

100 Day Plan

The first 100 days as a procurement leader present a critical window to assess, architect, and activate a function that drives strategic value beyond mere cost savings.


Whether you’re building from scratch or evolving the function, follow the roadmap below to scale procurement with trust and deliver quick wins.

Remember these 4 steps

1. Baseline your spend
2. Build a brand
3. Get points on the board
4. Create a policy

1. Baseline your Spend

Your first 100 days aren’t *just* about saving money. They’re about building credibility and control. And nothing enables those two things faster than spend visibility.

-  **Goal → Establish visibility to the point where you can confidently answer these 5 questions:**
- What are we buying?

• Who’s buying it?


• How much are we spending?

• When are key renewals or decisions coming?

• Why are we spending this in the first place?

Here’s how to build visibility and turn it into action:

1. Centralize your view.	2. Tag and classify your spend.	3. Map renewals and “danger zones.”	4. Create recommendations.
Even if all this starts in a spreadsheet, organizing a single source of truth is critical.	Spot redundancies, consolidation opportunities, and misaligned ownership.	Get ahead of auto-renewals, budget cliffs, and reactive requests.	You’re not here to build a dashboard. You’re here to make better decisions.
<div>Consolidate:</div> <div><div>• Active suppliers</div><div>• Contract metadata (term, renewal, opt-out, owner)</div><div>• Invoices, payment schedules, and approvals</div></div>	<div>Group vendors by:</div> <div><div>• Category</div><div>• Business unit</div><div>• Function</div></div>	<div>Flag contracts that:</div> <div><div>• Renew within 90–120 days</div><div>• Have no known owner</div><div>• Sit in categories with duplicate tools</div></div>	<div>Use your visibility to:</div> <div><div>• Prioritize sourcing efforts</div><div>• Launch intake processes</div><div>• Start conversations with stakeholders based on data</div></div>

 **Tip →** Share this data with stakeholders in 1:1 settings to demonstrate that you have established strong visibility. Then, work with them to align on an action plan to keep moving forward.



2. Build a Brand

Don't be mistaken: savings is *an* outcome, not *the* outcome. You want to be known as more than a “cost assassin” internally and show stakeholders how procurement is a strategic partner to the business. You should start doing that by tackling legacy spend. Adopt a zero-based budgeting mindset and ask these two questions:

- If you had no legacy vendors, would you buy them again?
- What is the current ROI of X vendor at the license level?



Goal → Determine the ROI of legacy spend to uncover better solutions and improve strategic alignment for stakeholders.

Start here:

1. To determine the ROI of legacy vendors, focus on these four areas:

- Understand the business outcomes behind each major category or vendor
- Gather utilization and performance data where possible
- Identify redundancies (especially across similar tools or overlapping services)
- Stay close to the changing supplier market (innovation creates new sourcing opportunities)

2. Once you have a strong understanding of those four areas, align with your stakeholders:

- Show stakeholders the data you've collected and potential opportunities for the business
- Share your recommendations but be open to ideas and collaboration
- Start to win their trust by aligning your next steps to their goals up front and keep them in the loop

By following the steps above, you now have a deeper understanding of your supplier landscape and performance along with next steps to take that are aligned with the goals of your stakeholders.

“ Don't forget, you're fighting the negative perception of procurement. Your job is to show them there's a better way.

*Michael Shields
VP, Procurement at Tropic*

What they think you are

- A department that lacks understanding of business context or end-user needs
- Procurement dinosaurs with processes that overly complicate and are formal compared to their importance
- Cost-cutting department primarily concerned with finding the lowest price



What you should strive to be

- **Align value with business needs:** Understand end users, speak their language, and map solutions that move the business forward
- **Lead with technology and user experience:** Great procurement provides guidance and visibility and is intuitive and progressive
- **Leverage data to drive smarter decisions:** Use insights to bring confidence, timing, and clarity.



3. Get Points on the Board

You've gained greater insight your spend and built a stronger relationship with stakeholders. Now it's time to turn visibility into traction. Use live deals to test, learn, and build momentum—not just to save money, but to understand how things actually work inside your organization.



Goal → Jump into live deals to document what's not working. Use these insights to improve processes and get these three quick wins under your belt:

- **Renegotiated renewal**
- **Sourced vendor with better terms**
- **Streamlined intake pilot**

Here's how to generate those wins:

1. Document your actual workflow in its current state.

- In a few immediate, live deals, observe:
 - Who actually gets involved?
 - What slows things down?
 - Where do approvals break?
 - How are vendors selected and justified?
- You'll uncover gaps between the intended process and the actual behavior — and that's where transformation starts.

2. Work with (not around) stakeholders.

- Use sourcing opportunities to partner with budget owners, IT, legal, and end users. To let them see you as an enabler, not a blocker, ask them:
 - What does success look like for this contract?
 - How are we making choose a supplier?
 - Have we bought something like this before?
- These conversations surface the priorities, biases, and opportunities you need to streamline.

3. Redesign on the fly.

- When you hit a bottleneck, don't just patch it. Document it instead. Start crafting V1 of a better sourcing and intake process by:
 - Mapping where delays or confusion occur
 - Noting which stakeholders need earlier involvement
 - Identifying tools, templates, or approvals you can automate



Bottom line: this is where visibility becomes value. It gives you a track record of delivery fast (for greater runway later), and it's how procurement becomes a trusted strategic operator, not just a reporting function.

*Michael Shields
VP, Procurement at Tropic*

4. Create a Policy

Now it's time to build a simple, transparent procurement policy that doesn't feel like a burden, bureaucracy or control. It's about clarity, repeatability, and most importantly designing an easy user experience people will actually follow.



Goal → Implement a simple policy with stakeholder input to establish lightweight governance and conduct monthly spend reviews with stakeholders.

Start here:

1. Co-create the policy with key departments.

- Involve these teams early, even if just in review—that input builds alignment and adoption:
 - Finance (for budget accountability)
 - IT and Infosec (for risk and compliance)
 - Legal (for contract integrity)
 - Business Owners (for usability)

2. Define the when, how, who, and where in 1-2 pages of clarity.

- Skip the 15-page playbook and give just enough information to give stakeholders confidence:
 - When procurement gets involved (e.g., thresholds, categories)
 - How to engage (intake process, timelines, expectations)
 - Who needs to approve what (Finance, Legal, Infosec, etc.)
 - Where to find key documents and updates

3. Map the journey from a stakeholder's perspective and design around these friction points.

- Keep a strong focus on user experience (this should be baked in from day 1) and prioritize fast and clear workflows (e.g., use one intake form and keep questions low and simple)
 - What's the first step they take?
 - How long should things take?
 - Where do they get stuck?

After designing this V1 policy, host a **monthly spend review** with key stakeholders. This isn't a governance hammer or a presentation, it's a working session dedicated to updates and actions:

- Review upcoming renewals and sourcing needs
- Share insights from recent deals
- Flag policy gaps or friction points
- Keep procurement aligned to the business roadmap



Michael Shields is the Vice President of Procurement at Tropic, overseeing procurement operations, advising customers on spend management, and helping shape the strategy behind Tropic's software, intelligence, and services. He brings over 15 years of experience, including his role as Global Head of Procurement at Qualtrics, where he built a team that helped sustain profitability through the company's \$8 billion acquisition.