

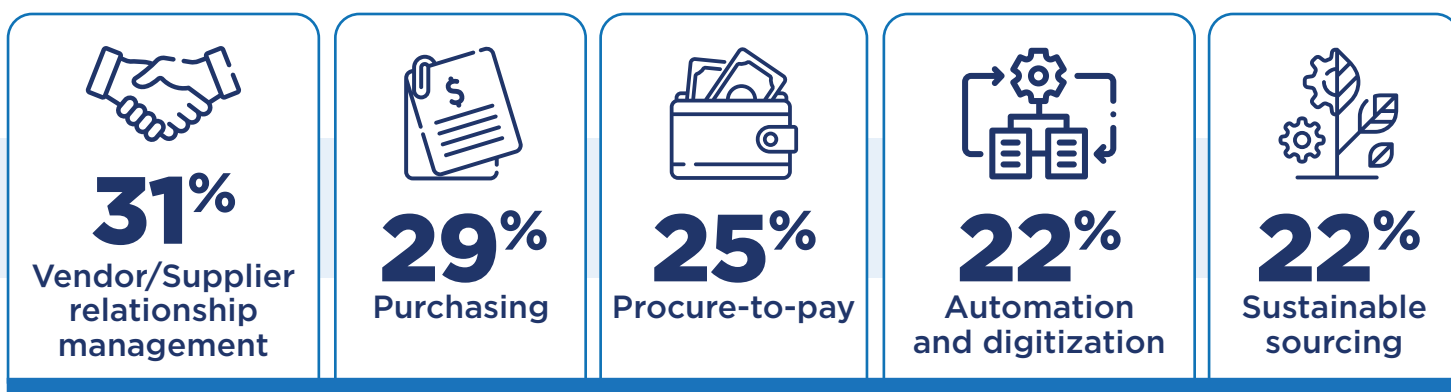


SOFT SKILLS ARE NEEDED FOR PROCUREMENT PRIORITIES

After a year of upheaval and uncertainty, supply chain professionals are planning for what is next. In a survey conducted by APQC, organizations indicated they are making sourcing and procurement a top priority for 2021.

Areas of **F**OCUS

The pandemic has led organizations to focus on core procurement responsibilities. In 2020, they made automation and digitization their top area of focus. In 2021, their focus shifted to other areas:



2021 PRIORITIES

Organizations' priorities have also changed over the last year. In 2020, the top priority for sourcing and procurement was standardizing processes. For 2021, it has been bumped by implementing methods to reduce supplier costs:

1. Implement methods to reduce supplier costs
2. Standardize processes
3. Focus on sustainable sourcing
4. Identify and implement best practices
5. Improve collaboration and communication

DEVELOP SOFT SKILLS in Procurement

For 2021, organizations are placing greater emphasis on developing supplier relationships, sustainable sourcing, and collaboration. All of these areas require procurement and sourcing staff to possess softer skills.

Employees must be able to work with key suppliers to identify mutually beneficial goals. They must also improve communication with both suppliers and internal groups. An ability to work toward strategic goals enables employees to take on more complex tasks such as pursuing sustainable sourcing.

Finding employees that already possess these skills is challenging. Organizations must take steps to develop soft skills in their existing talent. They should think beyond traditional classroom and online training courses to include on-the-job experience and creating mentoring opportunities with more experienced staff. Building internal capabilities will enable organizations to pursue their priorities in 2021 and in the years to come.

