Most employers require their purchasing agents to have a degree in business, mathematics, economics, engineering, or a related field (bachelor's degree or higher), but a purchasing agent with a Master's degree will have additional opportunities. Many certification programs are also available, such as the CPM, CPP, and CPE.

The problem-solving and analytical skills used in mathematics are an essential part of a career as a purchasing manager. Purchasing managers find that they are called on to solve problems, handle details, and coordinate many activities during intense work periods. They must also be comfortable handling complex data and have the ability to see the data from numerous perspectives.

Purchasing agents typically work in wholesale trade and manufacturing industries, and some work in retail trade. Job opportunities are expected to increase 7% through the year 2018. Companies will be expanding their purchasing departments to accommodate greater product and service demand from customers. A bachelor’s degree is highly recommended for obtaining a buyer position in an industry setting, whereas a master’s degree in business or public administration is required for a position in a government agency.

Typical tasks for purchasing agents include managing activities involved with obtaining goods and services, discussing price and schedule with vendors, and selecting products through examination and testing. Buyers must purchase items based on budget and market prospects. One desirable job for purchasing agents is that of a fashion buyer. Fashion buyers select and order apparel for retail stores. This path in the fashion industry is governed by talent, not connections, because the work of a fashion buyer can be evaluated based on the company’s sales record.

Low-end Salary: $37,850/yr  
Median Salary: $62,220/yr  
High-end Salary: $99,960/yr  

EDUCATION  
Most employers require their purchasing agents to have a degree in business, mathematics, economics, engineering, or a related field (bachelor's degree or higher), but a purchasing agent with a Master's degree will have additional opportunities. Many certification programs are also available, such as the CPM, CPP, and CPE.

WHEN MATH IS USED  
The problem-solving and analytical skills used in mathematics are an essential part of a career as a purchasing manager. Purchasing managers find that they are called on to solve problems, handle details, and coordinate many activities during intense work periods. They must also be comfortable handling complex data and have the ability to see the data from numerous perspectives.

POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS  
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FACTS  
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CITATIONS  
http://www.insidejobs.com/careers/fashion-buyer  
http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes131023.htm