

Monthly reflections on the journey towards excellence in Procurement and Supply Management

Optimising Investment in People

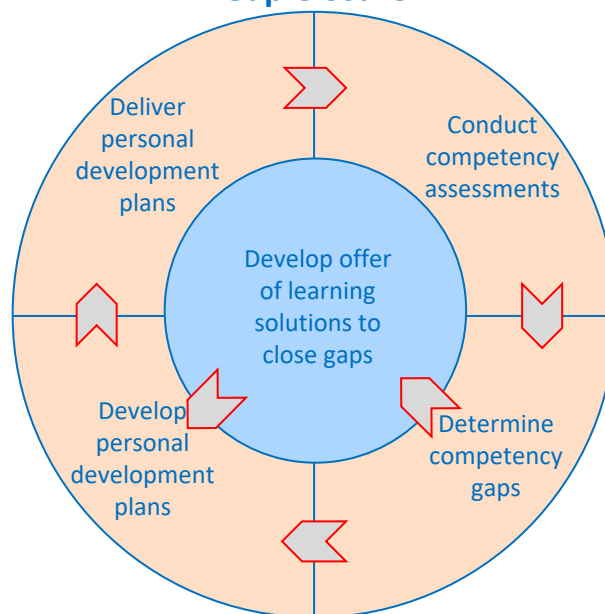
Procurement is a professional commercial discipline that requires broader and deeper skills as the function matures. Investing in people is therefore critical on the journey towards functional excellence. Many organisations take an uncoordinated and sub-optimised approach based on the development needs identified in annual appraisal discussions and/ or responding to ad hoc requests to attend courses or conferences. A faster, more impactful, and cost-effective outcome to professional development can be achieved by taking a programmatic and systematic approach.

Preparation



The starting point for such an approach should be a clear competency framework, covering functional, business and behavioural skills, that defines the required competency levels for each generic role. This should include the competencies required for a leading, strategic procurement organisation, e.g. market understanding, strategic thinking, economic analysis, risk management, and stakeholder engagement/ influencing.

Gap Closure



A skills gap analysis for each individual should then follow from which skills gaps against the requirements of the corresponding generic role would be derived. The process would need to start with the Head of Procurement with his/her self-assessment being verified by an external professional. It would then cascade down the organisation with each individual's self-assessment being verified by their line manager.

The resultant skills gap analyses should be used to inform not only the design and priorities of the overall professional development programme but also each individual's personal development plan. As well as traditional courses, learning solutions should include e-learning, coaching, knowledge hubs, focused events, networking, self-study, etc.

Of course, value is only delivered once each individual has fulfilled their personal development plan and applied their enhanced skills. A proactive and programmatic approach to implementation, with appropriate governance, would ensure that the plans are implemented in-full and on-time.

A case example of such a programmatic and systematic approach is BP's Procurement Capability Accelerator Programme that won the People Category of ISM's annual Gene Richter Awards - for more info, contact below.

If this article triggers an "aha moment" that you wish to discuss further, please contact:

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