

The Big Interview with... Andy Horne

Head of Supply Chain, Shared Goods and Services / IT at EDF Energy



“ Don't try to be someone you're not. Be yourself and be proud of who you are. I am a huge believer in ensuring someone can bring their whole self to work. ”



1. What success are you most proud of so far in your career?

I really consider myself to have been fortunate within my career, it's been both diverse, challenging and rewarding. So which one do I pick? The beginning of my career was spent in loss-adjusting for 10 years. During that time I was part of an emergency response team whose purpose was to mobilise in case of fires, floods, storms, tornado etc. We were there for the customers, the policy holders essentially, to hold their hand, explain the process and give them the right level of assurance. I am particularly proud of my involvement in the Birmingham tornado, resulting in me being interviewed by BBC news.

More recently I had a wonderful career at RSA, doing a variety of roles across Procurement and Supply Chain. Throughout, I had shown a real ability to adapt and take on new roles and challenges. The time had come after 22 years when I needed to challenge myself outside RSA, exploring other organisational supply chains. It was this leap of faith that made me join KPMG. I was losing familiarity and moving away from the known and entering a new environment where no one knew my name. Naturally I was going to be challenged and stretched in that new environment. We had really tangible successes that I am genuinely proud of within my first full year. We were shortlisted for CIPS awards for the training programme that I provided for the supply managers. That program also won sustainable supply chain of the year. For me that was external validation for me achieving outside the safe haven of RSA and strategically aligning what we were doing and why we were doing it.

2. What do you both love and find challenging in your role?

I love the diversity, every day is certainly a different day with different challenges. I can go from a meeting discussing HR, to one on marketing, IT or Telco. I love the fact that supply chain is the enabler for the business to grow, to transform, to adapt. As the ever-changing world of technology advances, it's an imperative that we do. But quite often what's lost within that is that whilst we are an enabler to help, we are also the ones to protect and provide assurance and mitigate risk. Supply chains are facing ever changing challenges. The need for transparency sounds obvious but it's all far from easy and I love all aspects of that.

The most challenging has got to be time. Genuinely there are not enough hours in the day. We want to deliver so much but we are inhibited by time and clearly part of my role is all about being able to prioritise in the right way and focus on what matters the most. I have to assess where we can be most impactful. We always want to do more and there is always a requirement to do more!

The essential skills needed to be a Head of Procurement...

- 1 Broad shoulders and resilience, it is a given that there are going to be moments where there are challenging and difficult situations.
- 2 People Skills, particularly focusing around stakeholder and relationship management skills. Within that being a good communicator and a team player is essential.
- 3 Negotiation Skills, internally and externally. Without question you have to be strong here and it's all linked to communication.
- 4 Flexibility/Adaptability, being able to go from one category to another within that one day and prioritize.
- 5 Highly Numerate, I think in procurement it's all about delivering financial value.

