



**Showcasing Staff Development:
Documentation Strategy to Successfully
Demonstrate AEP Criteria 3**



Introduction

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Background:

- 23 years in Public Procurement at the County of Volusia; Director, 2020.
- County of Volusia has been awarded NPI Achievement of Excellence 17 times dating back to 2003 and have received it consecutively since 2014 through 2025; looking for 18th Award in 2026.



Agenda

1. Overview of Criteria 3: Establish a procurement staff “Professional Development” program
2. Establish a Culture of Professional Procurement Staff
3. Budget Constraints – Plan to Succeed
4. Tracking Results
5. Submission Documentation
6. Questions and Answers

Professional Development Program – Criterion 3 Summary

Continuing Education Requirements for Professional Procurement Staff

PURPOSE & INTENT

- ▶ Recognize agencies with a **planned and deliberate** approach to continuing education.
- ▶ A clearly defined, **formal professional development program** must be in place to receive points.
- ▶ Training must be **procurement-focused**; client/customer training does not qualify.
- ▶ Program must include **all full-time professional procurement staff**.
- ▶ Dedicated funding is optimal; free/low-cost webinars are encouraged for agencies with limited budgets.
- ▶ Attending occasional webinars or classes alone does **not** constitute a formal program.

ELIGIBLE STAFF & TRAINING

- ▶ **Qualifying staff:** Buyers, contract officers, procurement agents, specifications writers, contract administrators, purchasing managers.

ACCEPTABLE TRAINING TYPES

- ▶ Professional association–sponsored seminars and webinars
- ▶ Internal procurement-related training
- ▶ External procurement-related training

For conferences and webinars, descriptions must include specific titles or session names confirming procurement relevance.

Establish a Culture of Professional Procurement Staff

What does that Culture Look Like?

A culture of procurement professionalism is one where the people, processes, and values of an organization consistently reflect excellence, integrity, and continuous growth in how goods and services are acquired.

- **Continuous Learning & Development** A true procurement culture never stops growing. Staff regularly pursue certifications (CPPB, CPPO, NIGP-CPP), attend industry conferences, participate in webinars, and seek out training. Learning is seen as a professional responsibility, not just a checkbox.
- **Strategic Thinking** Rather than simply processing purchase orders, procurement professionals in this culture are strategic partners to their organizations. They analyze spend, anticipate needs, manage supplier relationships, and contribute to long-term planning and cost savings.
- **Collaboration & Customer Service** Procurement is seen as a service function that enables the rest of the organization to operate effectively. These professionals build strong relationships with internal stakeholders, vendors, and the community, balancing compliance with responsiveness.
- **Process Excellence & Accountability** There is pride in following sound procurement practices — proper documentation, adherence to policies, competitive bidding, and contract management. Staff take ownership of their work and hold one another accountable to high standards.
- **Respect for Public Trust** (*especially in government/public procurement*) Professionals in this culture recognize they are stewards of public funds. Every decision is made with the awareness that it impacts taxpayers, the community, and the organization's credibility.
- **Mentorship & Knowledge Sharing** Experienced professionals invest in newer staff, sharing institutional knowledge and fostering a team environment where everyone is set up to succeed.
- **Adaptability & Innovation** This culture embraces change — whether adopting new procurement technology, responding to supply chain disruptions, or updating policies to reflect best practices. Professionals are solution-oriented and forward-thinking.

Establish a Culture of Professional Procurement Staff

Steps to develop the Culture

Creating a culture of professional procurement doesn't happen overnight — it requires intentional leadership, investment, and a long-term commitment.

- 1. Leadership Commitment & Organizational Support** Culture begins at the top. Senior leadership must visibly champion procurement as a strategic function, allocate dedicated resources, and treat procurement professionals as valued organizational partners.
- 2. Ethics, Integrity & Accountability** Organizations must establish clear codes of conduct, enforce transparent and fair procurement practices. Ethics should be reinforced through training, clear policies, and ***a culture where doing the right thing is never optional.***
- 3. Continuous Learning & Professional Development** A deliberate, formal commitment to ongoing education ***separates professional procurement organizations from transactional ones.*** This means supporting certifications, funding training programs, encouraging participation in professional associations, and creating an environment where ***learning is viewed as a professional responsibility — not just a one-time requirement.***
- 4. Strategic Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement** Procurement professionals must be engaged as strategic partners. Building strong relationships with internal departments, leadership, and vendors ensures procurement has a seat at the table early in the planning process, driving smarter decisions, better outcomes, and greater organizational value.
- 5. Performance, Recognition & Succession** Organizations should track performance metrics, celebrate excellence, create clear career pathways, and invest in mentorship and succession planning. ***When staff see that their growth, contributions, and expertise are valued, professional pride and long-term commitment to the organization naturally follow.***

Learning should be treated as a professional obligation, not an optional perk.

Budget Constraints

Plan to Succeed

Staff is the greatest expense & our greatest asset in our annual budgets.

How to Budget for Professional Development

1. Create a development plan for your division and each full-time staff member
2. Review those plans annually before budget season begins
3. Research and update cost of certifications, classes, renewals
4. Seek out cost savings: Scholarships; Virtual vs In Person; Early-Bird Registration, Free Webinars and Classes
5. Prioritize Requests


Tracking Results

As part of Criteria 3 tracking and documenting your develop plans and training is key to a successful submission. Equally important is sharing the document results with key stakeholders to continue to show the value and results of professional development of your staff

1. Create a tracking tool that works for your team
2. Update it regularly
3. Keep records of updates to your development plans
4. Share your success stories and accomplishments achieved

Tracking Results

Tracking Sheet Example

 NPI AEP Application 2026, Item #3. Procurement staff "professional development" program - Training for year 2025 <i>(01/01/25 - 12/31/2025)</i>		PA = Procurement Analyst														
Dates	Course Name & Description <i>Include <u>projected training through end of year</u>.</i>	Chestnut, Meghan P A II	Ditslear, Jennifer Activity Project Manager	Duckworth, John Sr. P A	Fegley, Inga Sr. P A	Freedman, Tabatha Sr. P A	Jankowich, John P A II	Kokitus, Andrew Sr. P A	Lassiter, Lacey P A II	Ott, Karissa P A II	Resto, Shaira Procurement Manager	Sewarski, Jalene P A II	Smith, Lisa P A II	Williams, Kathy Procurement Manager	Pam Wilsky P&C Director	Ott, Heidi P A II
01/30/25	Annual Security Awareness Training	1	1								1	1				
02.27.25	Webinar - Putting the Pieces in Place: Solving the Puzzle of Connecting Supplier Evaluations, Scorecards, and Ratings	1		1				1								
04/23/25	NIGP Headliner: Tariffs and the New World Order: What's a Buyer to do?	1.5								1.5						
09/19/25	CFC NIGP Workshop - Suppliers Beyond the Bid, Rent Vs Own, Federal Grants	3		3	3											
02/14/25	NIGP: On Demand: Procurement Jump Start Bundle	18.5														
07/15/25	Webinar: Executive Briefing - Procurement as Agent of Change: Balancing Stability and Adaptation	1														
12/05/25	Membership Meeting and State of the Chapter	0														
03/28/25	CFC NIGP Workshop - Procurement AI, Supplier Relationships, & Leadership		3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5		3.5							3.5	
02/13/25	Pavilion Training			1	1		1	1						1		
04/23/25	NIGP Headliner: Tariffs and the New World Order: What's a Buyer to do?			1.5	1.5		1.5							1.5		
01.23.25	Webinar - Refresh and Renew: Leverging Collaboration and Networks for a Better 2025				1											
01.29.25	Webinar: Manage Your Solicitation like a Project Manager: Optimizing Procurement Processes for Efficiency and Success				1			1				1				

Submission Documentation

4 Key Elements

1. Narrative of your program
2. Documentation of Professional Development Program and any updates to the program
3. Full Time Staff Member listing including their position
4. Training Tracking Sheet for training completed in past year and training planned current year.

Questions and Answers





Thank You!

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