

Supplying a Hydropower Workhorse

Procurement Specialist, Grand Coulee Dam

[music]

Fred Jordan On Phone: Hey Dan, Fred Jordan here returning your call.

Fred Jordan: Our mission here at Reclamation is to get the part or the service at the right price at the right time. I consider myself a project/contract specialist/purchasing/overall salesman in order to get it all done. And you have to take it in that light because it's challenging. It's very challenging. I'm not an expert in everything. In order to be knowledgeable in the product or the service that I'm procuring, I have to do my market research to understand A—what the product is, and B—how my end user requirements relate in the way I am going to acquire the product.

[music]

We have such unique requirements with the dam, with the power houses, with the switchyards, that literally, I can be ordering pens to a fire truck to forklifts all in one day.

[music]

At Reclamation, (in) our purchasing department we require a team approach. Now part of that approach is dealing with the end user, the requirements of the acquisition.

Customer: I do it the way the manual said to do it. This is the way...

Fred: My job is to listen and understand what the requirement of my end user is and work within that team to get the mission accomplished. I've always been attracted to purchasing because it takes negotiation skills, which I find negotiating fascinating, so that aspect of it has always driven me... and dealing with vendors and dealing with the public. And it doesn't mean beating up a vendor over price, but it means doing tradeoffs and tradeoffs to try to accomplish a win-win situation. We want vendors to be satisfied themselves.

[construction sounds]

You know, it's not like you're trapped in an office. Some people think we are, but actually there's a lot of interaction over the phone or site visits that I always like about this job.

[music]

[paper shuffling]

Now, to say our job is not high energy, high stress... that's not true! Because every piece of paper that I have on my desk, there's somebody waiting on it. Whether it's the warehouse, the mechanic in the field, an agency waiting for a vehicle... it's a procurement somebody is waiting on.

[music]

We help the community in generating that business, and of course you have the employees that live locally. I think we all know that Coulee exists because of the Grand Coulee Dam. So, I think in that aspect we're a positive. We have a security force who's well equipped. We have a fire department that's well equipped. And we have mechanics, electricians, (a) warehouse; we stock that warehouse. It's a lot of different aspects... a lot of different stuff that we order in the day.

It's more than just cost and dollars and cents. It's a matter of pride and, like I said, doing the greater good of the community and dealing with vendors on a daily basis and establishing relationships with the community and your coworkers. I made a right decision, because I just would not have gotten this breadth of experience. So if anybody thinks they're going to want a cushy job, as far as this, this is very challenging. And that's what I like it, because my days fly by.