance frameworks, develop a risk-aware culture, and ensure alignment between corporate and supply chain objectives.

2. External Risks

(i) Supplier Risk

This occurs when suppliers fail to deliver goods on time, provide substandard quality, or experience financial or operational failure.

This can interrupt production and increase procurement costs.

Management approach: Conduct supplier audits, develop long-term partnerships, use supplier scorecards, and establish contingency suppliers to reduce dependency.

(ii) Political and Regulatory Risk

Changes in trade laws, tariffs, sanctions, or political instability in supplier countries can disrupt international supply chains.

Management approach: Diversify sourcing across multiple regions, monitor geopolitical developments, and ensure compliance with international trade regulations.

(iii) Environmental and Natural Disaster Risk

Events such as earthquakes, floods, pandemics, or extreme weather conditions can damage infrastructure and delay logistics.

Management approach: Develop business continuity and disaster recovery plans, maintain safety stock in strategic locations, and invest in supply chain visibility tools.

(iv) Market and Demand Risk

Volatility in customer demand, changes in consumer preferences, or competitor actions can result in excess inventory or lost sales.

Management approach: Use demand forecasting tools, scenario planning, and agile supply chain models to adapt quickly to market changes.

3. How a Supply Chain Manager Should Deal with Risks

A strategic supply chain manager must apply a structured risk management process to anticipate, evaluate, and mitigate risks effectively. The following steps are aligned with professional best practice:

* **Risk Identification:** Map the end-to-end supply chain to identify potential sources of risk—internal and external—across procurement, logistics, operations, and distribution. Tools such as risk registers and failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA) can be used.

