



FEATURE

## How to Become a Certified Procurement Clerk

A procurement clerk handles the purchasing operations of a business. This includes such tasks as processing orders for materials and supplies, compiling requests, tracking orders and answering customers' questions. Although the basic requirements for obtaining such a position with a company are that you have a high school diploma, in this technological age, employers are looking for applicants that are highly qualified. This means you should have a diploma in a computer course or a proficiency in the use of computer software gained through a course in office administration. You can gain this type of training through courses at a technical or vocational college or through pursuing a university degree in business administration. With a university degree, you can be promoted to the position of purchasing manager.

There is a wide variety of tasks involved in the job as a procurement clerk depending on the size of the company and the number of suppliers it deals with. In a small company, you may perform general clerical tasks in addition to handling the purchasing part of the business. When you receive a request for a specific product, you need to have knowledge of the inventory to determine whether it is in stock or whether you have to place an order for it. For large orders you may have to invite suppliers to submit a bid. Knowledge of working with spreadsheets is essential for this position for you to compare prices from various suppliers so you can choose the lowest one.

Working as a procurement clerk in the administrative field has many opportunities for advancement in your career. It would be beneficial to obtain certification in this

administrative field by obtaining certification from the Institute for Supply Management. A certificate as a Certified Purchasing Manager is recognized worldwide, but you do need at least five years experience working in this position in order to be eligible for admission to the program or a degree from an accredited university and three years of experience. This certificate will allow you to advance in your career by demonstrating to your employer that you possess advanced skills in the field. In order to meet the requirements for this certificate you do have to pass the modules of the exam. The Institute does have study material to help you with this process.

As a certified procurement clerk, your certificate is valid for your lifetime. Taking the courses toward this certificate will help you increase your knowledge and skills to

become an effective problem-solver and one who can make decisions on the job. If you do not already hold a university degree, a CPM certificate can be used as transfer credits for a degree reducing the number of courses you have to take. You will receive a total of twelve university credits for passing the exam – nine for the exams and three for your experience. You can also sign up to receive updates on how to improve your credentials as new courses and exams are added.

Once you earn the certificate as a procurement clerk and obtain a job in management, you can then obtain a certificate as a certified professional in supply management. If you hold a CPM and pass the Bridge exam, you can then apply for this advanced certification.

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