

Oregon Procurement Basic or Advanced Certification

Life-Learning Paper Guidelines

What Is a Life-Learning Paper?

A Life-learning paper is a written document that describes a procurement-related project you completed and explains what you learned from the experience. You receive seven points for the paper—the equivalent of attending a full-day class. The points are credited toward your continuing education requirements to keep your Oregon Procurement Basic Certification (OPBC) or Oregon Procurement Advanced Certification (OPAC) current.

Who Can Submit a Life-Learning Paper?

Anyone who holds either the OPBC or the OPAC can submit a Life-learning paper as part of their continuing education necessary to keep their certification current. You can submit a Life-learning paper any time before your certification expires. Only one Life-learning paper can be submitted during a renewal (3-year) cycle.

Since procurement projects may involve the efforts of many people, more than one person can submit a paper that relates to the same project. However, each person needs to submit individually and describe their experience and role in the project.

What Are The Advantages Of Submitting a Life-Learning Paper?

Most of what you learn occurs on the job. A Life-learning paper acknowledges this and puts the learning in your hands. The paper will give you an opportunity to review a project, write down what happened, what worked, what could have gone better, and what changes you'll make in the future. This debriefing will help improve future projects. Your “lessons learned” also will help others avoid pitfalls and learn better ways of doing business. Besides providing an excellent review of a project, the paper also can provide a rich learning opportunity with no requirement to leave the office for a day of off-site training. The cost to submit a Life-learning paper is \$50 (less than full-day tuition).

What Are The Requirements for the Life-Learning Paper?

As a guideline, the total effort to write and submit the paper should be about 7 hours—the amount of equivalent class hours.

The general guidelines on the length and format of the paper are:

- Use a common 12-point font in Word or pdf. format.
- Double spacing or 1 ½ spacing between lines and paragraphs works best.
- Print on both sides of your paper.
- Approximately 2 to 6 double-sided pages should be adequate to summarize your project.
- Format the paper so it is organized and easy to read. For example, use bold paragraph headings, bullets where appropriate, and double space between paragraphs.
- The paper should be spell checked and well-thought-out. Have the paper proof read by a second party. Poorly written papers that lack continuity and appear to be a hastily-written first draft may be returned with comments for revision.

What Format Should I Use?

You can tailor the format to fit your situation. However, the paper generally should explain the following:

- 1) **Background**: Provide a context for your paper. Give pertinent details to explain what was being purchased, what the goals were, why the agency was seeking the service or good, whether this was a routine purchase or something new, and what role you performed.
- 2) **Process**: What market research did you complete? What procurement process did you use and why it was or was not the best process for the situation? What evaluation criteria did you use, if any? What award methodology did you use?
- 3) **Challenges**: What were the challenges and issues with this buy, and how did you address them?
- 4) **Outcomes**: What were the results? For example, how many suppliers proposed or bid? How many protests did you receive, and what were the bases of the protests? How satisfied were you with the responses from suppliers? How well did the solicitation capture the needs of the agencies? How well did the solicitation get all the best potential solutions from the suppliers?
- 5) **Lessons Learned**: What did you learn from this process? What tips and advice do you have for others? What changes do you anticipate making for the next time?