

# Educational Procurement JOURNAL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROCUREMENT

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**Customer Service: Educational  
Procurement's New Value Proposition**

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**Telling Your Story Through Performance Metrics**





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*Sitting:* Tim Hill. *First Row:* Todd Mortensen, Terry Hatch, Park Romney, Doug Buhler, Susan Linford, Cebre Allen, Roland Nelson. *Second Row:* Craig Passey, Ginger Miller, Jake Packer, Chris Clark, Tom Chapman. *Standing:* Megan Rogers, Makayla Johnson

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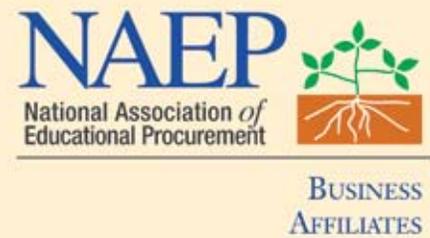
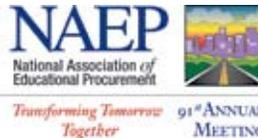
Once in a while it is of great value to learn how to do something well by learning how to do it terribly. This is no truer than with... "the dreaded meeting."

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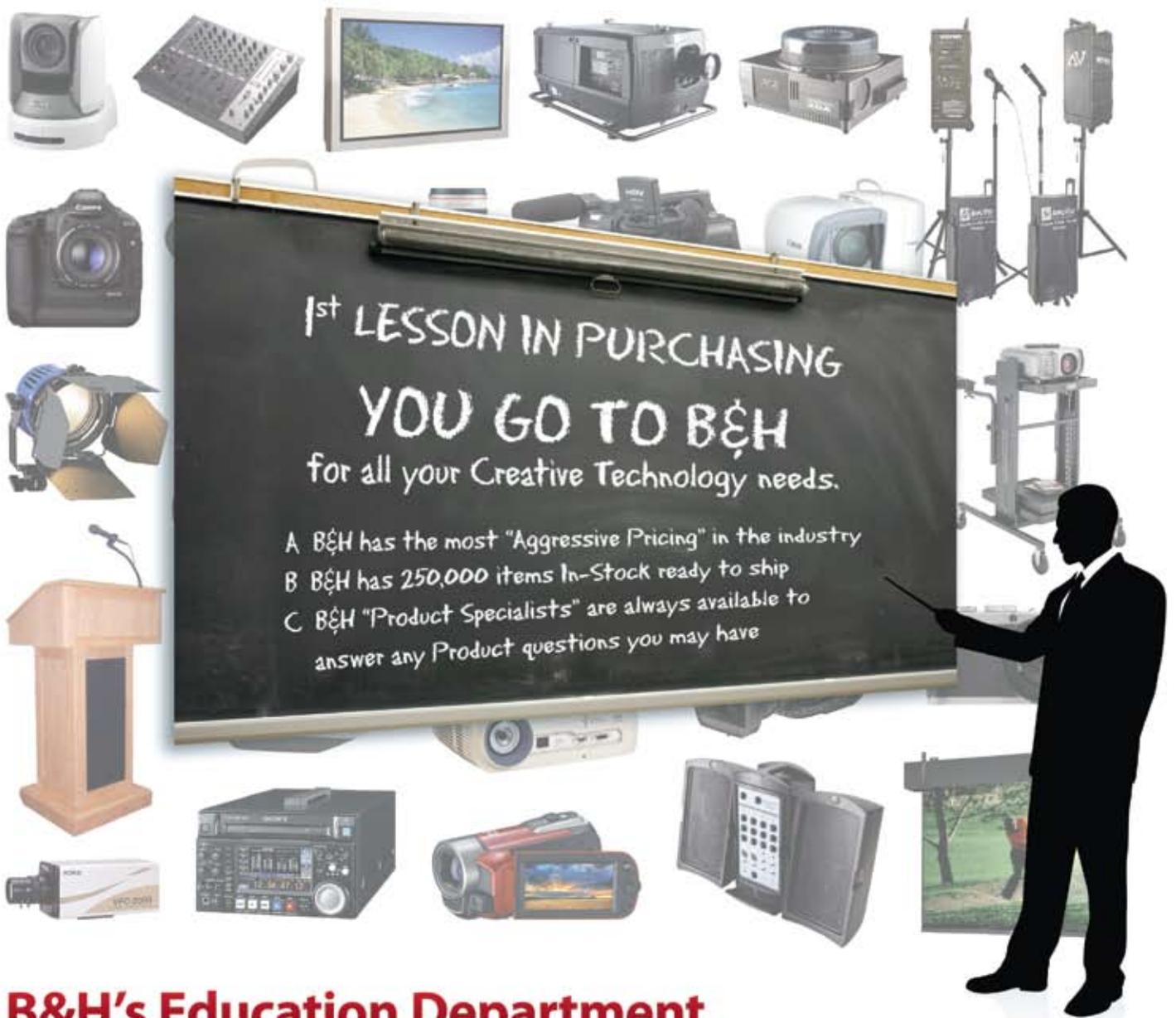
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**Doreen Murner**  
CEO, NAEP

**No Matter Where You Go,  
There You Are**

**M**y staff and I have had the privilege of travelling all around the country to attend several of our Association's fall regional meetings—five of those meetings in less than four weeks! Each region has its own unique spin, but what my travels consistently reinforce is that no matter how different states may operate, people are the same. We all thrive when we feel connected to something larger than ourselves. We all feel understood and connected when we are with people who share an interest, a passion, an objective.

So even though the sessions were different, the venues were different, and the food was different, no matter where I went, there I was, engaged in conversations with Members who are looking for ways to innovate, collaborate, and help their institutions reach their goals.

TAGM's *Build a Better University* theme offered sessions focused on the unique challenge of navigating laws, policies, and procedures while attempting to procure goods and services cost effectively and efficiently as we strive to provide outstanding customer service.

The Upstate New York Region of NAEP joined together with the State University of New York Purchasing Association with a theme of *Together Toward Tomorrow* and featured keynote Meagan Johnson who spoke on *Zap the Gap—How to Zap the Invisible Gap Between the Generations in the Workplace*.

The MINK and Minnesota/Dakotas regions joined forces for their meeting in September



in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and offered Members sessions on technology licensing, dealing with natural disasters, and IT security. Their keynoters—Gloria Schaefer and Malcom Chapman—offered insights into work/life balance, motivation, and humor to make sure that procurement doesn't lose sight of the important things in life.

And that's just a little taste of what went on all across this country. During October, we had several regional meetings, including New England in Hyannis, Massachusetts; all of our west coast regions collaborating on a district meeting (District VI), which was in Albuquerque, New Mexico, during the hot air balloon festival; TOAL; Great Lakes; District II. As I write this, a few regions, including the Carolinas and Florida, have not yet had their meetings. The strong turnout at these events speaks to the importance of these local meetings, the relevance of NAEP, and the continued need for higher education procurement to come together to confront shared challenges, brainstorm solutions, and share innovations with one another. In our most recent Member survey, our Members told us that NAEP is essential to their career.

NAEP Members tell us that their key sources of product and service information are **networking with their NAEP Colleagues (85%)**, **NAEP Listservs (72%)**, and **NAEP Journal (42%)**. So, unlike that picture to the left, this is not just a lot of hot air. Remember: No matter where you go, here *we* are to support you, both regionally and nationally, and it is both an honor and a pleasure to do so!

*Doreen Murner*



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# Customer Service: Educational Procurement's New Value Proposition



**by W. Timothy Hill, C.P.S.M.**  
*Brigham Young University*

I remember back in the early 1980s when I started my career in purchasing at a small college in South Eastern Idaho. I was hired as a Junior Buyer and assigned a desk, a telephone, a 10-key calculator, and a large in-box as my primary work tools. I also noticed a tattered and well-used Rolodex file—loaded with contact information—left for me by my predecessor. On my first day of work, my trainer showed me the large stack of pink-colored purchase requisition forms loaded in my newly acquired inbox and explained briefly to me that my job was to call the vendors in the Rolodex and buy from them the things listed on the purchase requisitions, and the most important thing to do in the process was to save money for the institution.

I picked up the first requisition for two IBM Selectric typewriters to be purchased from a local business machines supplier. The Rolodex said we had a contract with the supplier, so I called to place the order, with saving money as my primary focus. The vendor confirmed the contracted price, which I promptly told him wasn't good enough. He acted surprised by my tenacity and after about 15 minutes of haggling, he offered me a "today-only \$10 off on each typewriter" (I'm sure it was just to get rid of me). I excitedly called the requesting department to introduce myself and to inform

them that they had saved money on the purchase, to which they bluntly replied, "But where are the typewriters? I expected them days ago!"

I was completely deflated that my efforts didn't seem to matter, and I received my very first inclination that what purchasing thought was a key value proposition may be actually run counter to some customers' expectations. Incidentally, I learned later that I was expected to turn in a report to management detailing all of my savings for the week and whichever buyer recorded the highest savings numbers was highly recognized. In addition, our Office Manager took that data to his meeting with the college President once a month to justify the existence of the Purchasing Office.

Years later, as the new Managing Director of the multi-campus enterprise that included this very same college, I found myself heading to my newly appointed superior's office to make that same annual presentation with the same savings data collected from all of the enterprise organizations. I proudly presented persuasive cost-reductions, cost-avoidances, total-cost-of-ownership savings, shortened project ROIs, and other data. I was certain all this would solidify our department's continued value to the organization. At the completion of the presentation, my audience of one

yawned, rocked back in his chair stared me down and bluntly challenged, "Any good procurement organization should save money, we expect that. But what really does your organization do for this university and the faculty and students who labor here? How do you and your department directly contribute to the actual learning experience that takes place here?" I remember mumbling something about contracts, negotiations, policy formulation/enforcement, and risk mitigation. As I looked into his eyes, he didn't have to say a word. I could hear his thoughts screaming, "You just don't get it, do you?"

All of the old purchasing value propositions were now *expected* as a point of reference, but they no longer met the primary needs and expectations of a new and self-empowered customer-base and of a new administration obsessed with making the student and faculty experience spectacular beyond belief.

The months that followed were filled with new discovery. We surveyed our potential customers and asked them what a good Purchasing and Travel Department should look like. Their responses suggested that we should stay out of their way, cut down on administrative paperwork, relax the policy, and raise their p-card limits.

We then surveyed our own purchasing

personnel, as well as other purchasing employees from other universities, and asked them how they spend their time. Responses included negotiating contracts, reducing maverick spend, enforcing policy, risk mitigation and justifying value to the customer and the administration.

To complete the project, we surveyed some of the upper administrations of major companies and universities and asked what their idea of how a good purchasing department should operate. Not surprisingly, their responses were insightful. They suggested finding new and better ways to add value—embracing strategic sourcing concepts and functionality, doing more to gain the customer's trust, simplifying processes, aligning better with the mission of the organization, and stepping beyond the procurement role to contribute significantly to the strategic imperatives of the enterprise.

Armed with a new focus, the Purchasing and Travel Department crafted a new mission and vision statement that aligned more closely with the new customer-centric mission of the university. In passing the first five drafts by the administration, I was told that although it was a valiant effort, it was boring and lacked energy. An arduous process followed as our culture changed from command-and-control to customer-centric.

Our mission statement now reads: We strengthen BYU by bringing the power of the marketplace to the University learning environment. Our vision statement promises: To provide intense, personal customer care. Everything is geared toward the customer experience and the delivery of legendary service and support. Procurement professionals are expected to identify and lead key enterprise initiatives that add value to the faculty and student experience. New core competencies are emerging from new expectations. Strong leadership of people and initiatives has become a necessity. People need to be on board, engaged, and knowledgeable of their jobs and how to do them. Everyone must be led to *live* the new espoused mission, vision and values and use them to make a difference every day. Execution must be a priority. New initiatives must come fast and furious.

Strategic sourcing mastery has become critical. Working with customers and suppliers to formulate, articulate and execute clear and meaningful commodity strategies is an absolute must. Knowing and understanding the entire spend picture and being able to influence key decisions with that knowledge adds significant value. Being e-competent, e-ready, e-driven, and completely e-functional is also a new and valuable skill set.

Relationship development and management is a more critical competency. As a profession, we must be connected with key customers, suppliers, and power players across the business landscape. Our new success will depend almost entirely on who we know and how well we function in those relationships. It has been said that great relationships produce privilege, insure more rapid execution and create positive energy toward well-choreographed progress.

Through this process we have become more aware of important organizational dynamics. It is important to know where the power is in the organization and to work ourselves into the power structure. Indeed, we must actually own part of that power and be prepared when invited into another circle to thrive and contribute.

Our procurement profession in our respective organizations needs to become known for the kind of people we employ and the success record they have in the organization. We need to actually be sought after because of our reputation for contributing. We need to develop a sixth sense, so to speak, choosing to be part of projects and initiatives that have a strong likelihood for success. Finally, we should always carry a full arsenal of silver bullets and demonstrate the

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## Innovative Cabinet Locks

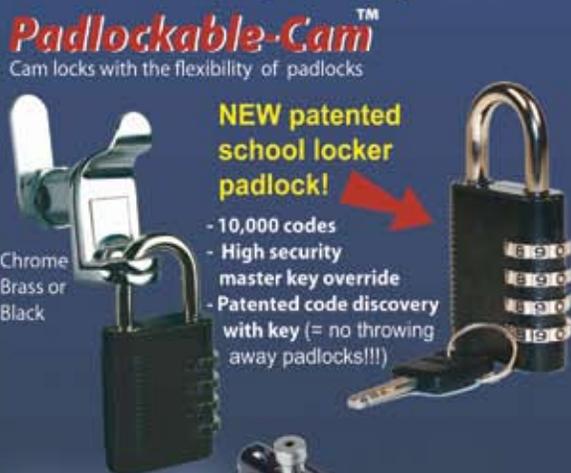
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knowledge and power to expend them skillfully and effectively for good.

As good and fun as all of this sounds (and it really is fun by the way), the proof is always in the results. It does stand to reason, for example, that if supplier and customer relationships are sound, great contracts and resulting savings will emerge, but as noted at the beginning of this article, savings, while still expected and tracked, simply aren't getting the attention that they used to. So just what are the key results indicators? Why not let the customer tell us?

In our organization, each time a customer receives an order purchased through our agents or processes, they receive a short survey asking them to rate the person with whom they worked and the processes, tools, and systems they experienced. They also have an opportunity to share free-text comments if they choose. The organization targets an overall customer rating of 85 percent on the surveys and currently receives an actual year-to-date average of just over 90 percent. Comments received from customers are individually assigned to the liaison staff that

visits each customer to resolve any issues. Senior university administrators have primary access to the metrics dashboard and regularly assess Purchasing and Travel's value to the educational experience by the ratings received. An unhappy customer is a big deal (!), demanding immediate attention. A high average of satisfied customers is a strong indicator that the organization is adding significant value.

Once we are armed with a customer-centric focus and aligned soundly with the mission of our respective organizations, we, as a procurement profession, own a responsibility to pay attention and build a purposeful and legendary future. A past-President of Brigham Young University, Jeffrey R. Holland, spoke to this principle in saying, "But that future, at least any qualitative aspect of it, must be vigorously fought for. It won't just happen to your advantage. Someone said once that the future is waiting to be seized, and if we do not grasp it firmly, then other hands, more determined and bloody than our own, will wrench it from us and follow a different course."

We must continually be carefully weaving ourselves tightly into the fabric of the educational

institutions we are a part of. We must bring the power of the marketplace into our learning environments and provide intense, personal customer care to the faculty, staff and students who invest heavily in our commitment to provide a legendary educational experience for them.



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# If You Ain't Comin', You Ain't Learnin'

by **Cory Harms, M.S.**

*Iowa State University*

**N**AEP makes us all better. There is no question in my mind that this is the case. In fact, here is how an NAEP professional development experience has made my Purchasing Department better. I attended a session by Charlene Lydick (University of Colorado) at an NAEP national conference about the benefits of putting on vendor orientation meetings. Not only did her session open my eyes to the possibility, but she provided a great roadmap showing how to get there and what things to include. We adopted this idea and have had tremendous support from all quarters of our vendor community, including local suppliers, targeted small businesses, and long-time Iowa State University contract holders.

So it's understandable that what disturbs me is the trend of less and less people attending and involving themselves in the NAEP organization. There may be several reasons. Many people cite budget cuts, travel restrictions, and competing opportunities. Some claim the need to stretch budgets as far as they can. Some universities may even consider not renewing their Membership. They may consider limiting their service and volunteerism or look to competing organizations to fulfill those obligations. In the end, in my view, they are doing their university, agents, and constituents a disservice.

There are countless skills and ideas that I have learned because of an NAEP annual or regional conference. I have brought them back to my university and made my Purchasing Department stronger and better able to avoid outsourcing, elimination, or downsizing. These ideas have kept our department relevant and on the cutting edge.

Another example is a session I attended at my first NAEP national conference in 2003. The session related to the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement, or AEP award. I was new to my

position as Associate Director of Purchasing and was tasked with bringing some new IT initiatives to the department. The AEP presentation opened my eyes to some of the best practices in purchasing and helped me set a road map of things we wanted to achieve.

I also obtained great information regarding fraud and auditing at a regional conference in Omaha. A speaker from Creighton gave a wonderful presentation on the topic. The valuable session helped

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us develop new systems for our purchasing card program to prevent fraud and ensure that our audits were covering the right things.

My final example deals with e-procurement. As a result of interactions I've had at vendor shows, discussions with colleagues, and exposure to vendors at the national and regional conferences, I became aware of the opportunities available. I had plenty of colleagues to consult with to make sure I found the right direction. This helped me enable my department to be an early adopter and begin a

highly successful program on our campus.

Other benefits that I've derived from NAEP and its institutes include help with legal language, knowledge about effective bid-document structure, exposure to excellent RFP evaluation tools, and numerous other vital skills.

My point, of course, is that we become better purchasing people and create better purchasing departments by supporting professional development. We do well to fight for that right and work harder to become active and contributing Members of NAEP. NAEP does not exist without us, and the institutes and conferences do not exist without NAEP.

If we are not out there learning new things, we may not be gaining the knowledge and skills that make us innovative. If we are not being innovative, we are not adding value. If we are not adding value, we can be viewed as replaceable.

I believe that NAEP is the professional organization that best fits what we do and best supports our unique needs as educational institutions. Can we improve NAEP and its offerings? Of course, but how is that done? Through volunteerism, involvement, dedication and work by *all* of the Members—all of us—not just a few.



**Cory Harms, M.S.**, is Associate Director of Purchasing at Iowa State University. He serves on the NAEP Board of Directors as Second Vice President. He is a Past President of the MINK (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas) Region and serves on the NAEP Editorial Board. He has presented at both regional and national NAEP meetings and has spoken for the Missouri Association of Public Purchasing (MAPPP).

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# Telling Your Story Through Performance Metrics

by Nancy S. Brooks, MPA  
Iowa State University

One question that plagues many of us in procurement is: How do we inform others of our value to our institution? Procurement has a tremendous story to tell about value-added outcomes that advance the accomplishment of our institution's strategic plan. So, it is logical to use performance metrics to tell this story.

## Performance Metrics

Performance metrics are a measure of activities, performance, and results. Quality performance metrics require the collection of meaningful data for trending and analysis of change over time. Metrics have the most impact when they measure meaningful outcomes—instead of mere outputs—and tie directly to an institution's goals. Some factors to consider in developing performance metrics include:

- Can the metric be objectively measured?
- Does the metric support the institution's goals?
- Are the metrics addressing effectiveness and/or efficiency of the department?
- Will the metric be able to provide meaningful trend analysis?
- Is there a standard established against which performance can be compared?

We should develop our metrics based on the story we need to tell, and we should minimize any chance that our audience could read a different story altogether. For example, measuring an output such as the number of purchase orders processed per year can tell different stories. A decrease over time in the number of purchase orders could signify that: 1) more volume-based contracting is being used to eliminate the need for individual purchase orders; 2) e-procurement solutions are creating greater efficiencies; or 3) expenditures are down or there is more maverick buying. Measuring and reporting mere outputs can create a confusing

story unless the outputs are well known to be part of an overall strategy, such as to create efficiencies.

## Story Basics

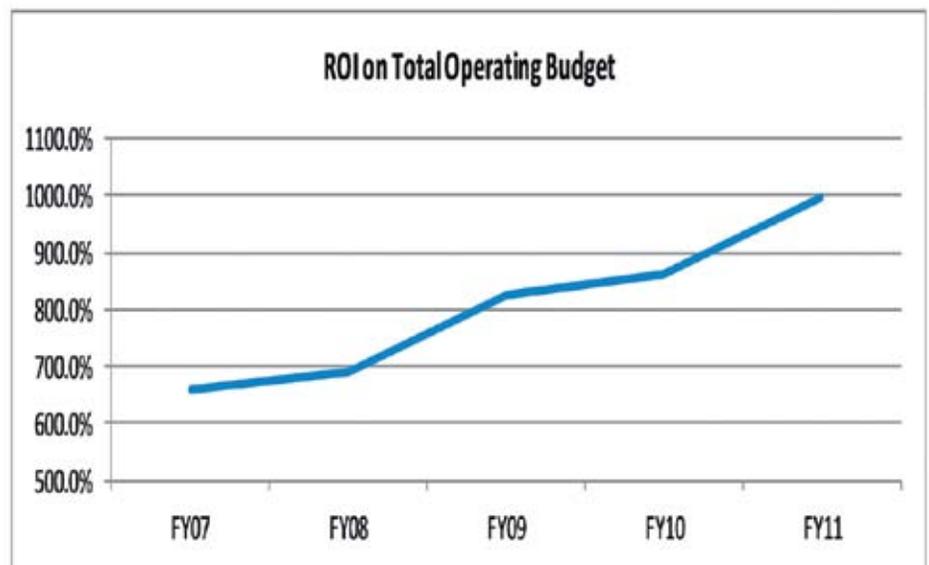
The use of metrics establishes credibility for our story and takes it out of the realm of fiction. The higher education story usually includes: the retention of outstanding faculty/staff; the support of growth in research; the promotion of economic growth; the enhancement of vitality in surrounding communities; the practicing of sustainability; and the demonstration of fiscal responsibility.

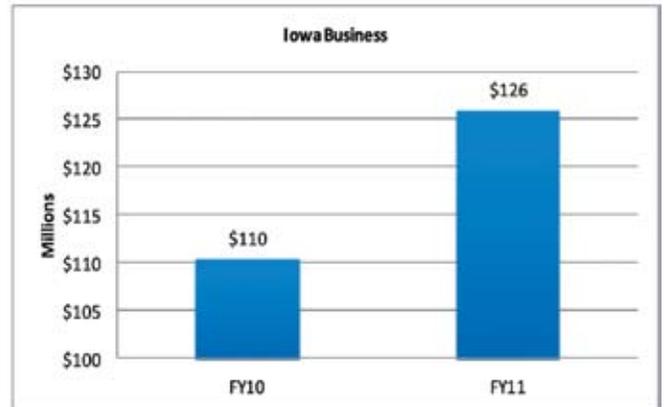
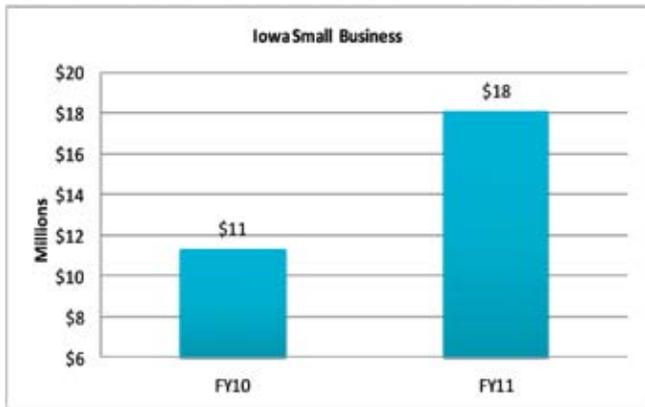
Any story starts with deciding what is important to our reader, even if it sometimes means we must tell our reader what *is* important. Procurement has a direct impact on the successful completion of campus-wide projects, the maximization of university resources, the compliance with governing directives, and the maintenance of positive public perception. Explaining how we do this with fewer

resources and increased demand for services is our story. One example of using performance metrics to tell our story is created below.

## Chapter 1: Fiscal Management

*Demonstrate accountability for university expenditures.* Spend management is an important function of procurement and translates to institutional cost effectiveness. Leading research in the procurement field suggests that an organization benefits financially as the percentage of spend managed by procurement increases. Best-in-class private sector results suggest that 70 percent of spend should be managed by procurement. In the previous fiscal year, procurement managed 61 percent of the total operating budget of the university (less salaries and scholarships) and facilities construction services managed 16 percent. Efforts to reduce or eliminate reimbursements, checks requests, or other direct pays were successful as 77 percent of the institution's spend is managed. The





high percentage is attributable to procurement's involvement in employee benefits contracting which may not be the case in the private sector.

*Provide efficient, value-added services that maximize university resources.* During the previous fiscal year, Procurement achieved a Return on Investment (ROI) of 998.9 percent, based on a total departmental operating budget of \$1,526,489 and documented cost savings of \$15,247,578. Over a five-year period, concerted

efforts have increased ROI from 659.6 percent to 998.9 percent.

Administrative efficiency is necessary for good stewardship of public funds, and the cost to process a dollar of spend through central procurement was .0054 or about half a cent. This is consistent with benchmarks in the private sector.

*Implement enhanced administrative systems and associated processes.* Procurement began transitioning to an e-procurement model several

years ago. A web-based catalog-hosting software was implemented to provide increased access to prime contracts and a procure-to-pay process. Expenditures increased 62.2 percent over the previous year. The new tool along with education efforts produced positive results by increasing the volume of spend on major contracts by 28.1 percent, a goal of strategic sourcing.

The e-procurement solution provided benefits to other areas of the university. It has reduced the

*Continued on page 16*



Performance Metrics, Continued from page 15

number of invoices and checks written by over 22.7 percent and significantly shortened overall process times.

Enhancements to our online system to interface with the quote solicitation process continue to provide efficiencies. Those enhancements, coupled with the additional purchasing agent, improved process times for orders requiring competition by 26 percent, which is equivalent to 10 days.

*Provide business systems, processes, training that promote compliance with policies, procedures & regulations.* During the previous fiscal year, procurement conducted outreach educational workshops and sessions for 641 individuals. These outreach efforts consisted of p-card user and system training, cardholder orientation, e-procurement training, and an eight-hour procurement process certification course for p-card users.

*Generate revenue sufficient to support core Business and Finance operations.* The e-procurement tool has been operational for approximately two-and-a-half years. Acceptance has surpassed expectations, handling almost \$14 million in annual expenditures. It now creates enough revenue to be self-supporting.



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## Chapter 2: People

*Develop tools and strengthen professional development opportunities for employees.*

Procurement is not merely a process but rather a function requiring analytical skills, good judgment, and innovation. E-procurement can create efficiencies but relies on the skill of professional staff to analyze spend, create and manage effective contracts, and promote an ethical business environment. Professional development is

Determine what is important  
to convey and identify the  
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YOUR story.

critical for staff to support the university as a resource. Eighty-eight percent of staff have bachelor's degrees; two staff members have master's degrees and one has a PhD. Almost one-fourth of the staff have professional certifications.

During the previous fiscal year, all professional staff participated in at least one professional development opportunity. Increasing skill levels is crucial for an employee's success in a dynamic business environment.

*Provide experiential learning opportunities for students.* The flood created a huge demand on our existing resources due to the extra reporting and documentation needed for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Procurement hired two master's-level students, converting one of the positions into an internship for the second semester. These students not only provided assistance but gained valuable work experience.

*Identify best practices and benchmark programs, processes and procedures with peer institutions.* We participate in the national benchmarking program sponsored by the National Purchasing Institute. We received national recognition when we were given the Award of Excellence in Procurement for the

seventh consecutive year. The criteria of this award are designed to measure innovation, professionalism, productivity, e-procurement, and leadership attributes of the procurement organization.

## Chapter 3: Environment

*Implement sustainable strategies that promote institution as an environmental leader.*

Procurement actively pursues/initiates recycling contracts including waste oil, waste cooking oil, scrap metal, paper/cardboard/phonebooks, electronics, and fluorescent lamp/ballasts.

Procurement evaluates bids using total cost of ownership when the long-term costs overshadow the purchase price of equipment. This practice not only provides cost savings over time but reduces our energy demands.

Procurement supports "buy local" for many reasons. It is an effective economic development strategy, in addition to reducing our carbon footprint. Buying local can easily be classified as buying within the state. Efforts to locate local sources paid off with an increase of 14 percent in procurement volume with in-state businesses. Procurement expenditures with local small businesses increased 59.5 percent over the previous year. The university channeled nearly \$126 million back into the local economy during the past fiscal year through procurements.

## The never-ending story

Procurement will always have a story to tell, as continuous improvement is essential to our mission. The story may vary from time to time, and new performance metrics may be needed based on your specific audience. Determine what is important to convey and identify the performance metrics that support your story. Most of all, have fun telling YOUR story.



**Nancy S. Brooks, MPA** is Director of Purchasing at Iowa State University and served as NAEP Board President for 2008-2009. Employed by ISU since 1989, Ms. Brooks' career

began in the private sector as a purchasing agent in a large manufacturing facility. Her background includes a number of years in the construction management field. She received her B.S. in Business and Master in Public Policy and Administration from Iowa State University. Email: [nsbrook@iastate.edu](mailto:nsbrook@iastate.edu)

# The Seven Hundred Million Dollar Question

by **John Riley, C.P.M.**  
Arizona State University

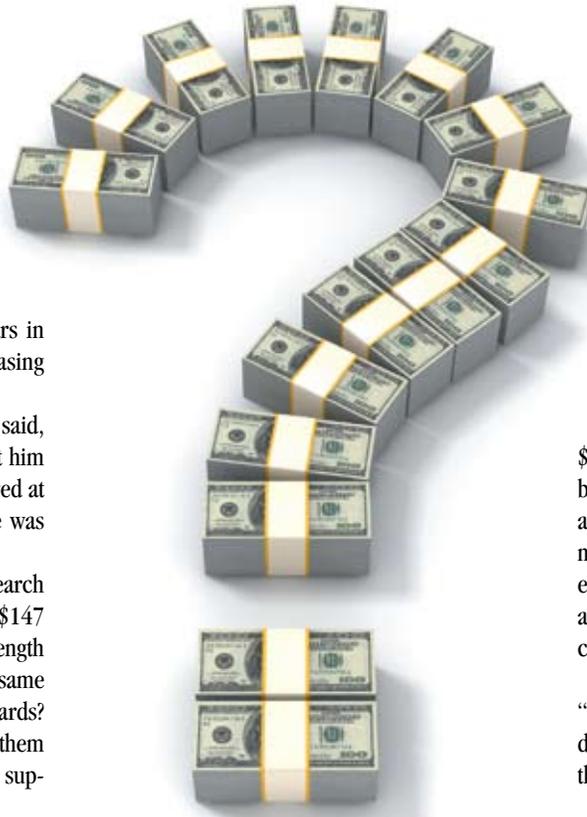
It was a long hard week. So, our intrepid Purchasing Director decided to enjoy a nice lunch over at the University Club. But before he could even order, the VP for Research sat down at his table and excitedly shared her plan to double research dollars in the next five years. “You people in purchasing can handle that, can’t you?”

“Of course!” our purchasing hero said, knowing full well that this was going to put him off his lunch. So, our intrepid hero just stared at the menu wondering how in the world he was going to pull it off.

How indeed? He knew that since FY 02, research awards had increased by 136 percent, from \$147 million to \$347 million, while his staffing strength remained the same. How could these same people handle \$700 million in research awards? By following the same strategy that enabled them to handle the current volume? “Maybe,” he supposed. “Let me think this through.”

We have been thinking strategically. So, we do not do a solicitation for one item. We turn all solicitations into requirements contracts for the next five years. We buy the one that the user now needs, and we have a contract under which we can buy more. This enables us to process more purchases faster.

We buy from someone else’s contracts whenever possible. We are members of a large number of buying consortia, and we are fortunate that we can buy from a State contract but are not required to. To be sure, we still do our professional purchasing thing, and determine which of the potential competitively bid contracts is best for us, and we always make a determination that the price we will pay is fair and



reasonable. If we find a good contract, then we use it. This ensures that we are only doing solicitations for goods and services in cases for which we can add value. This is an efficient and effective use of our resources.

We deploy technology. Our users can order from more than 250 suppliers in our web-based e-ordering system. They can get more than 8.5 million line items, all of which are under contract. Our users can also order goods and services from contract suppliers through our web listing of contract supplier contacts, and pay for these transactions with a purchasing card. Our users can also make purchasing card transac-

tions up to \$5,000, and use a departmental professional services order to hire a consultant up to \$10,000. All of this happens with no intervention by us in purchasing. This takes tons of transactions off our desks.

We have reasonable bid limits. We do formal solicitations when we expect to spend \$50,000 or more, informal solicitations when we expect to spend between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and under \$25,000, it is buyer discretion. Buyer discretion means that as the buyer understands the market, the commodity, the suppliers, and the user, the buyer can easily decide if the price is fair and reasonable, and then either issue the purchase order, find a contract, or do a solicitation.

Our intrepid Purchasing Director laughed. “Sure, we can handle \$700 million in research dollars,” he thought to himself. “I think I’ll have the filet mignon, today.”

(Burp)

“Excuse me.”



**John Riley, C.P.M.**, is the Executive Director of Purchasing and Business Services at Arizona State University and a former President of the National Association of Educational Procurement.

He is an author of the chapter on procurement in *College and University Business Administration*, and numerous other articles. John is a recognized leader in the use of technology to enhance purchasing functions and in integrating sustainability in all aspects of the supply chain. Email: john.riley@asu.edu

# LEED Certified or LEED AP? What Is The Difference?

by **Karin B. Coopersmith, C.P.M., LEED AP**  
Indiana University

## LEED Certified

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is an internationally recognized green building *certification* system. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) in March 2000, LEED provides building owners and operators with a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions. LEED applies to all building types—commercial, as well as residential.

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- Healthcare (HC);
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The USGBC site also offers a selection of certification tools. You will want to have an accredited professional (LEED AP) on your team moving forward.

## LEED AP

The LEED AP credential was established in 2001. This broad accreditation offers the following tracks:

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The Indiana University Research and Teaching Preserve's new field laboratory, an ecology and environmental sciences research station and classroom facility on the Bloomington campus. Silver LEED-certified structure, April 2009.

- LEED AP Homes;
- LEED AP Building Design + Construction (BD+C);
- LEED AP Interior Design + Construction (ID+C);
- LEED AP Neighborhood Development (ND); and
- with a Specialty Area (Building and Design Construction, Interior Design and Construction, etc.).

Accredited professionals can use their expertise by educating those desiring to build a LEED Certified Building and learning about the rating systems. They can assist in getting through the certification process.

So, the professional is *accredited* and the building is *certified*. Need more information? Go to [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org). You can also find a listing of accredited professionals to assist you and your institution with your GREEN building projects.



**Karin B. Coopersmith, C.P.M., LEED AP**, Assistant Director of Purchasing at Indiana University for the past 10 years, has served on the NAEP Membership, Editorial, and Sustainability Committees, and as Vice President and President of NAEP's Indiana Region. She has moderated and presented at the Association's Annual Meetings and for the past seven years has organized the vendor show for the Great Lakes Regional meetings. She has served on E&I Cooperative Service's Office Products, Copier and Carpet RFP Teams. Karin holds a Lifetime C.P.M. and owned and operated a commercial furnishings company for 18 years. She graduated from Indiana University with a BME and ME in Music Education. Email: [kcoopers@indiana.edu](mailto:kcoopers@indiana.edu)

# I Want to Be 10 Again

by **Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM**

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas (retired)*

I heard of a man who, knowing his wife's birthday was approaching, asked her what she wanted for the occasion. She said, "I want to be 10 again." So he threw a party for her and then took her to the circus. On the way home, he stopped at an ice cream shop and had them make her a hot fudge sundae. Finally, that night they watched a Disney movie together. Pleased with himself, he asked how she enjoyed her birthday. She said it was OK, just so-so. "So-so?" he asked. He then reminded her of everything he had done to make her remember how it was to be 10 again. "No," she said, "I did not want to be *age* 10 again. I wanted to be *size* 10 again!"

Then I heard of a teacher who asked her third grade art-class to draw something—anything. As she walked around, looking at each child's work, she saw little Mary's picture and asked, "What is that Mary?" Without looking up, Mary replied that she was drawing a picture of God. The teacher was amused but had to remind Mary that no one knew what God looked like. Her reply was, "They will as soon as I am done drawing Him."

Seems to me that many of us in NAEP are like the folks in these stories. Some of us realize that many activities can be done only if we are physically fit and prepared to take advantage of any opportunity that requires being in good physical condition. Since we do not want to miss out on any opportunities that might arise, we pay the price and get fit. We have others who want to be 10 again but who do not want to pay the price. They are the ones who are willing to sit back and let such opportunities pass them by because the price of getting prepared is too high. They settle for staying where they are, wondering—clueless—why other people are going places and doing things.

But the ones in NAEP who are of most concern to me are those who used to be like little Mary in the second story. They used to know no boundaries. They used to be creative. They used to believe they could accomplish anything. They used to insist on being challenged so they could learn more, excel and outdo their peers. They used to be willing to pay any price so nothing

would hold them back from being the best they could be. They remembered that it is the best-prepared person who is chosen when the next big challenge presents itself—and they wanted to be that person.

Ah, how I'd like to see all of us be 10 again—creatively preparing ourselves mentally and academically, positioning ourselves to compete for new jobs, promotions and opportunities.

What happens in between third grade and adulthood that makes some people believe they no longer need to make their reach exceed their grasp? Why is it that some of us keep ourselves physically fit and some do not? Even more important to NAEPers, why is it that some of us keep ourselves mentally fit and prepared to compete in today's highly competitive supply management world, but some do not?

Talk-show host Oprah Winfrey said, "What we dwell on is what we become." She would agree that the first thing we need to dwell on is just starting. But when should we start? Political consultant James Carville said, "The best time to plant an oak tree is 25 years ago. The second best time is today." He would agree that we should start *today* dwelling on accomplishing our goal of increasing our educational level.

But getting started amid all the personal and business cares invading our lives is difficult. So, isn't there an easier way to get ready rather than undertaking all the reading, working and testing

required to obtain a degree or certification?

Opera star Beverly Sills said, "There are no shortcuts to any place worth going to." Ms. Sills would ask if you know where you want to go and, if so, if it does not require much effort, is it worth going? She would ask if you have your sights set high enough. Still others wonder if they are up to the challenge, if their efforts would really pay off, if they could really accomplish their educational goals. Tennis great Andre Agassi said, "If I've learned nothing else, it's that time and practice equal achievement."

So there you have it: (1) dwell on what you want to become; (2) start today to realize your dream; (3) don't take any shortcuts, but instead pay the price to achieve success; and (4) if you stick with your program, over time you will achieve that dream.

Ah, how I'd like to see all of us be 10 again—creatively preparing ourselves mentally and academically, positioning ourselves to compete for new jobs, promotions and opportunities.

If you are one who wants to restart your mental creativity, who is ready to prepare yourself educationally and academically, who understands that your future depends on it, email me at [ashbybob@embarqmail.com](mailto:ashbybob@embarqmail.com) and let me help you become 10 again.



**Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM,**

is retired from his position as Director of Purchasing and Contracts for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he also served as an Adjunct Professor in the Management Department. Bob has been active in NAEP since 1997. In 2006, he received NAEP's Distinguished Service Award, and in 2008, he won the newly established Mentor of the Year Award. NAEP renamed the award in his honor to the Bob Ashby Mentor of the Year Award in 2009. Email: [ashbybob@embarqmail.com](mailto:ashbybob@embarqmail.com).

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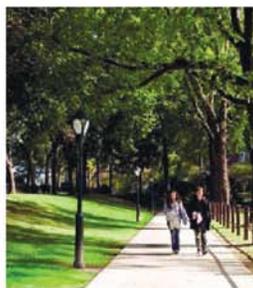


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# Meetings and Dead Horses

by **Craig Passey, C.P.M.**  
Brigham Young University

**B**eau Grant, our beloved NAEP teacher and keynote speaker, used a dead horse analogy to make fun of our penchant for solving problems by appointing committees and holding ineffective meetings.

The problem: “What to do with a dead horse?”

Answers included:

- Appoint a committee to meet and study the dead horse to see if it is really dead.
- Appropriate money and have purchasing buy a better whip!
- Change riders.
- Group dead horses together to see if they will run faster.
- Visit other universities to see how they ride dead horses; incorporate findings into training videos, etc.

I asked coworkers to recall the worst meetings they had attended, and one remarked that many of them were called and conducted by me. His candor reflects the strength of our relationship. I am sure it has nothing to do with the fact that he no longer reports to me and that I can't hurt him.

So, if you would like to call a meeting in a wasted effort to consider what to do with your own dead horses, pay attention to our helpful tips:

- Call meetings with little notice and make attendance mandatory.
- Begin late and end well after the scheduled time.
- If you are not sure whom to invite, invite the entire staff!
- Keep the objective of the meeting secret to add intrigue!
- To allow flexibility of topic discussion, do not prepare an agenda.
- Remember that every good meeting begins with a review of the last campus sporting event. If one has not been held recently, get



everyone relaxed by expounding on a child's recent school or club achievement.

- Build interest in the first slide or video by touching every button on the dead AV console and change every cable.
- Introduce your leadership vision in a slide presentation by challenging attendees' vision with eight point type.
- Demonstrate your authority by reprimanding and berating a participant without warning in front of everyone else.
- Don't document decisions.
- Don't follow up on previous assignments.
- Invite senior personnel to describe in detail how the office operated years ago with typewriters and carbon paper.

Another tip: Get yourself in the mood for your next meeting by reading a poem I read 35 years ago and committed to memory:

Meetings mostly are a menace,  
bringing out the blockhead in us  
Poorly organized confusion;

rarely leading to conclusion.

When we're goofing off they're fun,  
but for getting most things done,

*“Nothing's quite so self-defeating  
quite so often as a meeting!”*

—Author Unknown

One last word of caution: If you are going to relieve meeting boredom or stress with poetry, do it silently. A former boss once overheard me quoting a couple of lines from *Invictus* by William Ernest Henley as I exited his meeting. He definitely heard the line *“My head is bloody but unbowed...”* That led to an impromptu one-on-one behind closed doors as he demanded to know what I meant by that. Not a good time to ask for a raise unless you are encouraged by answers such as, “When hell freezes over.”

When the day's meetings have concluded and as the last waning rays of sunlight sink ever-so-softly behind the clouds, I leave the meeting and campus, riding my proverbial dead horse into the sunset and thinking to myself, “Another day shot to hell!”



**Craig Passey, C.P.M.**, has enjoyed a 30-year career in purchasing and travel for Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, and for the LDS Church in Salt Lake City. His writing and

teaching include assignments in both international and domestic procurement. He has a BS in financial planning and counseling, with a minor in international relations from BYU. He is the recipient of NAEP's 2010 Neil D. Markee Communicator of the Year Award. Email: [craig\\_passey@byu.edu](mailto:craig_passey@byu.edu).



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