

WHITE PAPER

Achieving Resilient Dynamism: A Synergistic Perspective

Jay Jacobson

served as the former Managing Director of Celemi Americas

A growing topic in contemporary business discussions is organizational resilience. While resilience has many definitions, it can be characterized as an organization's ability to effectively absorb, and rapidly respond to, unforeseen and disruptive market, economic, and social events while maintaining financial health, team engagement, and a competitive advantage.

Not all organizations will succeed in becoming resilient. In fact, two organizations within the same industry and market, of the same size, possessing similar financial health, can achieve widely varying degrees of resilience. It is of value, therefore, to identify the characteristics of organizations that achieve a high level of resilience. On examination, we discover that the synergy of agile processes, forward thinking leadership, and effective strategic execution are key essential differentiators. In fact, all three of these characteristics must be engaged simultaneously to create a powerful Resilient Dynamism.

Agile Processes

A closer look at agile processes reveals the following attributes that are present in resilient organizations:

- Establishment of "structured flexibility." In other words, all processes have built in mechanisms that can rapidly be adjusted, creating a balance between structure and flexibility.
- Process improvement is an ongoing initiative.
- Decision making is supported by mechanisms that allow for rapid implementation.

Forward Thinking Leadership

Organizations that achieve a high degree of resilience are characterized by leaders who possess the following attributes:

- They understand the importance of preparing the organization for change by enrolling the team in the change process.
- They understand the need to equip professionals with a high level of business acumen and financial literacy, resulting in informed decision making at all levels of the organization.

- They create a culture that encourages cross-functional teams to elicit the best ideas, shared responsibility, and ownership.
- They have a keen awareness that in times of turbulence, empowerment of all team members is essential, and it is integrated into the culture.
- They inspire the team by being candid, open, and encouraging.

It is important to note that not all competent leaders will succeed in creating Resilient Dynamism within their organizations. The skills and attributes of successful leaders during prosperous times are not identical to the skills and attributes needed to meet and overcome high-impact unforeseen events and challenges. Leaders who place an over reliance on command-and-control and inflexible processes will often fail to make the adjustments needed.

Strategic Execution

Virtually all leaders will agree that the greatest challenge of strategic success is not the development of the strategic plan; Rather, it is the execution of it. Therefore, those organizations that reflect the following attributes will succeed in creating Resilient Dynamism:

- Marketing is constantly looking for shifts in market changes, buyer preferences, and emerging new markets, and have the mechanisms needed to adapt quickly to those changes. While disruptive events are potential threats, they also present opportunities to gain a competitive advantage.
- They constantly evaluate their value propositions to reflect potential changes in buying criteria, enabling them to continue to deliver a high degree of customer value.
- Strategic plans include "what if" scenarios.

Achieving Resilient Dynamism

While identifying the characteristics of a resilient organization is critical, the over-arching challenge is how organizations attain them. Simply put, one does not train or teach resilience itself because resilience is the result of underlying practices, attributes, and competencies. Therefore, enlightened organizations focus on enhancing the skills and competencies that result in resilience. Some of these include:

- Change management
- Agile mindset
- Effective use of cross-functional teams
- Business acumen and financial literacy
- Strategic execution and flexible planning
- Market agility and competitive intelligence
- Delegation

Of course, there are more. However, the key is to recognize that Resilient Dynamism is a result of enhanced competencies and practices that must be engaged simultaneously to attain maximum success and synergies.