# Are You Ready for the 21st Century?

# Building a Resilient Business Module 2

Welcome to the age of uncertainty—a time when disruptions are unpredictable, unanticipated, and unstoppable.

You can't know when the next "Sandy" will hit? Or, when a water pipe might burst and flood your building? Or whether your business checking account might be hacked?



In our first module, we talked about the new landscape of risk. Extreme weather, the ever-quickening rate of technological change, global markets, brittle infrastructure and interconnectedness, all make the 21<sup>st</sup> century a time of tremendous unpredictability and volatility.

How can your business weather all this uncertainty and volatility? By becoming resilient—now. NOW is the time to build resilience into your business. And today, we'll show you how.



If you were to search for examples of resilience, you would find stories—all of which begin on the day of the disaster—about people rallying, persevering and overcoming extreme weather, wildfires, terrorism, industrial accidents.

That ability to fight through adversity is an important human quality. And people can be VERY resilient.

But, that's not the same as business resilience. Business resilience is about planning **before** the crisis hits— so disruptions don't cascade into disasters.



Business resilience is a set of processes and best practices that help your business recover from disruptions.

When you leave here today, you will know how to build resilience into your business by:

- Becoming risk intelligent
- Increasing flexibility and speed of response
- Creating a culture of employee engagement
- Building relationships inside and outside the

### You Can Create Resilience In Your Business By:

- Risk intelligence
- Flexibility / speed of response
- Employee engagement
  - Relationship building
- Operational discipline

company

Executing well

And as an added bonus, those same processes can make your business more competitive when there's not a crisis brewing.

The one critical element that underpins all of these best practices is *leadership* – leadership at the top and throughout your organization.



Businesses need leaders who:

- Create a clear vision about the purpose, values, and goals of the business. Norm Augustine said it best: Companies need to know what they stand for in advance of a crisis. And people need to have a sense of connection to those larger goals.
- Develop leadership skills at every level of the organization. In fact, employee performance can often depend more on the leadership of supervisors and managers than presidents or CEOs.
- Walk the talk. It's not enough to write down the values somewhere and hope everyone remembers. Great leaders reinforce them constantly

Leadership skills show up in each of the five capabilities that businesses need to deal with volatility.

So, now, let's put the "how to" in resilience.

# Companies that have decided what they stand for in advance of a crisis manage crises best. Norman Augustine Former CEO, Lockheed Martin

# 1. RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS ARE RISK INTELLIGENT

So, what the heck is risk intelligence. Rick Funston, who coined the term and authored a book titled "Surviving and Thriving in Uncertainty" boiled it down to a capability that he described in 5 words:

"Manage risk before it manages you."

Resilient organizations have active risk radars – and they translate that information into practical actions that can enable them to seize opportunities or preempt the impact of dangers that put their businesses at risk.



Unfortunately, it is incredibly difficult for most of us to accurately predict risk probabilities. In fact, research shows that only weather forecasters (well, some of the time) and professional gamblers are good at predicting risk.

For example, you're more much likely to die from an accident in your shower than a terrorist attack—but which one worries you more?



Realistic risk evaluation is a challenge also because we humans are naturally optimistic.

Even individuals who know the objective statistics—on divorce, illness, accidents, almost anything—don't think those statistics apply to them. In fact a recent survey found that while 93 percent of respondents were optimistic about their own future, only 17 percent were optimistic about the future of others.

Maybe you've seen the TV commercial for an insurance company that illustrates this point: When people are asked to describe major life events from the previous year, they describe a fairly even distribution of good and bad events; but when asked to predict the coming year, the vast majority sees only good things coming their way.

ME? YOU?

I'll Probably
do GREAT!

not so much
(nothing personal)

But while unbridled optimism might do wonderful things for your outlook on life, it will NOT do wonderful things for your business's outlook. This does NOT mean that you need to plan for every possible disruption. But there are a few things that you need to do regularly, even routinely:

### a. Think outside the box.

Often, what's needed is imagination, not information. The term "black swan event" refers to disruptive events that no one could have predicted—and that no one even imagined.

The phrase stems from the discovery by European settlers of black swans in Australia around 1700. It was a complete shock to them, because until that time, Europeans *knew* with absolute certainty that all swans were white.

As Mark Twain famously remarked: It's not what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just isn't so."

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Mark Twain

But how do you *train* yourself to think outside the box and imagine those black swans? There are many proven ways to stimulate your imagination, including:

- Make a list of things you absolutely know to be true about your business—and then envision the exact opposite. Could any of those opposites lead you to new approaches for old problems?
- Read a trade journal from another industry. Choose an industry you think has absolutely no bearing on your own business.
- Turn things upside down—whether physically or mentally—and examine the item from a new angle.
- Go somewhere new. Challenge your mind by exploring new territory.



# b. Look for signals that disruption could be coming your way.

Very few disruptions happen as "bolts out of the blue." Often, the signals were there—but no one was paying attention.

- Remember Blockbuster? It went out of business because it was too slow off the mark in the video-ondemand opportunity.
- Or how about Kodak? The great American company that invented the Brownie camera gave away the digital photography market.
- In early 2001, FEMA warned that a hurricane hitting New Orleans was one of the three most likely disasters facing the U.S. The very next year, a consortia of government and academic experts predicted that the largest damage could come from a weakened levee system, not from the storm surge. And indeed, three years later, 75% of the flooding in New Orleans was caused by breaches in the levees – a fully preventable disaster.



Ask yourself—and keep asking yourself: What's out there that could affect my business? Do I see changes in the market, in my customer base or my competition that could affect my business? Effective risk management requires not only an understanding of the risk of a business strategy, but the external risks to a business strategy.

What's happening around me on a larger scale that could disrupt my business and many others? Think about:

- Extreme weather
- Emerging Technologies
- Cybersecurity
- Infrastructure disruptions
- Pandemics



# c. Identify Critical Dependencies

What are the critical lifelines for my business? In general, most humans can survive without air for three minutes, 3 days without water and 3 weeks without food. What are those critical assets for your business can't survive without? Think about:

- Access to capital
- Access to infrastructure (power, transportation)
- Critical people or skills
- Critical supplies or parts
- Dependencies on any one customer or supplier.

Do you have a plan B if your critical lifelines are disrupted?



### d. Take the long view:

Don't let short-term concerns take all your attention and energy. Take the long view – which gives you time to react and respond to the challenges and complexities you see ahead. That way, you'll be able to identify and prevent problems—instead of trying to solve them when they're already at your doorstep.

And be sure to encourage and reward your employees for taking the long view as well. As one business expert only half-jokingly said: "If you're only going to reward fire-fighting, you might end up creating an organization of pyromaniacs." Taking that metaphor a step further: Your real goal is to fireproof your business.



# e. Overcome your risk biases:

We're all a product of our experiences, so it's hard to put aside our assumptions. One of the best ways to overcome blind spots and risk biases is to create mixed-age teams. Bring in younger, newer employees to challenge conventional wisdom – and their out-of-the-box ideas can be honed by the insights and experiences of your more seasoned employees.

These inter-generational teams can also spot new opportunities, which could give you a competitive edge.



# 2. RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS ARE ADAPTIVE AND QUICK TO RESPOND

If volatility is the new normal, then adaptive capacity is the requisite for dealing with this new reality. Competitive advantage rests with organizations that have the capacity to manage disruption—whether unforeseeable or merely unforeseen.

Adaptive companies are risk intelligent, flexible and willing to accept the idea of change.



When General Stanley McChrystal was tasked to fight Al Queda in Iraq, he said nothing in the world could outpace the challenger's one simple advantage: their ability to rapidly, seamlessly, and independently adapt to the environment.

The military could get ahead of the problem ONLY if it became comfortable with an ever-continuous cycle of change. McChrystal noted, "By changing ourselves, we found the ability to move with exponentially greater speed and precision, while constantly adapting to external threat factors."

Plans are great.
But always be ready to

ADAPT
to your new reality.

Although being small can be a disadvantage in some areas, when it comes to agility, small businesses have a distinct advantage: They can react quickly to disasters and changing markets without having to muscle through the enormous amount of red tape and bureaucracy.

An MIT study found that agile firms generate 30% higher profits and grow revenue 37% faster than non-agile companies.

But, adaptability and agility do not happen by accident. How do organizations develop those qualities?

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# a. Have a clear vision and priorities

It's that leadership thing again. When everyone on your team is on the same page and pulling in the same direction, you can more easily absorb shifts, make changes, and adapt on the fly. Without a north star, your employees may not know how to respond — especially in the chaotic conditions of a disaster.

Try asking each staff member to state what your business is and what your priorities are in 3 or 4 sentences. Did you get too many different answers? If so, you might need to remind everyone again, making sure the goals and priorities are clear.



It's up to YOU to make sure your whole team is aiming toward the same goals and priorities.

### b. Delegate authority to the lowest appropriate level

The number one requisite for nimbleness is the ability to make decisions rapidly—and that can only happen when decision-making authority is delegated down. Hierarchy and bureaucracy are the arch enemies of speed. Checklists and rule books are never a substitute for judgment.

But, delegating authority down should not be seen as only an emergency precaution. Since your employees are familiar with the company's processes, systems, products, and customers, they would logically have the best ideas to maximize these elements and deliver improved performance, business innovation, and better workplace experiences. The bottom line is that delegating authority



down to the lowest appropriate level will make your business more competitive.

Even the big guys are catching on. Remember how Walmart's reputation rose by leaps and bounds after Hurricane Katrina struck? One reason was because its CEO gave store managers the power to respond as they deemed appropriate. They distributed supplies to those in need and turned Walmart stores into shelters for homeless residents and first responders.

# Encourage your employees to unleash their problem-solving creativity. Everyone will benefit.

# c. Share information and create simple, effective ways to do it.

General McChrystal tells a fascinating story about a military culture in which information is siloed and secreted—and the transfer of information was not working. Consequently, McChrystal encouraged changing the culture. Instead of equating power with the accumulation of knowledge, he wanted to equate power with the *sharing* of knowledge. He said: The fact that I know something has zero value if I'm not the person who can do something with that information.

Here are some ideas to improve communication in your business:

- Develop a company wiki or regular roundtable meetings to discuss issues
- Rotate team members into new roles.
- Create open work spaces

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- Rotate team members into new roles
- Create open work spaces.

# 3. RESILIENT BUSINESSES ENGAGE THEIR EMPLOYEES IN BOTH SURVIVING AND THRIVING

PROACTIVE employees can be the key to your businesses survival in a crisis. So, resilient organizations make their employees part of the resilience plan and planning process. After all, their jobs are on the line, which can be highly motivating.

Engaged employees are as critical to a company's competitiveness as they are to its disaster preparedness.

RESILIENT BUSINESSES
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The Gallup organization defines three types of employees:

- Engaged: They work with passion and feel a deep connection to their company.
- Not engaged: These employees put in the time, but not the energy or the passion. They've basically "checked out"
- Actively disengaged: These guys are not just unhappy; they seed low morale and undermine what their coworkers accomplish.



What makes employees feel engaged in their jobs? There are a number of "must-haves:"

- Set clear performance expectations
- Involve employees in decision-making
- · Recognize individual needs
- Value employee expertise
- Create a culture of listening

**a. Set Clear performance expectations**: The bare minimum is that employees need to know what's expected of them and have the tools and equipment needed to meet those expectations.

Document job expectations and set up regular performance reviews people can benchmark their progress, even make improvements. Training creates personal opportunities for learning and growth that benefit the business as well.

b. Involve your employees in decision-making.

Are employees involved in decision-making, particularly when they will be directly affected by the decision? When companies cultivate a sense that "we're all in this together," everyone wins – including the business.

c. Recognize your employees as individuals

H. Norman Schwarzkopf, retired U.S. Army General, once remarked: I have seen competent leaders who stood in front of a platoon and all they saw was a platoon. But *great* leaders stand in front of a platoon and see it as 44 individuals, each of whom has aspirations, each of whom wants to live, each of whom wants to do good.

Are you consulting with your employees about their needs? Can you accommodate moms with sick children or family emergencies? What about during an emergency situation when they need to be home with elderly parents or young children?

## d. Value your employees' expertise

Does your leadership value employee ideas?

If you don't have an employee recognition system, consider implementing one. It's one thing to say you value employee input; It's another to highlight employees for their achievements in front of the entire organization.

One organization established two internal awards to encourage employee engagement and to spread innovation throughout the company: "Thief of the Month" was a high-profile internal acknowledgement for teams that "stole" an idea or innovation from another unit and successfully incorporated it into their own business; and the "We Wuz Robbed," award was recognition for having one's group's best practice or process adopted by another internal group.

### To increase employee engagement:

- Set clear performance expectations
- Involve employees in decision-making
- Recognize individual needs
- · Value employee expertise
- · Create a culture of listening





Your employees are individuals with their own aspirations and needs.

You know that. Right?

> US Positi Propo



## e. Create a culture of listening

In addition to awards, make sure your employees know you're listening to them every day. You might not always like what you hear, but you need to solicit honest opinions – and make sure there is no retribution for voicing them. Consistently ask for their input—and pay attention.

Don't forget to speak to employees who are leaving the organization. On an exit interview, they may feel inclined to let you know how they really feel. Use their feedback to identify training needs, develop people, and improve operations.

Listen to your employees.
Pay attention to their feedback.

(Even if you don't like what they're saying.)

4. RESILIENT BUSINESSES BUILD STRONG
RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION—AS
WELL AS OVER THE FENCE LINE

RESILIENT BUSINESSES BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION—AS WELL AS OVER THE FENCE LINE

The resilience of your business is all about relationships. So nothing is more important than building that team.

As General McChrystal has said: ""It's not enough to be great, you have to be great *together*."

No one needs partners more than during a disaster – both inside and outside the company walls.

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

(Corny? Maybe. (True? Absolutely.)

But you can't wait until a disruption occurs to establish a disaster management team. No one wants to be making introductions in the midst of a crisis.

And, teams with a history of collaboration work better together than people who haven't teamed up previously.



Nothing has highlighted the importance of teamwork over raw talent better than the 2004 American Men's Olympic basketball team. Each individual player on that team was an NBA superstar, and yet that ad hoc team lost more games during the 2004 Olympiad than we had suffered in all previous Olympiads combined.

By contrast, a 14-year study on the NBA revealed that teams that had played together longer won more games. Even "bad" teams with a long history of playing together

A collection of individual superstars makes a great photo op.

But only practice makes a great team.

won more often than the talent of individual players would have predicted.

Or on a much more serious note, consider that 73% of commercial aviation incidents occur on a crew's first day of flying together.

But even more importantly, the primary purpose for building strong teams is for competitiveness, not crisis management. Teams can drive productivity, avoiding unproductive repetition of multiple people working on similar tasks. improvements.

Teams can drive innovation. One study of science labs showed that important ideas did not emerge from a lone scientist in front of a microscope, but rather at weekly lab meetings when everyone shared their latest data, findings, errors and anomalies. It was the process of the whole team bouncing ideas around together that led to breakthrough innovation—innovation that required no additional investment.

Teams can drive better quality as well. In another study of a large software company, a 50% increase in team familiarity was followed by a 19% decrease in defects and a 30% decrease in deviations from budget.

How do you help teams develop in your company?

### a. Practice Team-building

Collaboration is not always instinctive; it takes practice. At DuPont, a visit by the President seemed like a good opportunity to exercise crisis management team in getting the company prepared for an official visit.

But if the president isn't visiting your business this week, you can always practice team building with activities like the marshmallow challenge, a game with the following rules: Teams of four build the tallest free-standing structure possible out of 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of tape, one yard of string, and a marshmallow that must be positioned on top. While the rules are simple, the construction is actually very challenging and forces people to collaborate very quickly.

Or, if you want to be on topic, run a table top crisis exercise. It doesn't matter if that scenario is the one that unfolds or not. Just practicing helps a team prepare for the real thing.





### b. Build partnerships over your fence line

Since you also rely on people *outside* your company to help you succeed every day—and to survive a disaster—you need to work on building strong relationships beyond your four walls. In fact, in a disaster, those relationships could be your best shot at recovery.

So who are these folks?

Suppliers and service providers: Your suppliers and service providers are fairly obvious. At a Resilience Workshop in Newark, business participants shared that prior relationships with contractors made a critical difference in getting needed supplies, services, or repairs after a disaster. But, good relations with your suppliers also helps if demand for your product suddenly spikes and you need to convince them to get you more than you asked for – and at an affordable price.

A small business owner in Redondo Beach, California experienced first-hand some of the pitfalls in taking your suppliers for granted when he called a supplier to ask for a favor and the supplier seemed distant and unhelpful. When asked what was wrong, the supplier said the owner only called when he needed something—and the supplier felt the owner was taking advantage of him.

From this experience, the business owner took two actions: First he created a contact data base where he stored information on suppliers and vendors as well as customers and business peers—and he began to document details of conversations. Second he changed his routine to set aside a portion of each day to maintain professional relationships that would sustain his business in good times and bad.

**Business peers**: You might also want to reach out to your business peers through local associations and professional groups and your local preparedness officials as well. The more people you know and interact with, the more you can learn about what's happening in your community and local industry.

That information could help you preempt the effects of disruptions before they occur. And in a disaster, these are also the folks that could provide you a lifeline. And there's a competitiveness dimension here too. The local ecosystem of thriving businesses lifts everyone's boat.

Consider the case of a hair salon called True Grit, which was devastated by an earthquake. The owner had a long history of engagement in the community. So, when her building was condemned, she was offered temporary space at one of her competitors' shops.





Community Leaders and First Responders: Build your local relationships by participating in community activities and charities. Sponsoring little league teams or 5K charity races, forming partnerships with local schools or supporting local causes will help you meet your neighbors and gain visibility in your community – and earn good in the process.

Get to know your local first responders – maybe even sign your employees up for free or low-cost preparedness training or first aid. This will increase your employees' confidence in their ability to handle emergencies, even in their families. You'll have employees who are able to weather any storm – and know who to call in a disaster.



### d. Leverage Technology

**Social media**: Use your social media tools to build relationships within your supply-chain and learn about your suppliers—and your competitors.

Many disaster survivors have reported that their social connections—both locally and through social media—were absolutely critical for their survival and might even have been their most important first responders. Your social media networks are always available—a large network within which you've already established connections, trust, and dependability. So now is the time to build those networks—and they'll be available for you when disaster strikes.

Use social media to build your networks NOW.

They'll be available for you when disaster strikes.

You can use your social media platforms as both communications and research tools:

- Post information about weather conditions, accidents, and road closures that would affect your business deliveries.
- Learn more about your suppliers' and vendors' businesses and monitor their reputations
- Capture and communicate best practices, continuous improvement ideas and initiatives
- Research and find new suppliers, business partners, vendors, carriers, and customers.



### 5. RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS EXECUTE WELL

What often differentiates one company from another is not the planning, policies, and procedures they've developed but whether or not they can execute.

Certainly one of the key requisites for flawless execution is operational discipline. DuPont defines operational discipline as "the deeply rooted dedication and commitment by every member of an organization to carry out each task the right way every time." The shorthand: Everyone do it right every time.



Organizational discipline is as critical to disaster preparedness as it is to workplace safety, superior products, and excellent customer service.

As noted business strategist, Jim Collins, said: A culture of discipline is not a principle of business; it is a principle of greatness.

But how do companies achieve operational discipline that leads to flawless execution?

- a. Write your plans and processes down. Document processes in a simple and standardized way. When management leaves it entirely up to workers to develop a process and how to implement it, results are inconsistent and inefficient at best—with the potential for outcomes that are more disastrous.
- b. Communicate the processes and procedures up, down and across the organization. Lessons captured from major disasters almost invariably cite the lack of employees' familiarity with the organizations' business continuity plan—the development of which we'll discuss at length in our next presentation. In a crisis, that can leave employees operating at cross-purposes, without clear priorities or direction.

On a day to day basis, the lack of operating disciplines can result in shortcuts that trigger quality and competitiveness problems.

The 2010 Deep Water Horizon BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico—in which 11 lives were lost—exemplifies the potential disasters that can occur when operational disciplines are not followed. Executives had no knowledge that the blowout preventer had been extensively modified or that, because of those modifications, the drawings they were using to manage the crisis didn't match what was actually on the ocean floor. That mismatch led to decisions that created the largest accidental marine oil spill in the history of the petroleum industry to date.

# c. Measure specific goals and milestones—for both competitiveness and resilience.

Snap Poll: Do you currently use any specific performance metrics or key risk indicators? Show of hands:

- Yes my business uses key performance indicators or key risk indicators
- Maybe, but we need to look at them more closely
- No but we'd like to investigate their use
- No and we have no plans to put metrics in place.

A culture of discipline is not a principle of business, it is a principle of greatness.

James Collins, Author, Good to Great





# Do you use any specific performance metrics or key risk indicators?

- Yes, my business uses key performance indicators or key risk indicators
- Maybe, but we need to look at them more closely
- No, but we'd like to investigate their use
- No, and we have no plans to put metrics in place.

Since you're only going to manage what you measure, it's important to keep track of your milestones and maybe reasons to celebrate. Here are some of the metrics you might want to measure:

- Defect levels or customer complaints—which also tells you either that the processes are not being followed or that you need to take another look at the processes
- Productivity targets: Are inefficiencies slowing down your productivity growth?
- Whether your business continuity plans are being updated (annually) and practiced (semi-annually)
- Whether the time to recovery met expectations for any disruption that occurred in the previous 12 months

**e. Make sure your plans are living documents.** The most useless documents in the world are the ones that sit on the shelf, unresponsive to changing conditions.

The ability to learn from experience and continuously improve your plans and processes is as important to resilience as it is to competitiveness.

The coach for a British cycling team coined the phrase "aggregation of marginal gains." He led his team to first-ever British win in the Tour de France by focusing on a 1% margin of improvement in everything they did. His idea was that all the little things that people tend of overlook because they "don't matter" eventually add up to a big thing that can become the defining factor between failure and success.

# The bottom line .... well, it's actually your bottom line.

In this Age of Turbulence, resilience isn't something to think about only when you "have time." It is actually a cornerstone of competitiveness.

Resilience allows you to anticipate without having to predict. Resilient organizations are change-ready – poised to adapt and quick to respond. They can draw upon networks of support both from inside their companies and with their partners, neighbors, and communities. They don't rely on luck, but on strategic preparation. And those processes and practices are what make their day-to-day operations more productive and prosperous.

Our next module focuses on putting the how-to in business continuity.





