



Josh Beth
Procurement Adventurer

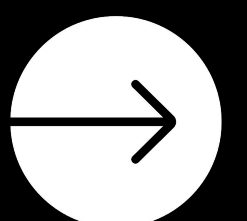
Intro

When I first met Josh to discuss our procurement project for **Holy Moly**, he invited me to his house and we sat outside having a delicious lunch prepared by his lovely wife Sonja.

Josh has incredible energy and a passion for sourcing lovely ingredients and I knew within 5 minutes he would be a brilliant addition to the Procurement Adventurer Group.

Here's his story...

March 2024





Where did your procurement journey begin?

It all started at The Mandarin Oriental where I joined as a commis chef at the age of 16. It sure was tough – 6 days a week 7am start until 1am in the morning with just a 2 hour break between 5-7pm – the pace was insane! I used to make the canapes to accompany customers' cocktails as well as prepare a range of ingredients for the other more senior chefs. We got exposed to amazing things that I'd never seen, touched or tasted before like: tonka beans, summer and winter truffles and my favourite Alaskan King Crab (which is such a spectacle if you've never seen one before)!

I remember vividly the Procurement Team who had a swanky office on the first floor – everything had to go through them, no matter whether it was teaspoons, baking powder or caviar. It looked like they did cool stuff and I decided one day I wanted to be part of that.

Careers often have pivotal moments. What were yours?

After 4 years at the Mandarin Oriental, I felt I knew it all (I really didn't!) and I felt I needed to experience something else. So, I started my own business creating bake-at-home pizzas. It was really fun setting this up – I financed it by maxing out my credit cards and an investment from Luke Johnson (owner of Patisserie Valerie).

It was as equally full on as being a chef! I had to learn everything from finance to recruitment, marketing and how to lease a shop. It was ace but after 4 years with my nose to the grindstone, I'd lost all my puff (if you've ever started a business by yourself, you'll know how I felt). I needed to firstly take a small break and then I moved into the world of aviation catering with GateGroup (GateGourmet).

**The Wastage
was Criminal!**

What was the Gate Gourmet role like?

Gate Gourmet does vast amounts of catering for airlines all around the world (~\$5bn). I was the Head of Product Development for 'anything packed' (ie not the fresh plated meals).

Fascinating to see how the airline industry works. The only thing that irked me was the wastage. It's difficult to re-use spare food when a plane lands in a country so it gets incinerated – criminal! This will only change when passengers are required to pre-order their meals which (at the time) was just starting out.

And now you're at a super cool company - Holy Moly

Sure am! I'm the Head of Product & Sourcing. This is a broad remit covering the design of products, selecting and managing the suppliers in South America and across Europe, all the packaging, logistics – basically the whole shebang of the end-to-end supply chains.



A Fresh Avocado from the supermarket is a lottery

Tell us about the Holy Moly Products

Our core range are delicious dips: guacamole and smashed avocado, hummus, salsas and aioli (much more coming to the market in 2024). With our range of cold-pressed avocado products, we solve a unique customer problem – when you buy a fresh avocado from the supermarket you’ve got a fair chance for it to be under-ripe, over-ripe, bruised with brown bits or having too much or too little oil, maybe some flavour, maybe none at all ... it’s a lottery. Not a great experience! Working with selected suppliers in Peru, Colombia and Mexico we come at it totally differently.

First, we select the fruit – and we’re proud to say we don’t buy the perfectly shaped fruits. We source the ones that are still delicious on the inside but a bit wonky on the outside say with blemishes on the skin or are a bit too big or small – they’d be wasted otherwise.

Our Partners carefully hand-scoop out all the flesh and then cold-press into our iconic square trays which we then ship over to the UK. This locks in the flavour, minimises the wastage and reduces the carbon footprint. And what's cool is the stones don't get wasted. They get pressed in South America to make oil and/or animal feed.



What makes Holy Moly so unique?

To do something unique you have to do things differently, you must source in a different way, you have to have standards that are unique, you have to invest in technology and create new practices, you have to create and grow new supply-chains. If you want a job doing properly, you have to do it properly!! If you want a unique product, you have to do things differently. Otherwise, you'll be the same as what's in the rest of the market!!

**Procurement is
the gateway to
so many other
areas**

Why should graduates join Procurement?

Procurement is the gateway to so many other areas – you really get an immersion into business such as: how the supply chains work, costs and finances, how a business scales for growth through their suppliers, finding and harnessing new technologies...the list goes on. Plus, there are so many different types of procurement from raw materials, packaging and what's called indirect spend (things like marketing, logistics and professional services). Plus, as Procurement you're the function holding the purse strings, it's a GREAT feeling!

Notwithstanding how great procurement is, why is the profession struggling to attract sufficient talent?

Hey, it's for us to promote the benefits of a career in procurement! We really need to tell the stories of what we do and the skills it gives procurement professionals.

There's something else as well – few CEOs/COOs seem to come from procurement; typically they work their way up from sales & marketing or maybe finance roles. My belief is that any great procurement professional could do a CEO/COO role. So senior procurement professionals must believe they can achieve this and Boards need to take procurement seriously.

What's your standout Procurement Adventure?

It's gotta be our first forays to Colombia some 3 years ago. Early on we found a fantastic supplier. Purely to de-risk from sole supply we needed to find several others of such a high quality. And Colombia is amazing – on the ground everyone is incredibly welcoming, fun and hospitable. The people are what makes a country and the people of Colombia are very special!

**Hire
someone
like Jorge!**

What's your advice for sourcing something from miles away?

Have someone like our Jorge! He's our 'person on the ground'. I liken him to our 'man from Del Monte' in South America and is a legend. He totally understands our founders' dreams and my product requirements - in fact, he knows it better than we do! Jorge works very closely with our suppliers ensuring top notch quality and getting shipments away smoothly, on time, in full and with quality we are proud of.



**It's not about
drilling your
suppliers
into the
ground**

How do you do a great deal whilst keeping your morals intact?

A good business has clear markers that provide the reference point for the deal that is much more than just price. Knowing what the limits are means that the negotiator can be confident when they've achieved these levels. It's not about drilling the supplier into the ground. After all, if you're doing it right, you'll want to partner with that supplier and you'll be working with them in the future, so being clear from the VERY outset is pivotal.

What do you look for in procurement candidates?

- 1) Excitement, enthusiasm and creativity
- 2) Tenacity and speed (sometimes doing something speedily is critical).
- 3) Being smart – no need to have gone to University ... I'm looking for savviness.



What would you like your suppliers to say about you?

Josh gives clear direction, nothing is left to chance.

Everything is transparent – nothing is left undiscussed – no elephants in the room!

Characterful – always makes the most of the situation (you need a flexible relationship to steer you through the journey that lays ahead).

... I have seen some procurement folk keeping their cards very close to their chest. I believe that by doing the opposite, suppliers appreciate knowing exactly where they stand and are more likely to hit your needs and be flexible when you need them to be.

Greatest Inspiration?

High performing athletes (I'm not one) and seeing their journeys through adversity and their ability to grind it out. Tiger Woods was a prime example of this - he put in unbelievable hours day in day out. But if I could be one athlete it would be Mike Tyson - when he got in the ring (when he was on form), people were in no doubt that he would win by knock out.

If you could take a 3 month sabbatical where would you go?

Ride my motorbike from London to Beijing: freedom; stop anywhere; unstoppable! I'd particularly like to see the area just east of the Caspian Sea and the high plateaus of the Himalayas.

Rapid fire...

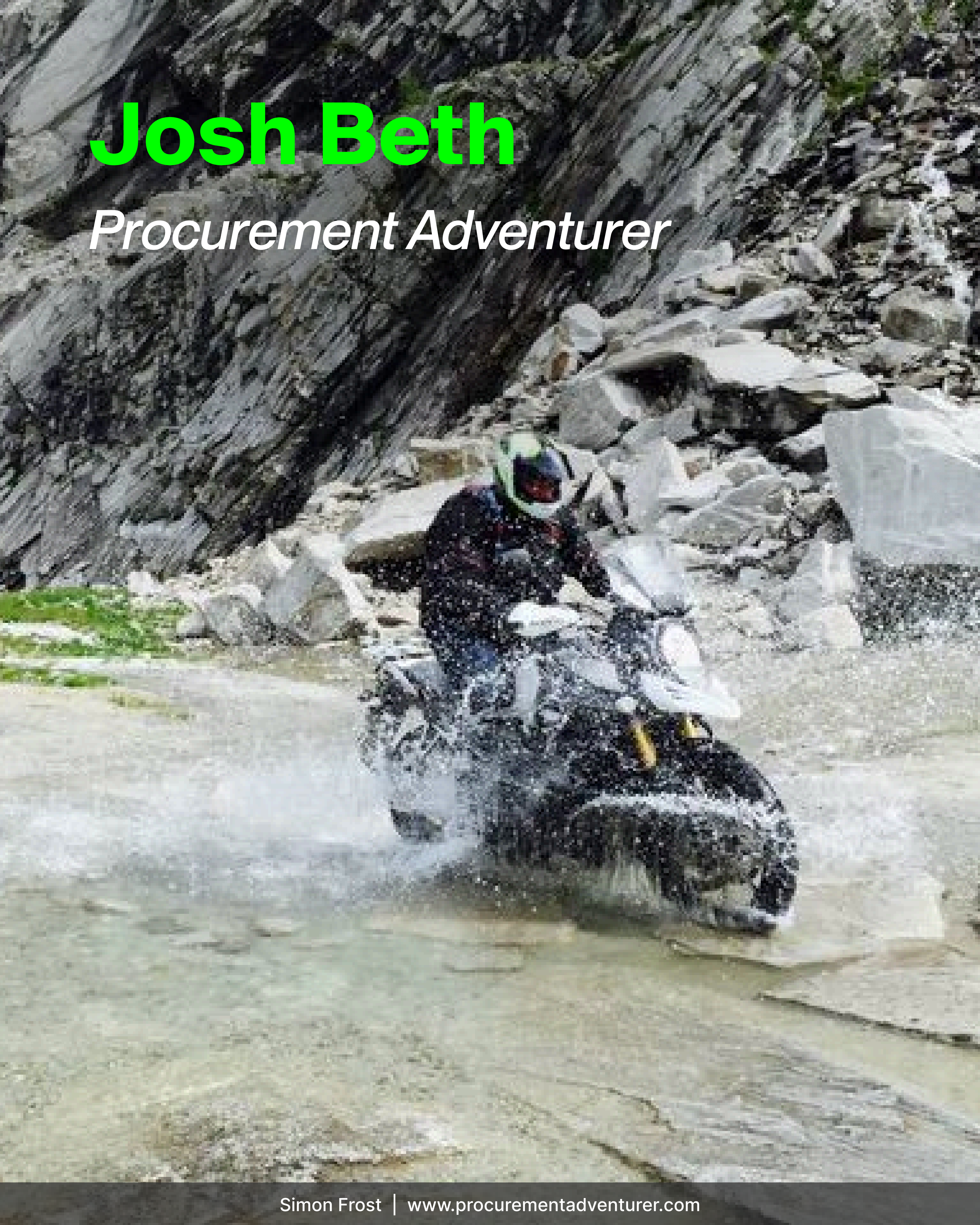
Eat in or Eat out – **Eat in** because eating out is more often than not disappointing (and my Wife is a KNOCKOUT cook)!

Chipotle or Scotch Bonnet – **Chipotle**, because it has some characterful flavour and it brings smoky deliciousness!!

Humans or Animals – If there were the choice of bears, it would be **bears**! Love'um!

What can't you do without?

MacBook, iPhone & my £19 super-cheap Chinese Bluetooth headset



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