



Executive guide: Resilience

What is resilience?

‘Resilient’ organisations are able to continue meeting key objectives when faced with significantly challenging circumstances in their operating context/environment. Resilience tears down silos of risk, security, emergency and business continuity management through a holistic approach to help organisations survive turbulent times.

What does resilience bring to an organisation?

‘...Every business is successful until it’s not. What’s amazing is how often top management is surprised when ‘not’ happens...’

Hamel & Välikangas

No leader can anticipate exactly the challenges their organisation might face. Only with the flexibility to adapt to the environment can an organisation survive and potentially thrive. Being resilient has obvious advantages for organisations. A resilient organisation can turn crisis into opportunity. Following a disruption, an organisation with a higher level of resilience may:

- return to pre disruption profits faster
- use the event to improve the effectiveness of its operation
- reduce the cost of disruptions to insurers; thereby resulting in reduced insurance premiums
- reduce exposure to uninsured losses
- negate increased regulation to meet community expectations
- enhance its reputation, and
- increase staff morale.

What is a resilient organisation?

Resilience is a combination of culture and attitude, process and framework. There is no one blueprint for a resilient organisation; however resilience is strongest in organisations that show all or a combination of the following traits:

- anticipates emerging threats and understands

their impact on the organisation’s objectives and goals

- understands the operational and system dependencies that support and underpin the organisation’s strategic direction
- fosters and supports a partnership with critical supply chains, sectoral and community stakeholders
- possesses an ability to respond to and recover from disruptions quickly and holistically
- adapts and reacts flexibly to restore and strengthen the routine functioning and operation of the organisation
- nurtures and supports loyal staff
- articulates clearly the organisational objectives through effective leadership, and
- establishes a strong sense of purpose in response to and recovery from a disruption.

How do we build resilience into the organisation’s culture?

To become resilient an organisation should have a desire to be resilient at the highest level. This is not a tick in the box exercise—it’s a way of operating!

Some key early actions an executive can take include:

- identify a direct report to take responsibility for driving a resilience program
- treat enterprise risk, business continuity and crisis management as senior management tasks
- integrate risk and business components into a common purpose
- remove silos between the disciplines
- invest in building on existing programs such as enterprise risk management, business continuity and strategic planning
- develop outcomes based and aligned key performance indicators around resilience, and
- integrate a management approach in both direction and strategy and express that to internal and external stakeholders.

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Where can I get more information?

The following references are for reference only. They are representative only and inclusion in this list does not indicate endorsement by the TISN.

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This Executive Guide has been prepared by the TISN Resilience Community of Interest.

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