Procurement’s transformation is powered by people. As the function becomes more strategic, collaborative, and technology-driven, talent and skill requirements change. Oxford Economics and SAP surveyed more than 1,000 senior procurement executives and non-executive procurement practitioners around the world to map the future of the function. Here’s what you need to know about how the right talent strategies can help make your vision for the future a reality.

### The Future of Procurement

#### The Human Challenge

Strategies vary for luring skilled workers to the procurement function. **Procurement jobs are demanding—and practitioners say they often lack the time and resources they need.**

**Satisfied employees**... yet procurement is a pretty satisfying job. 55% of practitioners are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs—much higher than the average worker satisfaction rate in SAP’s Workforce 2020 study. 56% plan to stay in the procurement or supply-chain function long term. 74% of respondents say the procurement function is an excellent or good training ground for other areas of the business.

### Strategies vary for the future

*Practitioners say they either are not proficient or only slightly to moderately proficient in these areas*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy/Business acumen</th>
<th>Soft/People skills</th>
<th>Negotiation</th>
<th>Data analysis and critical thinking</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Supply-chain management</th>
<th>Risk management</th>
<th>Procurement/Supply-chain technology</th>
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<td>Executives</td>
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<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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</tr>
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### Procurement jobs are demanding—do not always look for eye-to-eye with executives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruiting new talent</th>
<th>Outsourcing</th>
<th>Supplier innovation programs</th>
<th>Training/Upskilling programs</th>
<th>Procurement/Supply-chain technology</th>
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Keep in mind, your team will also be more likely to have a clear understanding of all lines of business. 53% are more likely to have a clear understanding of all lines of business.

### The Future of Procurement is built on well-informed, well-compensated workers.

**Executive**

- Executives think their skills are at least moderately difficult to find.

**Practitioners**

- Practitioners think their skills are either not proficient or only slightly to moderately proficient.

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"If the head of procurement has a good, strong vision, and the team understands what that vision is, there will be more common ground.

Chief Procurement Officer, large US financial institution

I would rather the company focused on automating invoice management and efficiency gains...

Just 29% believe procurement has the right skills to support the enterprise in a digital way as a goal for the current team of employees. 54% plan to go in a different direction to meet the needs of the business, and 56% say the company has already started implementing those changes.

"It’s only a matter of time before we’re looking for someone with some knowledge of data science and analytics." 88% of practitioners say they have identified data science and analytics as a major requirement for new hires.

51% of respondents say they don’t have the necessary skills or experience to take on strategic endeavors. 26% say they do not have the necessary skills or experience to tell procurement how to do its job. 37% of respondents say senior procurement leaders do not have a clear idea of the company’s future procurement requirements.

### Keep your team engaged

**Employees**

- Are more likely to have a clear understanding of all lines of business.

**Practitioners**

- Are more likely to have a clear understanding of all lines of business.

### Surveyed by...