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Managing Teams and Individuals

*[L5M1]
Core
Study Guide*

Level 5
Advanced Diploma in
Procurement and Supply

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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 STEELED 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 (Q20-Q25):

NEW QUESTION # 20

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 # 21

What is needed for a group to be effective? (15 points). Is it important that each person plays a different role within the group? (10 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Part A - What is needed for a group to be effective (15 points):

For a group to be effective, several conditions must be in place.

Firstly, the group must have clear objectives and purpose. Without shared goals, members may pull in different directions, leading to inefficiency.

Secondly, strong leadership is needed to guide the group, set direction, and balance concern for people with concern for tasks.

Leadership provides motivation and resolves conflicts.

Thirdly, good communication ensures information is shared openly, problems are raised quickly, and collaboration is smooth. In procurement, this means buyers, finance, and operations align on sourcing decisions.

Fourthly, groups need defined roles and responsibilities. Clarity prevents duplication of work and ensures accountability. For example, one person may manage supplier contracts while another handles negotiations.

Finally, trust and cooperation are essential. When group members respect and support each other, they are more willing to share knowledge, take risks, and commit to decisions. Psychological safety is key to team performance.

Part B - Importance of different roles in a group (10 points):

It is important that each person plays a different role within the group. According to Belbin's Team Roles theory, groups are more effective when individuals contribute complementary strengths. Roles may include "Shapers" who drive action, "Plants" who bring creativity, "Implementers" who turn plans into reality, and "Monitor Evaluators" who provide critical analysis.

If everyone in the group plays the same role, important skills may be missing. For example, a procurement team made up entirely of "Shapers" may generate energy but lack careful analysis, leading to poor supplier selection. Conversely, a balanced team ensures creativity, organisation, and delivery are all present.

Conclusion:

For a group to be effective, it needs clear goals, leadership, communication, defined roles, and trust. It is also important that members bring different strengths and roles, as this diversity improves problem-solving and ensures the group performs to its full potential.

NEW QUESTION # 22

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 # 23

What is meant by the 'systems approach' and 'contingency approach' to management? (20 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Theories of management provide different ways of understanding how organisations can be led effectively. Two important perspectives are the systems approach and the contingency approach. Both move beyond early "one best way" classical theories and instead highlight the complexity and adaptability required in modern organisations.

The systems approach views the organisation as an integrated whole made up of interdependent subsystems such as HR, finance, operations and procurement. It is based on systems theory, seeing organisations as "open systems" that interact with their external environment. Inputs such as people, information and resources are transformed into outputs such as products, services and stakeholder value. Feedback loops are essential to monitor performance and make adjustments. The key idea is synergy - the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. For example, in procurement, sourcing decisions influence not only supplier performance but also finance (budgets), operations (continuity), and CSR (sustainability). A systems approach ensures that procurement strategies are aligned to wider organisational goals and continuous improvement.

The contingency approach develops this idea further, arguing that there is no universal way to manage. Instead, the best approach depends on situational factors such as environment, size, technology, or workforce capability. It rejects "one-size-fits-all" rules and stresses that management must adapt. For example, in a stable market, a hierarchical structure with formal rules may work well, whereas in volatile markets, flexible and decentralised decision-making is more effective. In procurement, this could mean using strict process controls for routine, low-value items, but adopting agile, collaborative approaches when managing strategic supplier partnerships in uncertain global supply chains.

In comparison, the systems approach gives managers a holistic view of how different parts of the organisation connect and interact with the external environment, while the contingency approach emphasises adaptability and situational leadership. Together, they suggest that effective managers need both a broad systems perspective and the ability to tailor their approach depending on context. In conclusion, the systems approach stresses coordination, integration and feedback across the organisation, while the contingency approach stresses flexibility and the idea that "it depends." Both are highly relevant to procurement and supply leaders who must integrate across functions and adapt strategies to dynamic and uncertain supply environments.

NEW QUESTION # 24

Buttons Ltd is a clothing manufacturer. It began as a very small enterprise but over the last 3 years it has grown and has become very successful. The company has decided it needs a dedicated procurement and supply chain function to help source materials for its clothing. Describe the scope of the procurement and supply chain function (10 points) and explain what knowledge, behaviours and skills will be required by those recruited to work in the department (15 points).

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for Detailed Answer

Explanation:

Part A - Scope of Procurement and Supply Chain (10 points):

The scope of procurement and supply chain at Buttons Ltd will cover all activities involved in sourcing, purchasing, and managing the flow of materials needed for clothing production.

This includes sourcing raw materials such as fabrics, zips, and buttons from reliable suppliers, ensuring cost efficiency and quality. It also covers supplier selection and management, including contract negotiation and supplier relationship management. The function will ensure compliance with ethical and sustainable sourcing standards, which are increasingly important in the fashion industry.

The supply chain scope also involves logistics and inventory management, ensuring that materials are delivered on time to support production schedules and that stock levels are optimised to avoid delays or overstocking. Additionally, procurement must manage risk and continuity of supply, identifying alternative sources in case of disruptions. Finally, procurement contributes to strategic decisions by aligning sourcing activities with company objectives such as cost reduction, sustainability, and innovation.

Part B - Knowledge, Behaviours and Skills Required (15 points):

Knowledge:

Understanding of sourcing and supply chain processes (tenders, contracts, logistics).

Knowledge of ethical and sustainable procurement, ensuring materials are responsibly sourced.

Awareness of fashion industry requirements such as lead times, quality standards, and supplier markets.

Behaviours:

Professional integrity and ethics, ensuring fair treatment of suppliers and compliance with standards.

Collaboration and teamwork, working across departments (design, finance, production).

Adaptability and resilience, since the clothing industry faces rapid changes in demand and supply risks.

Skills:

Negotiation skills to secure best value while maintaining supplier relationships.

Analytical skills to assess supplier performance, costs, and risks.

Communication skills to liaise with suppliers and internal stakeholders effectively.

Problem-solving skills to manage supply chain disruptions and ensure continuity.

For example, a procurement professional at Buttons Ltd might need to negotiate fabric supply contracts while ensuring the supplier meets sustainability standards and delivers within tight production deadlines.

Conclusion:

The procurement and supply chain function at Buttons Ltd will be responsible for sourcing, supplier management, logistics, and risk management, supporting the company's growth and competitiveness. To succeed, staff must demonstrate strong knowledge of procurement processes, ethical behaviours, and key skills such as negotiation, analysis, and communication. Together, these ensure the function delivers value and supports the company's long-term goals.

NEW QUESTION # 25

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