

Recruiter: Jobwatch.org
Posted: 10/07/19
REF: GT65WA1
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Contract Type: Permanent
Experience level: Graduate



Chapter 4 Managing costs

Procurement refers to the buying in of goods and services. How these providers are selected has a big impact on the costs and performance of a business. In the job below you will see that Serco spends over £1.4bn on procurement so controlling costs is vital to the success of the business.

For this high level role you need a degree and an understanding of complex business processes. An understanding of business economics would undoubtedly help here.

Job: Procurement Services Director

At Serco, not only is the nature of the work we do important, everyone has an important role to play, from caring for vulnerable people to managing complex public services. We are a team of 50,000 people responsible for delivering essential public services around the world in areas including defence, transport, justice, immigration, healthcare and citizen services.

About the role Serco spends approximately £1.4bn globally with third party suppliers every year and procurement supports the business by understanding business requirements and providing innovative solutions from the supply market throughout the business lifecycle that reduce cost, improve service and quality and protect the business from risk. Procurement is also responsible for managing all third party supplier arrangements including sourcing and contracting and supplier and contract management to deliver competitive advantage to Serco.

Managing suppliers and contractors is a key part of managing costs; this is examined in this chapter of the book

Managers must control costs but also achieve the quality targets they have. When we examine the costs of a business in this chapter we are considering the costs given a desired level of quality.

About you

- Graduate calibre with a Bachelor's degree.
- Post-graduate qualification (e.g. MSc/MBA) or a professional qualification such as MCIPS is desirable but not essential.
- Possesses strong business acumen, able to understand

An insight into the Economics of Business would undoubtedly help here.

complex business needs and drivers and identify ways for Procurement to address.

- Has advanced experience and knowledge of procurement best practice and processes covering Category Management, Sourcing, Supplier Management and Purchase to Pay.

- Will have worked in a complex changing environment with demanding business objectives in a competitive market sector.

- Previous experience of creating, building, leading and managing successful Procurement teams.

- Demonstrates previous experience and ability to motivate, lead, coach, mentor and develop staff and enhance their performance and fulfil their future growth potential.

We examined stakeholders in Chapter 1

- Track record of strong thought leadership and delivery in procurement transformation and improved procurement practices.

- Experience of managing delivery of services provided by an outsourced partner.

- Demonstrates extensive track record of developing and maintaining strong senior stakeholder relationships up to MD and Board level.

- Possesses excellent communication skills with the ability to influence and sell at multiple levels especially senior and to Board level.

- Has a strategic mindset while being flexible to local differences and creative to encourage and seek innovative approaches.

You need a strategic awareness and so chapter 9 on strategy in this book would be helpful here.

- Is familiar with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

Not surprisingly as this is a Director role you need experience and an understanding of the environment of procurement such as the legal issues with contracts.