

New

Ministry

Service Alberta

Describe: Basic Job Details

Position

Position ID

Position Name (30 characters)

Senior Category Specialist

Requested Class

Job Focus

Supervisory Level

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

Employee

Employee Name (or Vacant)

Organizational Structure

Division, Branch/Unit

☐ Current organizational chart attached?

Supervisor's Position ID

Supervisor's Position Name (30 characters)

Supervisor's Current Class

Design: Identify Job Duties and Value

Job Purpose and Organizational Context

Why the job exists:

The Procurement Services branch is responsible for the Government of Alberta's (GoA) mandate for efficient, open and transparent procurement. The Branch allows ministries to meet essential and complex program goals, by leading or facilitating cost effective procurement in a fair and equitable manner, in alignment with national & international trade agreements and provincial legislation. Procurement Services has responsibilities for GoA corporate purchasing, warehousing services, surplus sales, inter-provincial trade, vendor relationship management, corporate card program management, and category management.

The Senior Category Specialist specializes in and leads a unique portfolio of several "spend categories" that combine to represent approximately one fifth of all GoA purchasing. Examples of such categories include: contingent labour, vehicles, or furniture. The Senior Category Specialist is the singular, provincial expert in these spend categories. This includes continuous monitoring of emerging market trends, coordinating procurement strategies, managing vendor relationships, influencing demand for purchasing, and providing expert guidance within and outside GoA.

The work of the Senior Category Specialist involves acting as a single point of contact for purchasers across GoA (and MASH sector) and prospective vendors within their spend category. The Senior Category Specialist not only leads/facilitates procurements for the category, but also plans and coordinates novel approaches to optimize the end-to-end utility of those procurements across the province.

Responsibilities

Job outcomes (4-6 core results), and for each outcome, 4-6 corresponding activities:

1. Demand Planning -- Goods and services purchasing within each spend category is economized via effective, specialized business intelligence forecasting.

The Senior Category Specialist integrates relationships across the province to ensure procurement planning is informed by appropriate GoA program planning. For example, the position:

- Pro-actively seeks and assesses market and supply chain impacts on provincial programming, and undertakes problem-solving to mitigate impacts before they affect GoA goals.
- Identifies needs and barriers of programs, including social and political considerations, regional issues and market contexts, to predict evolving provincial purchasing requirements.
- Interprets demand plan submissions from departments and MASH sector organizations, to identify potential gaps or considerations.
- Leverages varied sources of program data across the province to resolve demand planning ambiguities, redundancies or gaps.
- Analyzes systemic demand gaps and develops new options for provincial program owners to improve purchasing efficiency.

2. Procurement Projects -- Goods and services purchasing within each spend category is supported by appropriate procurement practices, in alignment with national/international trade agreements, provincial legislation, and best practices.

The Senior Category Specialist utilizes extensive knowledge of procurement legislation and best practices, trade agreements, and supply chain management to deliver procurement projects within each assigned spend category. For example, the position:

- Applies advanced knowledge of GoA systems (e.g. 1GX, Ariba, Alberta Purchasing Connection) to implement and track procurement projects.
- Translates program needs into appropriate solicitation documents, requirements documents, evaluation plans, and other procurement tools.
- Ensures appropriate procedures are followed for bid evaluation, including coordinating with clients and vendors throughout the tendering process.
- Determines recommendations for contract awards, creates resulting contracts, and coordinates briefings and other approvals to delegated decision-makers in GoA ministries.
- Ensures appropriate monitoring of goods and services availability/pricing/provision in accordance with contract terms and conditions.
- Arbitrates or provides expert advice in vendor complaints and contract disputes.

3. Continuous Improvement -- Goods and services purchasing within each spend category is optimized via continuous improvement initiatives.

The Senior Category Specialist draws on market research, network intelligence, and awareness of provincial program priorities to improve efficiency and effectiveness of long term category purchasing. For example, the position:

- Identifies creative opportunities to consolidate purchasing power across GoA clients and MASH sector, and makes recommendations to influence program implementation decisions that will permit these consolidations.
- Interprets, analyzes and communicates evolving trends, markets, and contexts as they relate to spend categories, and uses this information to design new go-to-market strategies for procurements.
- Contributes to policy recommendations that do not yet have precedent, in support of innovative contracting/procurement approaches that affect provincial purchases.
- Supports feasibility studies and environmental scans to ensure availability of up-to-date competitive intelligence for the province.

4. Stakeholder Engagement -- Goods and services purchasing within each spend category is strengthened with appropriate internal and external stakeholder engagement.

The Senior Category Specialist leads development of strategic alliances, partnerships and networks to ensure viable, long term procurement feasibility in the province. For example, the position:

- Leads complex stakeholder consultations and independently represents GoA interests at meetings and working groups that will affect provincial program outcomes.
- Applies deep knowledge of stakeholders and program needs to resolve disputes and bring closure to complex procurement issues.
- Anticipates reactions to potential procurement approaches and works proactively to mitigate concerns among GoA/MASH purchasers and the vendor community.
- Influences ministry purchasing approaches by exercising a high degree of interpersonal skills, and by effectively positioning ideas and content.
- Supports training/guidance on procurement and category management methodology.
- Contributes to industry capacity by fostering awareness of provincial procurement approaches among vendors.

5. Leadership and Accountability -- The unit is a high-performing team, working toward a common goal of providing the best procurement services for the GoA.

The Senior Category Specialist leads the province in all matters relevant to their spend categories, within the context of public sector constraints. For example, the position:

- Exercises appropriate judgement, within the framework of existing policy, when completing tasks.
- Fosters a culture of mutual trust and respect among colleagues, managers, clients and stakeholders.
- Cultivates a strong commitment and ethic toward service excellence.
- Assures appropriate maintenance and security of records, including appropriate disposition of transitory information.
- Ensures projects meet the requirements of management and executive leadership across the GoA.

Problem Solving

Typical problems solved:

Through the development of new and creative category management approaches and procurement strategies, the position must act as a change agent and must lead the province in finding solutions to various purchasing problems. Issues that arise in the position may be complicated and require solutions that are implemented over the long term (compared to “quick fix”/short term solutions).

Typical problems faced by this position include:

- Negotiating among parties with separate interests and agendas (e.g. inter-divisional interests, business and industry, stakeholder organizations and government).
- Influencing the acceptance of new and innovative ideas.
- Providing leadership in the realm of procurement service, while respecting program decision-making.
- Lack of precedents to follow when developing initiatives.

The Senior Category Specialist influences key stakeholders (such as industry leaders and client ministry executives) in a manner that will improve overall program outcomes for Albertans, while addressing the ongoing challenges of the evolving markets and supply chains (e.g. fiscal situation, cost of fuel, international disputes, etc.). The Senior Category Specialist must develop solutions that are mutually satisfactory for all parties.

In many cases, the precise nature of the problem to be solved is itself ambiguous, and solutions are unknown/unprecedented. The work has the potential to be contentious. Strategies push the boundaries of what is commonly expected.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

The position works under broadly defined guidelines and practices, including Trade Agreements and the Government Organization Act. But as the subject matter expert of their spend categories, the Senior Category Specialist is required to work with considerable independence and minimal past precedents.

Administrative (not technical) supervision is provided by the manager. Strategic direction is obtained from purchasing clients, which could include executives in other departments.

Due to the uniqueness of each spend category, and the level of specialization required to effectively coordinate the network of stakeholders and market issues in the portfolio, access to internal technical peers in GoA is limited.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

Work performed affects the GoA as a whole, including extended stakeholders outside of the GoA such as the MASH sector, vendor community, and purchasing organizations in other provinces.

Effective procurements are vital to the province as they affect all Albertans, with a direct impact on expenditures and provincial program outcomes. The Senior Category Specialist must remain continuously sensitive to the larger political and societal context in which the key procurement objectives are to be achieved.

Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

This position works with category teams including different subject matter experts, stakeholders and ministries. Liaises across government, providing category expertise and pertinent guidance and leadership. The Senior Category Specialist measures performance of the team and initiatives, and oversees the delivery of expected results.

Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

Education Level	Focus/Major	2nd Major/Minor if applicable	Designation
Bachelor's Degree (4 year)	Other	Other	Other

If other, specify:

Supply Chain Management Professional (SCMP) or similar.

Job-specific experience, technical competencies, certification and/or training:

Job-specific experience:

- Experience in the public sector.
- Knowledge of program models and current research regarding trends in spend categories.
- Knowledge and experience in motivating others to achieve diverse and broad goals.
- Demonstrated ability to build effective working relationships with multiple stakeholder groups.
- A strong knowledge of the administrative structures of government.
- Budget, contract and project coordination experience
- Expert knowledge of markets, issues and trends within assigned spend categories.
- Extensive knowledge of contracting process including planning, tendering and selection, negotiating and preparing contracts, monitoring and evaluation.

Technical competencies:

- Category Strategy development and management, negotiation, and business partner needs (business area understanding)
- Strategic sourcing experience, including those related to Services categories (ex: IT Services, Professional Services or Contingent Labour, Engineering Services etc.)
- Proven ability to negotiate complex agreements and manage service levels over time with suppliers to sustain the negotiated contract value.
- Understanding of applicable trade agreements (NWPTA, CFTA, CETAWTO)
- Expert knowledge of contract terms & conditions
- Complete understanding of category management methodology, contracting and pricing models
- Understanding of public sector procurement rules and regulatory compliance

- Understanding of relevant supply market structure and value levers
- Deep knowledge of the procurement process and supplier relationship management
- Strong business, project and change management acumen with a results focus
- Strong strategic, analytical, and decision making skills
- Proficiency with analytics tools and industry standard procurement and supply chain technologies

Certification:

University graduation in a related field, plus 6 years progressively responsible related experience.

Behavioral Competencies

Pick 4-5 representative behavioral competencies and their level.

Competency	Level					Level Definition	Examples of how this level best represents the job
	A	B	C	D	E		
Systems Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Takes a long-term view towards organization's objectives and how to achieve them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes holistic long-term view of challenges and opportunities • Anticipates outcomes and potential impacts, seeks stakeholder perspectives • Works towards actions and plans aligned with APS values • Works with others to identify areas for collaboration 	by always considering the entire APS and its workforce, along with the various processes used by different areas, and ensure a consistent approach to reporting is applied.
Creative Problem Solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Engages the community and resources at hand to address issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages perspective to seek root causes • Finds ways to improve complex systems • Employs resources from other areas to solve problems • Engages others and encourages debate and idea generation to solve problems while addressing risks 	many of the requests taken on by this role will require additional probing to determine the key business question. This role is expected to triage each request to get at the root problem in order to maximize business alignment. Further, a variety of potential solutions is available, so determination of the most appropriate one will also require problem-solving skills.
Drive for Results	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Takes and delegates responsibility for outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses variety of resources to monitor own performance standards • Acknowledges even indirect responsibility • Commits to what is 	by providing information and data that directly impacts decision-making at the people leader and executive levels, and providing prompt and accurate information and data issue resolution. This role is an integral

		good for Albertans even if not immediately accepted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches goals consistent with APS direction 	member of a high performing team and contributes to a culture of continuous improvement.
Build Collaborative Environments	○ ○ ● ○ ○	Collaborates across functional areas and proactively addresses conflict: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages broad thinking on projects, and works to eliminate barriers to progress • Facilitates communication and collaboration • Anticipates and reduces conflict at the outset • Credits others and gets talent recognized • Promotes collaboration and commitment 	by engaging others to think broadly about impacts of projects and work to bring differing perspectives together. The ability to be collaborative, network, influence without direct authority, and lead diverse teams will be key in your success as a category specialist.
Develop Networks	○ ○ ● ○ ○	Leverages relationships to build input and perspective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks broadly to engage stakeholders • Open to perspectives towards long-term goals • Actively seeks input into change initiatives • Maintains stakeholder relationships 	by being part of the central hub for spend reporting and data analytics in the APS, this position will require strong communication and the ability to maintain collaborative partnerships within your team, Service Alberta and with other departments.
Agility	○ ○ ● ○ ○	Identifies and manages required change and the associated risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies alternative approaches and supports others to do the same • Proactively explains impact of changes • Anticipates and mitigates emotions of others • Anticipates obstacles and stays focused on goals • Makes decisions and takes action in uncertain situations and creates a backup plan 	this role will continuously have multiple deadlines and priorities as part of the program delivery. The ability to move seamlessly between them is required, including those required urgently by high profile stakeholders. Sees the need and readily steps into co-workers' tasks to help out when needed