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## Emerging Supply Chain Trends

Those executives who stay on top of the latest trends and search for patterns and trends in their business are far more successful than their counterparts. In my 20+ years of experience across multiple industries and globally, I've seen the value of being on the edge of identifying and leveraging trends. This is especially valuable if you are able to look across organizations inclusive of types and sizes - if you see something in common, you're likely to have a gem!

Now the question is how to leverage these trends. Identifying is useless without the ability to put it to good use. So, let's look at the latest supply chain trends keeping execution in mind:

1. **Collaboration:** You can no longer be successful if you aren't focused on how to expand and add depth to your collaboration efforts. Do you partner with suppliers or pound them over the head about price? Do you find ways to collaborate with your customers to get a better handle on demand data? If so, you'll have superior service and cash flow. S&OP is one vehicle to consider.
2. **Innovation:** It is no longer acceptable to be an exceptional implementer; instead, you must innovate to stand out in the crowd. How can you elevate customer service while reducing cost and increasing profit? Doing what you used to do better will not cut it! You must innovate.
3. **Risk Management:** What could be more important in today's new normal global business environment? Earthquakes. Tsunamis. Political conflicts. Strikes. Currency swings. Are you prepared? How agile is your supply chain? Customers will still expect on-time deliveries of the highest quality!
4. **Sustainability:** What started as a way to improve the company image and address regulatory concerns is emerging as a competitive advantage. It's starting to offer profit improvement - the triple bottom line is here to stay. How can we be green "and" increase profits? It doesn't hurt if you circle back to innovation... You'd be surprised what you can achieve - even areas like packaging can be ripe with opportunity.
5. **Big Data:** As we are increasingly living in an information overloaded society, we must find ways to sift through the data to find what will matter. How do we glean intelligence from it and translate it into business advantage? It is no longer limited to a techie topic; those who leverage big data to drive results will sustain a competitive advantage.

Assuming you jump on these trends, the only potential roadblock is your people. It is becoming increasingly paramount - and difficult - to find exceptional supply chain talent. Make sure your company stands out in the crowd and values supply chain talent, and you'll be well on your way to achieving success.

Think about how these trends impact your business. Since my brothers used to be heavily involved in ice hockey, one of my favorite analogies becomes applicable here: How can you skate to where the puck is going instead of skating to where it is?

## Lisa's Tips: Showing Thanks in the Workplace

It's been proven that a simple thank you can achieve great results so why don't we take the time out to appreciate our people more often?

- **Catch 'em doing right** - What could be better than recognizing someone's efforts in the moment? Better yet - the person knows you recognized their contributions and valued them.
- **A simple thank you** - Many times, a simple thank you is enough. I can't tell you how often I hear that from some of the most valuable resources my clients have.
- **Think about the person** - Not everyone appreciates the same thank you gestures. Don't consider what you'd prefer. Think about the person. Would an afternoon off be preferred? Or a special lunch?
- **Awards** - Who doesn't like to be recognized? However, to be meaningful, it has to be obvious that the person stands out in the crowd. The award shouldn't circulate through everyone over time. Make sure it's meaningful - and rare.
- **A special project** - For high performers, one of the best rewards is to be put on a special project. What interests does your recipient have? How can you recognize them with a key role? Or with a special training opportunity?

## Recommended Reading

"[Getting Organized in the Google Era](#)" by Douglas C. Merrill - this is an excellent book on how to get organized in today's information overloaded society. He provides many tips and techniques that you can 'take to the bank' to improve your efficiency and effectiveness.

## Connections

Connections and relationships are the 80/20 of success! Please see this month's requests:

- My APICS (Association of Operations Management) Board of Directors is looking for cutting edge volunteers. [E-mail me](#)
- My Ontario ProVisors group (a community of professionals who serve their clients as trusted advisors and collaborate for success) is looking for top notch Inland Empire attorneys. [E-mail me](#).

**NOTE:** To submit an item for this section, please send me an email with a short description of your needs and an email address. Please note that NOT all requests will be published as it must fit the guidelines and align with the Profit through People brand.

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