DAY IN THE LIFE:
PROCUREMENT MANAGER

Gwynne Morgan – Head of Procurement – London Zoo

Describe the main responsibilities of your role.

My main responsibilities include digging into current agreements, setting up supplier meetings, making savings, rolling out a purchase to pay system and helping staff purchase a whole host of various items – recently these have included venom proof snake bite gloves, scales for lions and enough food to feed an army.

How does your average day start?

It usually starts with the sound of gibbons making their hooting calls and ends with the lions roaring. There’s no average day at the zoo, it’s so varied.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I love working in an organisation where people are passionate about the work they do and the animals they care for. I also enjoy passing by our spider monkeys who are always keen to swing over and say hello.

What is the most fulfilling part of your role?

Making a difference; improving supplier service for our staff is very fulfilling, but knowing that any cost savings we make will help our conservation work around the world is also very satisfying. ZSL is as much about conservation and science as it is about being a zoo, and we want procurement to be a part of that.

What is the most difficult part of your job?

Finding enough time to do everything...having a Procurement Team at ZSL is very new which means there is a lot to do – locating contracts, understanding current services, putting process in place, assisting and educating staff. We’re doing it all in bite size chunks at the moment with a long term plan in mind.
What do you feel are the key skills needed to be successful in your role?

Good communication skills and sound procurement knowledge. The ZSL staff are a wonderful group of people and it’s important that we engage with them, understand current processes and then work with them to make improvements. A new team must get out and meet the staff, stay customer focused and re-assure them that the changes we are making will be beneficial.

How and why did you get started in the profession?

I initially started in Facilities Management, and then moved into Contract Management which later became Procurement. It’s not unusual to start in a different department and end up working in procurement – I’m one of those people.

Are you a CIPS member and if so how has CIPS helped you in your career?

Yes. CIPS offers some good seminars, qualifications and enables you to carry out your work with confidence.

What advice would you give someone who wants to progress to your position?

Stay true to yourself. We’re all different and have particular strengths to bring to the table. Recognise yours but, more importantly, recognise the strengths of others – you won’t be able to do the job all by yourself, so find the right team and be prepared to trust them.

What do you think the next step in your career will be?

Hmmm, maybe a zoo keeper…

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