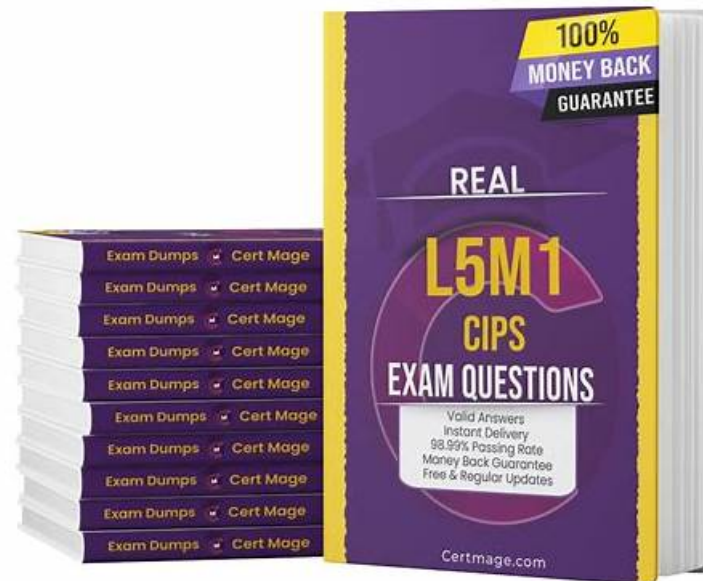


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CIPS Managing Teams and Individuals Sample Questions (Q26-Q31):

NEW QUESTION # 26

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 # 27

What is meant by 'alienation' at work? (5 points). Describe 5 factors which can cause this (20 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Definition (5 points):

Alienation at work refers to a state where employees feel disconnected, powerless, or estranged from their job, their colleagues, or the organisation. The concept, linked to Karl Marx's theory, highlights situations where workers feel that they have little control, little purpose, and no personal fulfilment in their role. Alienation often leads to low motivation, disengagement, and reduced productivity.

Five Factors that Cause Alienation (20 points):

Repetitive and monotonous work - Jobs that involve the same routine tasks every day can make employees feel like "cogs in a machine." For example, a procurement clerk only processing invoices with no involvement in decision-making may quickly feel alienated.

Lack of autonomy - When employees have no control over how they do their work, they feel powerless. In procurement, if buyers must follow rigid procedures without input into strategy, they may feel disengaged.

Poor leadership and communication - Alienation grows when managers fail to involve employees, communicate decisions, or provide feedback. Staff may feel undervalued and excluded from organisational goals.

Weak connection to organisational purpose - If employees cannot see how their work contributes to wider goals or society, they may feel their role lacks meaning. For instance, working in a cost-cutting environment without recognition of social value or sustainability can reduce motivation.

Lack of recognition or development opportunities - When employees feel their contributions are ignored, or they see no path for growth, they disengage. In procurement, failing to recognise successful negotiations or not offering training can create a sense of alienation.

Conclusion:

Alienation occurs when employees feel disconnected from their work, leading to low morale and performance. It can be caused by repetitive tasks, lack of autonomy, poor leadership, absence of purpose, and lack of recognition. For managers, reducing alienation means creating meaningful work, involving employees in decisions, and supporting development, which leads to higher engagement and productivity in procurement and supply functions.

NEW QUESTION # 28

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 # 29

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 # 30

Explain the '2 factor hygiene theory' of motivation and how this can affect the motivation of employees within an organisation (25 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

The Two-Factor Hygiene Theory, developed by Frederick Herzberg, explains what drives employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work. Herzberg argued that there are two categories of factors that affect motivation.

The first category is Hygiene Factors. These are extrinsic elements such as pay, working conditions, company policies, job security and supervision. If these are poor or absent, employees become dissatisfied. However, their presence alone does not create motivation - they simply prevent dissatisfaction. For example, in procurement, if buyers do not have fair pay or adequate systems, they will feel frustrated, but improving pay alone will not guarantee enthusiasm or creativity.

The second category is Motivators. These are intrinsic to the job itself, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and personal growth. When present, these factors actively increase motivation and job satisfaction. For instance, giving a procurement professional ownership of a supplier relationship, recognising their success in a negotiation, or offering training opportunities can significantly boost motivation.

The impact of Herzberg's theory on motivation is significant. Managers cannot rely only on hygiene factors like pay and working conditions to motivate staff. These need to be in place to avoid dissatisfaction, but true motivation comes from providing meaningful work, opportunities for growth, and recognition.

In practice, this means managers should:

Ensure hygiene factors are adequate (fair pay, safe environment, supportive policies).

Focus on motivators such as giving responsibility, offering progression pathways, and recognising achievement.

Design jobs with variety and challenge, rather than only repetitive tasks.

Encourage intrinsic motivation through empowerment and involvement in decision-making.

In procurement and supply, applying Herzberg's theory could mean ensuring staff have reliable systems and clear processes (hygiene), while also providing opportunities to lead supplier negotiations, recognise cost savings achievements, or involve staff in strategic sourcing projects (motivators).

In conclusion, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory shows that avoiding dissatisfaction through hygiene factors is not enough. Managers must also provide motivators to create true engagement and drive performance. For procurement leaders, balancing both sets of factors is essential for building high-performing, motivated teams.

NEW QUESTION # 31

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