

Purchasing Agent Interview Questions And Answers Guide.



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Purchasing Agent Job Interview Preparation Guide.

Question # 1

Tell us what was your best/favorite negotiation; and why was it your best?

Answer:-

The responses you get will tell you more about the candidate's definition of value. With this Procurement Interview Question, you get a better view of his/her interpretation of values, style and interpersonal skills. There are a host of information available on CIPS regarding negotiation or you can find this forbs article useful to get you thinking outside the box!

[Read More Answers.](#)

Question # 2

Tell us what are your biggest Procure to Pay challenges?

Answer:-

Procure to Pay is an important aspect of the procurement function. The challenge for each procurement professional is to set-up the most streamline process.

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Question # 3

Can I ask about CIPS and its importance or any Procurement related qualification?

Answer:-

In my view, asking the candidate if he/she has ever heard about CIPS and its importance or any Procurement related qualification is also essential.

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Question # 4

Please explain how JIT Purchasing is different from Traditional Purchasing?

Answer:-

This is the question I am always asking when hiring buyers. And in most cases, people struggle to explain or they start waffling! There is a difference and you can learn the difference by reading JIT

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Question # 5

Tell us do you have any experience building a procurement team from the ground up?

Answer:-

Is the candidate a change agent? How do they work with high levels of autonomy? Sometimes, it's important that a candidate can create processes to drive the strategic vision of the organization

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Question # 6

Explain me what motivates you to do your best on the job as Purchasing Agent?

Answer:-

I was motivated by the challenge of monitoring the performance of selected suppliers, highlighting areas of concern and recommending alternatives where necessary. This gives me the sense of achievement towards the company goals and to myself too.

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Question # 7

Tell us how would you define incoterm using some leading examples?

Answer:-

Amongst the Procurement Interview Questions, this is one question every professional needs to nail.



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Question # 8

Tell us what are your targets and goals if you are hired?

Answer:-

In this procurement interview question, the hiring manager wants to learn about your ambition as a procurement professional or life in general. For me, this is one of the trickier questions and there is no easy answer.

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Question # 9

Tell us what have been the most significant achievements in your procurement career?

Answer:-

The processes or steps they go through is fundamental, and how they measure their success on the job. A clear response to this useful statement ensures you are dealing with an expert in the commodity/category.

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Question # 10

Can you tell us what is your leadership style?

Answer:-

Does the candidate have leadership qualities? Can they articulate this?

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Question # 11

Tell us why are you the right candidate for this job as Purchasing Agent?

Answer:-

This job requires me to provide logistical support to the project as needed, including vehicle management, coordinating work permits for expatriate staff, inventory reporting and control which I was perfect at in my previous job. With my dream to be an all rounded procurement professional managing disposal of property and equipment in accordance with EGPAF and USG regulations will gear me towards that.

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Question # 12

Explain me which procurement problem are you currently facing and what solution have you applied?

Answer:-

There is a variety of problems currently facing the procurement division. The mark of excellence here is how well thought out the response is. You can maintain going deeper and more profound until you get satisfied. In this question, the interviewer wants to know how broad your experience is in solving procurement problems. Make sure you think hard and find the best problem you (not your team members) have solved, what was the scenario, what approach you have taken and what was the outcome

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Question # 13

Explain me what is your procurement risk management strategy against unreliable suppliers?

Answer:-

In this Procurement Interview Question, we want to know how much you estimate your understanding of what supply chain risk management is for you. There are plenty of useful research and materials available. I have written couple of blogs on this which you might find useful.

[Read More Answers.](#)

Question # 14

Please explain how would you describe regular day-to-day activities?

Answer:-

I would prefer choosing an activity or item and plan for a negotiation strategy, then negotiate with it. In my opinion, a practical approach should be evaluated by using an existing practical issue from the Procurement domain. This will quickly show you their attitude and mindset.

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Question # 15

Top 10 Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * 1. What have been the biggest achievements in your procurement career?
- * 2. What do you like most and least about procurement?
- * 3. Give an example of a time when you have had a difficult experience with a stakeholder and how you resolved it.
- * 4. What tools and techniques would you use to implement a company-wide operational change driven by a procurement need to save money? And how would you get buy-in from stakeholders?
- * 5. What has been the hardest lesson you have learnt in procurement?
- * 6. Give an example when your perseverance resulted in a win for you and your organisation?
- * 7. Who has had the biggest influence of your career? And how have they helped shape you?



- * 8. What ongoing education are you undertaking?
- * 9. What would you like to be doing in two or three years? And what is your career goal in 10 years' time?
- * 10. What attracted you to apply for this role and to work this company?

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Question # 16

Role-specific Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * Can you explain the purchasing process step-by-step?
- * When choosing suppliers, what are the most crucial criteria to consider?
- * What is a Qualified Products List (QPL)?
- * Which are the key procurement metrics?
- * How do you keep records of supplies?
- * What is risk management?
- * Are you familiar with warehouse safety regulations?

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Question # 17

Time management Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * When you schedule out your tasks, how do you decide what to do first?
- * Can you tell me about a time when you were behind on a project? What did you do?
- * How do you manage multiple projects at the same time?

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Question # 18

Management Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * Tell me about a time when you were leading a difficult group. How did you manage them?
- * What is the most difficult part of being a manager?
- * What is your greatest achievement as a manager?
- * How do you motivate your team?
- * Describe your management style.
- * How do you choose goals to set for your team? How do you keep the team on track to meet those goals?

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Question # 19

Common Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * What is your greatest weakness?
- * What are you looking for from this position?
- * What are your professional goals?
- * What do you know about the company?
- * Why do you want to work here?
- * Why should we hire you?

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Question # 20

Experience Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * What experience do you have?
- * How have your previous jobs prepared you for this job?
- * Tell me about your management experience.
- * How does your previous education improve your job skills?

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Question # 21

Behavioral Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * Describe a time when a buyer was under-performing. What did you do?
- * How do you resolve disagreements with suppliers? Give some examples.
- * Describe a situation where you achieved a discount.
- * Have you ever had to cancel a vendor contract? What happened?
- * How do you grow your network of industry professionals, like suppliers?

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Question # 22



Purchasing Agent Interview Questions And Answers

Innovation Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * Can you tell me about a problem you solved in a unique way?
- * How do you handle resistance to your ideas?
- * Has there ever been a project where your normal processes didn't work? What did you do instead?

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Question # 23

Conflict Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * Have you had a conflict with a boss? How was it resolved?
- * How do you handle conflict among your team?
- * How do you communicate with people who dislike you?
- * How do you maintain relationships with your co-workers?

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Question # 24

Communication Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * How do you prefer to communicate with co-workers?
- * Was there ever a time when your communication failed? Why did it fail?
- * Have you ever given a speech or presentation for your job? How did you prepare? How did it go? Is there anything you would do differently?

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Question # 25

Operational Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * How do you perform market analysis? What tools do you use?
- * What would make you search for a new supplier?
- * What kind of supplier or third party management software have you experience working with?
- * How do you ensure on time delivery of orders?
- * If a supplier informs you that there will be a delay in their shipping, how would you deal with it?
- * If a department wants to order equipment that's beyond budget, what would you do?
- * How do you evaluate product quality? If you receive a defective product, how do you handle it?

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Question # 26

Decision making Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * What steps do you take to make a decision?
- * What is the most difficult decision that you've made at work? How did you make your decision?
- * Have you ever made a decision at work that you regretted? Why?

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Question # 27

Position Based Purchasing Agent Job Interview Questions:

Answer:-

- * What do you know about marketplace trends for this industry? What direction do you think the market is going for this industry? (The industry refers to the client's industry.)
- * How do you predict shifts in market trends? How successful are your predictions?
- * How experienced are you at writing profit and loss reports?
- * What cost savings did you achieve at your last position? How did you reduce costs?
- * What part of this career stresses you the most?
- * Describe your negotiation skills and tactics.
- * How do you negotiate with a difficult supplier?
- * How do you work with a supplier who is unwilling to negotiate?
- * Tell me about a negotiation that went poorly? What went wrong? What would you do differently?
- * Tell me about your most successful negotiation.
- * How do you go about researching new vendors?
- * Walk me through your typical sourcing strategy.
- * What factors do you consider when making a purchasing decision? (This might include loyalty to a vendor, location, price, quality of the products, etc.)
- * Do you belong to any professional organizations?
- * What do you do for continued professional development in this industry?

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Question # 28

What are your strengths as Purchasing Agent?

Answer:-



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Over my three years experience I have accumulated extensive knowledge of procurement policies, practices and procedures and also knowledge in tendering procedures and systems. In my previous job I successfully prepared suitable contracts in close consultation with the user departments and I also obtained competitive bids and quality discounts which reduced the company losses by 50%

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Question # 29

Tell me are there any challenges with past trends and what action plans do you offer?

Answer:-

This question covers the kind of commodities the procurement expert prefers and what level of understanding he possesses on past trends which can be applied to the here and now. A good expert always has a strategy or action plan in place to minimize risk on cost and zero shortage concerning the plan.

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Question # 30

Can you give me an example where you have to lead the cost reduction programme?

Answer:-

Since I am a supply chain guy and my focus is primarily on KPI's like Inventory, On-Time Delivery, lead time reduction and so on and so forth, which, at times, I find it contradictory to the procurement guys main aim of cost reduction.

For example, I have gone into battle with some commodity managers who have agreed a very high batch size of machined parts to get the best price, which throws my Just in Time, lean means supply chain design out of the window! So, we need to find the right balance between cost reduction and best supply chain design to meet customer service targets and operational goals.

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Question # 31

Please explain an experience, buying or selling, you successfully coordinated its activities?

Answer:-

Describing a successful experience in which he/she was a significant partaker in coordinating the activities speaks volume of his/her style and personal touch. Also, this Procurement Interview Question, would mainly tell if he/she has the required experience level you are looking for in a procurement professional.

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Question # 32

Tell us what approach and definition do you apply to purchasing?

Answer:-

Understanding the concept of buying and the processes involved while buying any product or service is essential. With this Procurement Interview Questions, you should be able to know the difference between procurement and purchasing with the provided response. Part of your response should include how suppliers are compared and awarded, specifications, which internal customers are involved, etc. With this, you also get to know if internal stakeholder's negotiations are allowed.

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Question # 33

Tell me what are the top three accomplishments in your career?

Answer:-

This shines a light on what a candidate considers to be an accomplishment and what aspects of the job they feel are most important. Is it cost-savings? Is it the fact they connected their company to the right supplier?

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Question # 34

Can you ask them about their Market intelligence and strategy?

Answer:-

This Procurement Interview Questions aims to gauge the depth and breadth of information they have coming in. A Buyer and Or Commodity Manager is only as right as the information they use to lead financial decisions they are tasked to make. If they just react to demand from a system database and supplier feedback, you are interviewing a Procurement coordinator not a Buyer.

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Question # 35

Tell us what percentage of your current role is strategic versus tactical?

Answer:-

This reveals how often candidates "roll up their sleeves," as MRA said. It can also reveal their analytical skills.

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Question # 36

Tell us what are the logic & Principle of goods and services procurement?

Answer:-

There are logic & Principle for goods and services procurement applied by most firms, and you would want to know how they work to arrive at the best deals.

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**Question # 37**

Tell me what do you like the most and the least about procurement?

Answer:-

Enjoying the job is one aspect not everyone finds easy. A real expert always loves the job yet would still have their likes and dislikes about procurement. Also, do not forget to ask questions which could ensure their integrity of dealings most importantly.

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Question # 38

Tell me why do you want to work here as Purchasing Agent?

Answer:-

Also try to look for news articles about the company, their recent successes and challenges, any information in the press about the developments of the industry they work in. Come up with concrete reasons which show your interest and enthusiasm for why you want to work for the company,

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Question # 39

Please tell me how do you manage your relationship with your supplier?

Answer:-

If you are seasoned procurement professional it is very likely that you would know the answer of this question and may talk for hours, if there is no time limit! However, don't take this question lightly. Here, the interviewer is trying to understand your ethos and technical knowledge of how you would manager supplier relationship.

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Question # 40

Explain me how you've won over a difficult stakeholder?

Answer:-

This illustrates how a candidate will go about building relationships and how he approaches dealing with resistance.

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