

**BEST PRACTICES AWARD APPLICATION: INNOVATION IN THE PURCHASING PROCESS
PARTNERING FOR ONLINE TRAINING INNOVATION**

Department History

The Hillsborough County Aviation Authority (Authority) owns and operates Tampa International Airport (Airport), an origination-destination airport serving the greater Tampa Bay region, and three general aviation airports. The Authority currently has approximately 650 employees.

In 2011, Authority purchasing staff from three different departments and Materials Management were centralized into a single Procurement Department (Procurement). With centralization came the task of aligning departments on the entity-wide procurement processes. Initially two face-to-face training responsibilities were formed: one for P-Card and one for Oracle requisitioning and general policy. When Procurement was centralized, the Authority CEO issued the challenge to increase the use of automation and technology to become more efficient.

Since 2011, Procurement's workload has increased with new construction and renovation of Airport facilities, infrastructure expansion and new equipment throughout the airport campus that required sourcing and acquisition; however, staffing levels remained the same. The Team members responsible for scheduling, training and tracking attendance of face-to-face training were also supervising and processing procurement projects. Most of the administration of the training responsibility was handled by email, phone, PowerPoint, DocuSign and spreadsheets.

The Challenge

The course material delivered required periodic update so versioning of the PPT presentations was critical, as well as scheduling, conference room availability, attendance tracking, and reminders and follow-ups for individual enrollees and no-shows. Hard copy sign-in sheets that required scanning were replaced by DocuSign forms, however all still required downloading and saving to the network.

Keeping the CEO's original challenge in mind, Procurement began searching for an automated solution. Though e-learning platforms are no longer a revolutionary innovation, Procurement leveraged the technology as an "evolutionary" innovation. In 2018, Human Resources (HR) began to pilot a learning platform (Articulate) for employees and was slowly getting it out of the starting blocks. A single HR team member was juggling projects to get the first custom course loaded into what would be called "TPA University (TPA-U)." A Senior Manager from Procurement learned about the project after processing a license agreement and discussed having Procurement become an early adopter/partner in this project with an additional license.

The Solution

The solution evolved from the Authority's collaborative culture. As with previous automation projects, partnering on a similar technology allowed Procurement to save selection and development time.

After meeting with HR to understand functionality and set up, Procurement converted, refreshed, and streamlined its course content, including adding interactive elements that require correct responses before proceeding. The use of modern graphics and automated tracking at course completion further improved the user experience.

Piggyback vs. Non-Piggyback Option

LESSON 4 OF 10

Which of the following solicitation types can be piggybacked? Hint: Must be the result of a competitive solicitation process. Move the card to the correct option (piggyback or non-piggyback) below.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) with the exception of A&E Services

Piggyback Options

Non-Piggyback Options

Complete the content above before moving on.

Figure 1: Series of interactive electronic option “cards” to drag into categories

Individual users log in and can see required courses and a total “score” of all completed Authority training (called “miles” in the system). Procurement training delivery is familiar to employees as it has the same feel as other trainings offered Authority wide and is not an outlier that requires a separate registration or process. The miles system “gamifies” the experience and users can view their miles in comparison to their department teammates. Miles accumulate to progressive aviation themed thresholds such as Zeppelin Airship to Glider, to Flyer to Helicopter to Spruce Goose and beyond. The application tracks all required, optional and completed courses by user

where status can be easily exported by an administrator. Some courses are also available for mobile devices.

Implementation and Evolution

Development of the online training series began in late 2018. The Authority's PCard Annual Refresher training, mandatory for PCardholders, was the first to be released. This training replaced 12 to 15 face-to-face training sessions that consumed 18 hours of Procurement staff time as well as 193 hours of Authority staff time. Following that successful launch procurement rolled out Requisition Approver Training and Navigating Procurement Processes as additional offerings for Authority staff on TPA-U. By March 2019, Piggybacking 101 and Mistakes that Could Cost You supplier trainings were added to the Authority's external website.

The timing of implementation and expansion was extremely fortunate as it positioned Procurement to continue these important trainings through the pandemic when face-to-face meetings were eliminated. Procurement maintains its user license and has continued to add internal and external training.

The following internal courses are now available online in TPA-U:

- Annual P-Card Refresher Training (required)
- Course Pack: Procurement 101, Navigating Procurement Processes (Registration for live class)
- Course Pack: Procurement Basics: Procurement Thresholds and Solicitation Methods, Government Cooperative Contracts (Piggybacks). PCard Travel Training
- Course Pack: Procurement Requisition Training
- Requisition Approver Training
- Solicitation Process Training
- Evaluation Committee Member Training

The following on-demand supplier training courses are now available directly from the Authority's procurement web page:

- Mistakes that Could Cost You
- Piggybacking 101
- Procurement Methods

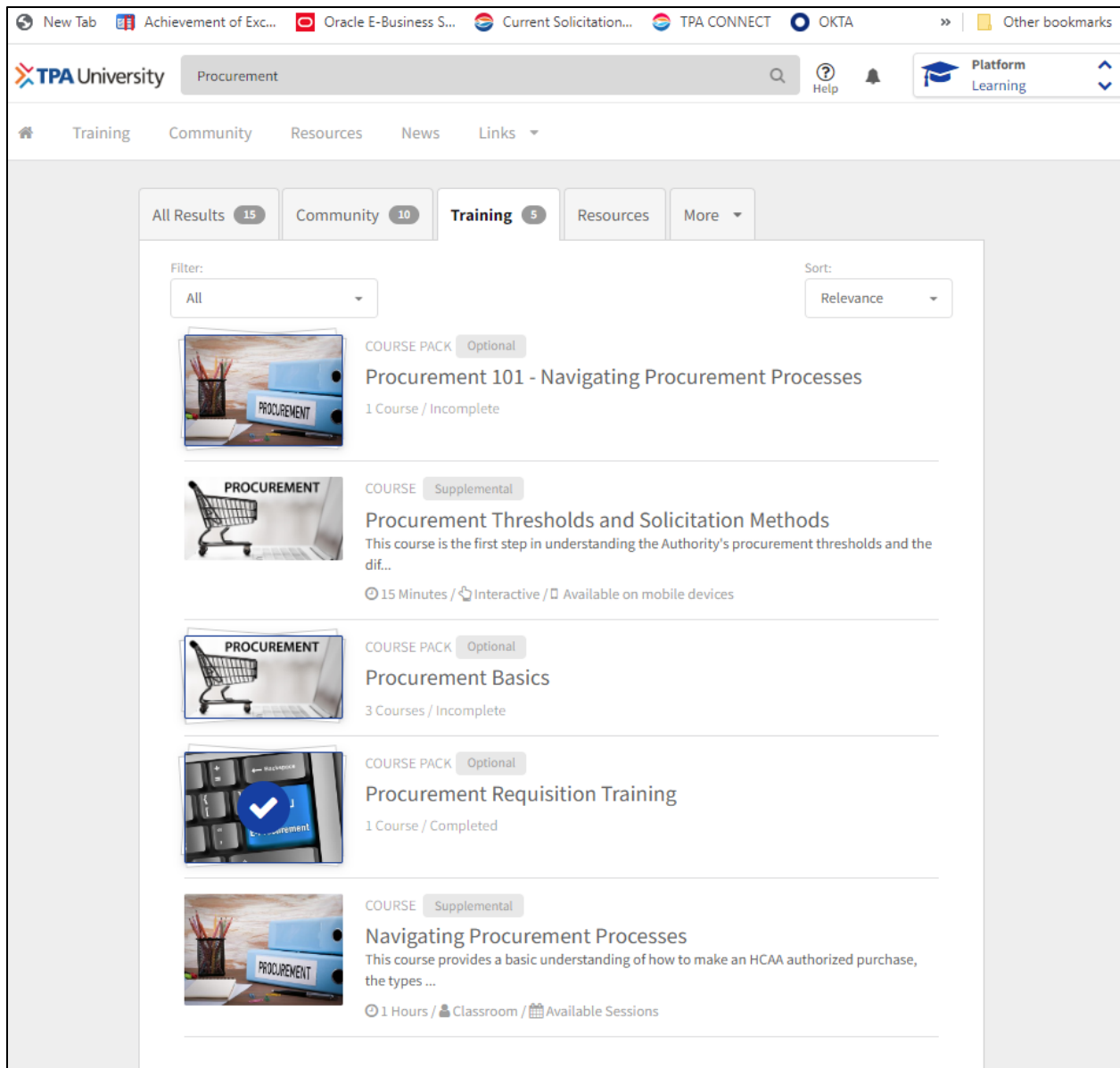


Figure 2: Internal procurement training options in TPA-U

Result and Efficiencies

Through implementation of online Procurement training, Procurement has seen many benefits, including but not limited to:

- Reduction of an estimated 190 hours of Authority staff time per year due to streamlined, concise content and on-demand access
- Reduction of an estimated 70 hours of Procurement staff time per year in instruction and administration
- Elimination of manual tracking of internal training
- Faster delivery of annual compliance reporting for mandatory internal refresher trainings

- Improved “bite-sized” content for better retention of key subject areas
- Consistent delivery of the message through repeatable training content
- Improved training delivery to the supplier community through convenient on-demand availability
- Eliminated the cost of similar separate system by adding a single license to HRs selected solution

We encourage procurement professionals to partner with their user departments to identify applications, or other technology solutions they are implementing that may also address Procurement’s needs. Though some entities have sophisticated catalogs of all entity-wide applications and licenses, the newest innovations may be coming across your desk as new requisitions. As the hub for sourcing all requirements, Procurement can take advantage of that bird’s eye view early in the process and attain innovation efficiently.