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Organisational resilience: Building an enduring enterprise is a report written by The Economist Intelligence Unit and commissioned by BSI (the British Standards Institution). It focuses on the process of creating resilient companies—businesses that are able to both respond effectively to short-term setbacks and adapt to long-term shifts in their environments. As Fiorella Iannuzzelli, director and enterprise resilience lead at PricewaterhouseCoopers, puts it: “Resilience is about getting ahead of change so that you can survive and thrive.”

Based on a survey of a sample of international executives, this study assesses the progress they have made towards embedding a culture of resilience; the benefits they feel they have derived; the obstacles they are facing; and what work remains for them to do to ensure that their companies become resilient. The key findings include the following:

- **Companies trust their ability to implement specific resilience-promoting practices, but their confidence in overall resilience may be exaggerated.** For example, in the key area of having well-trained and appropriately skilled staff, 75% of respondents say they are satisfied that their companies will be well prepared in three years’ time. Yet, as noted above, fewer than one in three say that resilience in general is fully embedded in their organisations, suggesting a gap between focusing on isolated measures and fully embedding a culture of resilience.

- **Good people and great service are key to achieving organisational resilience—today and in the future.** Understanding customer needs, employing well-trained staff and having a dynamic leadership are the top three prerequisites to ensure resilience.

- **Lack of knowledge and skills, insufficient leadership commitment and the need to focus on immediate financial issues are the biggest obstacles to resilience measures.** The strong presence of such barriers suggests that senior managers are not focused on the internal and
external trends that may be affecting their resilience strategy.

- **Economic uncertainty, disruptive competitors and reputational harm** are viewed as the leading business risks that drive the need to be more resilient. Threats to a company’s data security come in fourth in the list of risks identified by respondents—suggesting that business leaders see organisational resilience as buttressing their company’s strategic rather than operational goals.
Today’s headlines are filled with cautionary tales of world-class brands damaged by bad decisions and poor leadership. In 2015 alone, Volkswagen’s reputation was severely damaged by an emissions-rigging scandal, Toshiba dealt with US$1.2bn accounting irregularities that led to the resignation of its CEO, and Petrobras, Brazil’s state-run oil company, suffered multibillion-dollar losses in the wake of embarrassing disclosures about corruption and money-laundering. These incidents show how even strong organisations are vulnerable to upheaval—and not just from scandals. Shifting market demands, global competitors and major political or economic changes can unsettle, and even topple, established brands that are caught unprepared.

An emerging concept for preparing to withstand such shocks, and even to benefit from future shifts by anticipating them, is organisational resilience. Resilience can be broadly understood as “staying power”—the ability to react to crises, but also the ability to structure and run a company in a way that minimises its exposure to disruptions, whether from internal or external causes. In practice this means improving a company’s ability to track and address risks, adapt to market shifts and prevent actions that will damage its reputation. Operationally, building resilience requires strong leadership, an inclusive corporate culture and flexible practices—all of which help to head off risks and adapt to problems as and when they arise.

A recent Economist Intelligence Unit survey of 411 business executives worldwide shows that companies are well aware of the importance of organisational resilience. It shows that executives are confident about their companies’ ability to embed key specific resilience-promoting practices in their daily operations and understand the benefits of becoming resilient. However, the survey also shows that only about one in three so far say that resilience has become “embedded within the organisation and a clear differentiator and factor in success/improvement in performance”. And looking ahead, less than half of respondents expect to have achieved this goal in three years’ time.

This research explores the gaps between intention and action in companies’ approach to promoting resilience. It also looks at how a sample of business executives perceives and prioritises resilience-promoting measures, what it takes to build and maintain a culture of resilience, and what best practices are being adopted to promote resilience.
This research is based on a survey of 411 business executives, 61% of whom are heads of departments, SVPs or CEOs. Of these, 20% represent companies that are more than 100 years old, and 16% work for companies that are less than ten years old. One-half of these organisations have more than US$500m in annual revenue, while 10% have an annual revenue of US$10bn or more. Respondents were drawn primarily from Europe (29%), North America (30%) and Asia-Pacific (30%).

To complement the survey findings, The Economist Intelligence Unit conducted in-depth interviews with nine business leaders and industry experts from around the world. We would like to thank all survey respondents and the following executives (listed alphabetically) for their time and insights:

- Paul Brock, CEO, Kiwi bank, New Zealand
- Cezar Busatto, chief resilience officer, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- Sebastien Eckersley-Maslin, CEO, BlueChilli, Sydney, Australia
- Fay Hoosain, SVP, office of the president CEO, Sasol, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Fiorella Iannuzzelli, director and enterprise resilience lead, PricewaterhouseCoopers, New York
- Teemu Kangas-Kärki, COO/CFO, Fiskars, Helsinki, Finland
- D Christopher Kayes, professor of management, George Washington University School of Business, Washington, DC
- Michael vom Sondern, founder and chief sales officer, minubo, Hamburg, Germany
- Elizabeth Yee, VP, Strategic Partnerships and Solutions, 100 Resilient Cities, pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation, New York

The Economist Intelligence Unit bears sole responsibility for the contents of this report, which was written by Sarah Fister Gale and edited by Victoria Tuomisto.
Experts interviewed for this report agree that being able to adapt to constantly shifting market trends is key to their long-term success. Fully 88% of respondents to a survey conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) for this report say that organisational resilience is a priority for their company. However, only 29% say that resilience practices are fully embedded in their organisations and contributing significantly to improving their business performance (see Figure 1). And just 44% of organisations surveyed anticipate that in three years’ time resilience-oriented practices and processes will be fully embedded in their businesses. This means that the number of companies which consider that reaching this goal is important is twice as high as the number of those that are confident in their ability to do so in three years’ time. This gap between aspiration and performance suggests that businesses still face a number of challenges and stumbling blocks on the road to resilience.

Just as resilience is fully implemented in only a minority (29%) of companies surveyed, so it is inconsistently understood within companies—about two-thirds (67%) of respondents say that resilience is inconsistently understood across their companies. This is significant, as embedding a culture of resilience requires company-wide commitment and a thorough understanding of its requirements.

**Figure 1**

Which of the following best describes your company's approach towards organisational resilience?

(%) respondents

- A necessary evil - driven by regulation / a "must do it"
- Acknowledged as a priority but still seeking full business support
- Embraced by the business but with room for improvement
- Embedded within the organisation and a clear differentiator and factor in success/improvement in performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Now</th>
<th>In three years’ time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
European organisations are least likely to have organisational resilience processes in place today (19% vs 29% overall), although in three years’ time they expect to be leaders in this area, with nearly half of all respondents in the region predicting that these processes will be embedded. This expected shift is likely to be a response to the economic crisis in Europe, which has both hampered organisations’ ability to make process improvements and caused them to prioritise this goal going forward.

These business leaders recognise that resilience is the foundation of longevity. “A lot of it is about understanding when you need to have the courage to continue on the path you are on, or to change direction and create a new future,” says Teemu Kangas-Kärki, CEO and CFO of Fiskars, the global maker of garden, home and outdoor products headquartered in Helsinki. Founded in 1649, Fiskars is the oldest company in Finland and one of the oldest in the world. “The fact that we’ve been in operation for almost four centuries is a testament to our resilience,” he says.

But while most companies cannot claim such a long history, many of the executives surveyed agree with Mr Kangas-Kärki’s view. When asked about the value of resilience, four out of five respondents agree either strongly or somewhat that resilience is a prerequisite for long-term growth, and more than half see a very strong link between investment in resilience and long-term financial performance. These numbers hold true across regions, organisational size and job titles.

There is also close agreement among survey respondents about the most important factors involved in achieving resilience. When asked about these factors, respondents tend to focus on the people-side of the business, particularly on the importance of skilled staff, dynamic leaders and the ability to understand the needs of core customers (see Figure 2).

Ensuring product quality, protecting employee health and safety and managing environmental impacts are also important components of building resilience. More than half of survey respondents say that these factors are either

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**Figure 2**

**In your view, how important are each of the following factors in ensuring organisational resilience?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>Very unimportant</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding customer needs</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-trained and appropriately skilled staff</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic/agile leadership</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information security systems</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company-wide governance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and analysis of the gathered information</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information gathering on political, economic and industry trends in all markets</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational processes to ensure quality control of products and services</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply chain flexibility</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational process to ensure health &amp; safety</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational process to manage environmental impact</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
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somewhat or very important to ensuring organisational resilience.

**Moving with the market**

The ability to adapt to shifting customer needs is a key element of resilience. The 2015 Annual Global CEO Survey by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) shows that 61% of CEOs expect customers’ changing behaviours to change their industries.¹ Monitoring and adapting to consumer tastes creates opportunities to build a more resilient organisation, according to Paul Brock, CEO of Kiwibank in New Zealand. For example, the bank recently rolled out Home Hunter, a mobile app that lets customers get pre-approval for home loans and then helps them find appropriate listings of homes for sale. The app now accounts for roughly 15% of pre-approvals, Mr Brock says. “It’s an example of how meeting customer needs makes us more resilient, and will allow us to stay relevant in the future.”

Addressing shifting customer demands is a frequent topic raised by the experts interviewed for this report. “You must be willing to adapt as customers’ needs change,” explains Michael von Sondern, founder and chief sales officer of minubo, a cloud-based e-commerce company headquartered in Hamburg, Germany. His team of developers recently built a new analytics dashboard that would send key analytics to customers. It was an innovative tool, but customers objected to a system that was quite different from the current one. “We pushed them too far outside of their comfort zone,” Mr von Sondern says. In response the team quickly rebuilt the tool, making it more familiar and user-friendly. “Our size makes us resilient because we can adapt more quickly,” he adds.

Cezar Busatto, chief resilience officer of Porto Alegre in Brazil, has a similar approach to the importance of adaptability and responding to feedback. Although he is a city leader, he says cities and organisations face many of the same challenges in building resilience—and can adopt similar strategies to achieve these goals. One of the key steps he has taken as chief resilience officer is to involve citizens in the budget decision-making process. “We invited people from all 17 regions to make suggestions on where to apply the public budget. This empowerment step delivered many benefits,” he says. “With less hierarchy there is more freedom to share ideas and generate innovative solutions.”

Such collaborative approaches can be adopted in organisations, with leaders beginning to reward innovative thinking and creating teams across departments and business units. “These ideas are valid for all types of organisations,” Mr Busatto says.

An important component of resilience is continuous tracking of external trends. Some 58% of respondents who say their companies have fully embedded resilience say that information-gathering on political, economic and industry trends is very important for resilience, compared with 16% of those that are least interested in resilience. This stands to reason: before an organisation can adapt appropriately to changes in the environment, it must be aware of what those changes are, and the earlier it gains that knowledge, the better it can adapt.

Yet even the most mature organisations encounter challenges on the way to implementing resilience-promoting measures. Lack of leadership commitment and lack of skills and relevant knowledge are among the biggest obstacles to making companies more resilient, according to our survey. This suggests that while organisational resilience might be viewed as an imperative, it may not be receiving the senior-level commitment needed to make it stick.
An improved ability to identify opportunities in risk and changes in the marketplace is one of the primary benefits of resilience. And it’s not just the “Big Bang” issues you need to watch out for, argues Teemu Kangas-Kärki, COO/CFO at Fiskars, a Finnish manufacturer of garden, home and outdoor products. “I believe people overestimate the impact of change in the short term and underestimate its impact in the long term,” he says. He notes that Fiskars has survived because of its willingness to transform itself. Indeed, new leadership was hired in 2008 because the board of directors wanted a fresh perspective. “They recognised that the company would need to change to meet the requirements of a changing world,” he says.

Over the centuries Fiskars has transitioned from its origins as a local ironworks to an integrated consumer goods company with a global presence. Most recently, the transformation featured a series of acquisitions, including the Scandinavian design house Ittala in 2007 and Royal Copenhagen in 2013. In 2015 Fiskars acquired the WWRD group of companies, whose brands include Waterford and Wedgwood. The acquisitions helped Fiskars to achieve a leading position in its sector, says Mr Kangas-Kärki. “In our business the environment keeps changing, however crises tend to be rare as we are constantly evaluating risks in the market and aim to understand the impact they can have on the business over the long term.”
Risk management is seen as a strong reason for pursuing a strategy of enhancing resilience. Survey respondents say that the top risks they face today are external, namely disruptive competitors and macroeconomic uncertainty (both identified by 59% of respondents) (see Figure 3). Reputational damage is also cited as a key risk (41%)—albeit one over which organisations arguably have more control. These are the same risks that resilience helps businesses to reduce and manage.

More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents overall (75% in Europe) believe that the primary benefit of investing in resilience measures is ensuring the long-term viability of the business. Protecting the company’s reputation and improving competitiveness are also among the top benefits cited by respondents.

Executives from different parts of the world vary in their views on the value of resilience and the risks that resilience can help to overcome. Asian companies tend to be more concerned about disruptive competitors and reputational risk than their peers elsewhere, suggesting that technological innovation and brand image are higher priorities in these countries. This focus appears to be paying off, particularly in China. In 2015, for the first time in the history of Forbes’ Global 2000 list of the world’s biggest companies, the top four spots are taken by Chinese companies, and 29 companies listed in the 100 Global Challengers survey of Boston Consulting Group (BCG) are from China. BCG attributes their ascendance to an increased focus on innovation, customer needs and global expansion.

Asian and North American organisations are also more likely to say that organisational resilience measures would help to protect their reputation (52% and 61%, respectively). Examples of the damage that can be done by a corporate scandal are unfortunately numerous. These include the emissions scandal at German carmaker Volkswagen and the US$1.2bn accounting scandal at Japanese multinational Toshiba, which led CEO Hisao Tanaka to resign in July 2015. “Reputational risk can make a lot of organisations vulnerable,” says D Christopher Kayes, professor of management at the George Washington University School of Business in Washington, DC. European respondents tend to be more worried about political instability and civil unrest (27%), perhaps reflecting the recent unrest in Ukraine and ongoing economic issues in Greece and the rest of the region.

Regardless of their location, executives feel strongly that promoting a culture of organisational resilience is one of the best strategies for managing risks of all kinds. This
is especially important as business leaders face complex challenges, including global competitors, threats to data security and economic and political disruptions that readily cross borders. According to PwC’s 2015 CEO survey, 59% of CEOs see more threats to their businesses today than they did three years ago.

“Thinking about resilience when there isn’t a catastrophe going on is one of the hallmarks of a resilient organisation,” according to Professor Kayes. “It’s not only about responding to problems, but also about how to get ahead of them in the future.” To do this, business leaders have to create a culture in which employees feel empowered to share ideas. “You have to build resilience from the top down, and it has to be infused across the organisation,” Professor Kayes says. That includes educating employees on what is expected of them when it comes to monitoring risks and opportunities, being clear about business goals so that employees can identify opportunities, and creating a corporate culture that rewards problem-solving.

The risks and benefits of implementing a culture of resilience are not uniformly appreciated across sectors, however. Overall, the survey shows that two-thirds of respondents (67%) believe organisational resilience is inconsistently understood, and 63% believe it is relatively unknown in their industries, suggesting that this business trend is still in its infancy in many sectors.

Moreover, there are sharp divergences between industries in the adoption of resilience measures. More than half (57%) of business leaders in the entertainment and media industry and 44% in the retail sector say that resilience is fully embedded in their organisations, compared with just 15% in healthcare and pharmaceuticals and 20% in financial services.

This difference may reflect the complex regulatory environment in the latter sectors and the increasing pressure to address global competition and changing customer needs. “Compliance creates real challenges in getting ahead in a fast-changing environment” says Kiwibank’s Mr Brock. Interestingly, despite their low level of preparedness, 85% of financial services firms and 68% of healthcare and pharma firms say that resilience is a prerequisite for their long-term growth. This suggests that these companies recognise their shortcomings in this area and see the need to invest more effort and resources in promoting resilience.
In your opinion, what are the biggest sources of risk against which your organisation needs to build resilience over the next three years? Please select three

(% respondents)

Year business established
- 2010 or later
- 2005 or later
- 1995 or later
- 1965 or later
- 1915 or later
- Before 1915

- Disruptive competitors in the market
- Reputational risk (eg, on-site accidents, non-compliance)
- Threats to information security
- Corruption/bribery
- Increased incidence of terrorist attacks or other crime
- Risk of disease and epidemics
- Macroeconomic uncertainty/events
- Political instability/civil unrest
- Environmental changes/natural disasters
- Other, please specify
**CASE STUDY: The “One Sasol” view of resilience**

Sasol, the integrated chemical and energy company based in Johannesburg, South Africa, has been transforming itself in the face of volatile markets over the past four years. This effort has resulted in the adoption of the “One Sasol” philosophy, which drives a more co-ordinated and systematic risk-based approach to addressing global issues, one in which employees are rewarded for their teamwork, foresight and adaptability, and for advancing a common corporate goal. This new philosophy has led the company to refine its business approach by enhancing its chemicals investments.

GTL was a strong business for more than a decade, but the recent volatility in fuel prices, coupled with the rising market value of chemicals, caused the organisation to redefine their portfolio focus. The company has been moving more resources to chemicals development over the past two years, says Fay Hoosain, SVP in the office of the president and CEO. “In the past, when the company was built around separate product portfolios, such a suggestion could have created friction between business units,” she says. Now, with the new value-chain-based operating model, employees know the benefits of working together to deliver the most value. “It makes people less anxious, and more open to change.”

This behaviour change is a critical element of the company’s efforts to become more resilient. By taking a “One Sasol, one bottom line” approach we can make decisions in the company’s best interests, rather than in the interest of a particular business units,” Ms Hoosain explains. “It allows us to be more agile and to take advantage of shifts in the marketplace.”
Business executives by and large agree that organisational resilience requires strong leadership, empowered employees and nimble decision-making processes. “Resilience is like innovation,” says Sebastien Eckersley-Maslin, CEO of BlueChilli, an Australian firm that creates start-ups and helps them to grow. “It’s a combination of speed, empowerment and a willingness to take risks.”

That said, appropriate measures for promoting resilience will vary with a company’s size and age. A start-up technology company, for example, might view resilience as ensuring that the business is in a good position to be sold in five years’ time, whereas a Fortune 500 company might view resilience as protecting a legacy and creating lasting brand value. “How you create resilience depends on your goals,” says Fiorella Iannuzzelli, director and enterprise resilience lead for PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Moreover, while older, well-established companies may have the luxury of focusing on the long term, younger firms must generally find a balance between demonstrating short-term success and keeping an eye on the future. And, in fact, our survey shows that the youngest firms (under five years old) are less concerned about reputational risk (21%) than the sample average, but that the importance of this issue increases as organisations mature (see Figure 3).

“In our first few years we changed every three to six months,” says minubo’s Mr vom Sondern. While the team has stayed true to the overall business plan—to provide a data analytics tool to online retailers—it has constantly adapted its strategy since its launch in 2013 to serve customers better. Those changes have ranged from constant software updates to shifting the company’s sales strategy and target customer base. “For us, being resilient is about adapting to change,” Mr vom Sondern says. minubo has been named one of Europe’s fastest-growing technology companies, and it has secured almost US$3m in two rounds of venture funding from seven investors.

Start-ups must first establish a reputation before they can worry about doing damage to it, notes Mr Eckersley-Maslin. “In early-stage companies, resilience is about what we have to do to survive and grow. If you go in the wrong direction, you can be out of business in a month.” But because they are small, start-ups can also be nimble and are able to swiftly change the direction of the business. In large—and especially public—enterprises the opposite is often true. “By virtue of the fact that they have stakeholders and
quarterly reports, it’s more difficult for large organisations to be nimble,” Mr Eckersley-Maslin says. “So they have to figure out how to create strategies that allow them to react quickly in the places where disruption occurs.”

Younger organisations may also feel pressure from investors, regulators and stakeholders, which can distract from longer-term goals. Mr vom Sondern notes that he, too, feels pressure from investors to change direction or try new ideas. “We take their suggestions seriously,” he says. But if the idea doesn’t align with the company’s business plan, he won’t do it. “You’ve got to stay true to the business, even when it isn’t easy.”

In general, the experts interviewed for this report identify several features that define a resilient organisation. Taken together, these may provide a blueprint for implementing a culture of resilience:

* A proactive approach. “If you wait for the world to change before you make your move, you will be left behind by your competitors,” warns Fay Hoosain, SVP in the office of the president and CEO of Sasol, a chemical and energy company based in Johannesburg, South Africa. “You have to take steps now to become resilient for the future. It is about future-proofing.”

* Dynamic leadership. Fully 57% of survey respondents say that having dynamic/agile leaders is very important to ensuring organisational resilience. Any resilience-promoting efforts need top leadership support, agrees Elizabeth Yee, vice president of Strategic Partnerships and Solutions, 100 Resilient Cities, New York, an organisation incubated and launched by the Rockefeller Foundation. “You need an instigator with the power to evolve the organisation.”

* Responsiveness to change. The need for change is constant and growing—more than half (56%) of CEOs surveyed believe that their companies will compete in new industries over the next three years, according to PwC’s 2015 CEO survey. To adapt to this change, leaders need to be willing to constantly adapt and question long-held beliefs about how the business operates. “You never get to the point where you can say: ‘I’m resilient,’ and be done,” comments Ms Iannuzzelli of PwC. “It’s a living thing that requires constant focus—because we do not live in a static world.”

* Strong corporate culture. “Culture is the most underrated part of resilience,” according to Kiwibank’s Mr Brock. This includes making sure everyone in the organisation understands the importance of his or her contribution to the business.

* Keeping focused. Fast-growing companies get pulled in a lot of different directions, causing them to lose focus on what makes them unique. “Hanging on to that innovative, resilient culture is the way to success,” advises BlueChilli’s Mr Eckersley-Maslin.

* Long-term view. In a fast-moving business, it is easy to focus on today—or yesterday—but “a rear-view focus leaves you vulnerable,” says Mr Brock. “You have to constantly look forward and know what to do when the next big thing occurs.”
Conclusion

Surveyed companies across different sectors and of varying sizes agree that resilience ensures the long-term viability of the business. They also agree that strong leadership, great people and a willingness to listen to customers are the most important hallmarks of a resilient organisation.

However, acknowledging the importance of resilience, and having a good idea of what a resilient organisation looks like, does not mean that companies are actively working towards ensuring a culture of resilience in the future. In our survey, only 29% say that a culture of resilience is embedded today, and 44% expect such a culture to be firmly in place in three years’ time—pointing to considerable work yet to be done. In addition, while surveyed companies tend to show confidence that individual hallmarks of resilience are present, this does not mean that companies are well on their way to taking a comprehensive approach to ensuring resilience.

That said, a resilient organisation by definition is one that is constantly shifting and adapting; there is no “finish line” when it comes to implementing a culture of resilience. “If you wait for the world to change before you react, it will be too late,” says Sasol’s Ms Hoosain. “Being open to change and willing to question your assumptions is what ensures sustainability and creates value in the future.”
Endnotes


3 https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/globalization_growth_will_china_global_challengers_next_global_leaders/


6 http://thenextweb.com/voice/2015/03/10/europes-fastest-growing-young-tech-companies-here-are-the-tech5-finalists/

7 https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/minubo
The Economist Intelligence Unit conducted a global survey of 411 business managers and executives in July-August 2015. Our sincere thanks go to all those who took part in the survey.

Please note that not all answers add up to 100%, either owing to rounding or because respondents were able to provide multiple answers to some questions.

Where are you based?
(%) respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia-Pacific</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of the world</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
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When was your business established?
(%) respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 or later</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 or later</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995 or later</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965 or later</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915 or later</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1915</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What approximately are the latest annual gross revenues of your company globally (in US dollars)?

(\% respondents)

- More than $500m in annual revenue: 48
- Less than $500m in annual revenue: 52

What is your primary industry sector?

(\% respondents)

- Agriculture and agribusiness: 1
- Automotive: 4
- Chemicals: 3
- Construction and real estate: 5
- Consumer goods: 7
- Education: 2
- Energy and natural resources: 5
- Entertainment, media and publishing: 3
- Financial services: 14
- Government/Public sector: 2
- Healthcare, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology: 7
- IT and technology: 5
- Logistics and distribution: 8
- Manufacturing: 8
- Professional services: 13
- Retailing: 6
- Telecoms: 3
- Transportation, travel and tourism: 1
- Other: 2

Which of the following best describes your company’s approach towards organisational resilience?

(\% respondents)

- Embraced by the business but with room for improvement: 33
- Embedded within the organisation and a clear differentiator and factor in success/improvement in performance: 29
- Acknowledged as a priority but still seeking full business support: 26
- A necessary evil – driven by regulation/a "must do it": 13
Which of the following best describes your company’s approach towards organisational resilience? (%
respondents)

- Embedded within the organisation and a clear differentiator and factor in success/improvement in performance: 44
- Embraced by the business but with room for improvement: 29
- Acknowledged as a priority but still seeking full business support: 16
- A necessary evil – driven by regulation/a "must do it": 11

In your opinion, what are the biggest sources of risk against which your organisation needs to build resilience over the next three years? Please select three. (%
respondents)

- Disruptive competitors in the market: 59
- Macroeconomic uncertainty/events: 59
- Reputational risk (e.g., on-site accidents, non-compliance): 41
- Threats to information security: 36
- Political instability/civil unrest: 17
- Corruption/bribery: 15
- Environmental changes/natural disasters: 13
- Increased incidence of terrorist attacks or other crime: 7
- Risk of disease and epidemics: 5
- Other, please specify: 5

What, if any, do you believe are the primary benefits of investing in organisational resilience? Please select the top three. (%
respondents)

- The long-term viability of the business: 68
- Protecting the company’s reputation: 49
- Improved competitiveness by quicker and better-targeted responses to opportunities: 49
- Improved financial performance in the medium and long term (more than 2 years): 39
- Improved competitiveness by minimising disruptions: 37
- Operational efficiency: 30
- Improved financial performance in the short term (1-2 years): 21
- Other, please specify: 5
- Don’t know: 1
- Organisational resilience is not an objective for my organisation: 4
In your view, how important are each of the following factors in ensuring the organisational resilience of your company? Select one in each row.

(%) respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding customer needs</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-trained and appropriately skilled staff</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dynamic/agile leadership</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information security systems</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational processes to ensure quality control of products and services</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational process to manage environmental impact</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How important do you believe each of the following priorities will be for your organisation in three years’ time? Select one in each row.

(%) respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>Dynamic/agile leadership</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational processes to ensure quality control of products and services</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational process to manage environmental impact</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
To what extent are you satisfied that your organisation meets the priorities you indicated are extremely or somewhat important?*

(%) respondents

Understanding customer needs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
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Well-trained and appropriately skilled staff

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<th>Somewhat important</th>
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<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
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<td>39</td>
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</table>

Dynamic/agile leadership

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<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>Very unimportant</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
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</table>

Information security systems

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<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>Very unimportant</th>
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<td>49</td>
<td>13</td>
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Company-wide governance

<table>
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Evaluation and analysis of the gathered information

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Information gathering on political, economic and industry trends in all our markets

<table>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

Operational processes to ensure quality control of products and services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
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Supply chain flexibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>Very unimportant</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
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Operational process to ensure health & safety

<table>
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<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
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Operational process to manage environmental impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only includes answers from previous question rated very important/somewhat important.

Where does responsibility for organisational resilience sit within your organisation? Select one.

(%) respondents

The CEO/’s office

CIO or equivalent

CFO or equivalent

Other C-level executive

Head(s) of business operating unit(s)

Head(s) of Department(s)

Other senior management below C-level or an organisational development unit within senior management

There is no single unit; organisational resilience issues are spread throughout the organisation

Other, please specify

Don’t know
To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Please select one answer for each statement.

(\% respondents)

- **Organisational resilience is a pre-requisite for my company’s long-term growth**
  - Strongly agree: 28\%
  - Somewhat agree: 36\%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 14\%
  - Somewhat disagree: 11\%
  - Strongly disagree: 3\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

- **Organisational resilience is currently a source of competitive advantage for my company**
  - Strongly agree: 33\%
  - Somewhat agree: 22\%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 12\%
  - Somewhat disagree: 3\%
  - Strongly disagree: 1\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

- **Organisational resilience is particularly important in my geographic region**
  - Strongly agree: 31\%
  - Somewhat agree: 23\%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 8\%
  - Somewhat disagree: 2\%
  - Strongly disagree: 4\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

- **Organisational resilience is particularly important in my sector**
  - Strongly agree: 40\%
  - Somewhat agree: 32\%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 21\%
  - Somewhat disagree: 5\%
  - Strongly disagree: 1\%
  - Don’t know: 1\%

- **Organisational resilience is relatively “unknown” in my sector but is becoming more important**
  - Strongly agree: 25\%
  - Somewhat agree: 37\%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 19\%
  - Somewhat disagree: 4\%
  - Strongly disagree: 3\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

- **Organisational resilience is inconsistently understood across my business**
  - Strongly agree: 23\%
  - Somewhat agree: 38\%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 19\%
  - Somewhat disagree: 8\%
  - Strongly disagree: 4\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

**Which, if any, of the following are the main obstacles to incorporating organisational resilience into the company’s strategies and practices?** Please select up to three.

(\% respondents)

- **Immediate financial goals are more urgent**
  - Very strong: 52\%

- **Lack of skills or knowledge related to ensuring resilience/business continuity**
  - Very strong: 48\%

- **Insufficient senior management focus on resilience**
  - Very strong: 46\%

- **Silos within the organisation’s risk management/organisational resilience functions**
  - Very strong: 36\%

- **Absence of/ inability to present a compelling business case for organisational resilience**
  - Very strong: 28\%

- **Inadequate budget**
  - Very strong: 22\%

- **Opaque operations or practices, making the effects of company’s actions towards increased resilience unclear**
  - Very strong: 19\%

- **Other, please specify**
  - Very strong: 1\%

- **Not applicable—we face no obstacles to implementing organisational resilience**
  - Very strong: 3\%

**How strong, if at all, do you believe the causal link between your company’s investment/commitment to organisational resilience and its financial performance to be over the short, medium or long term?** Select one for each.

(\% respondents)

- **Short term (1-2 years)**
  - Very strong: 33\%
  - Somewhat strong: 36\%
  - Not very strong: 24\%
  - Not strong at all: 6\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

- **Medium term (2-5 years)**
  - Very strong: 33\%
  - Somewhat strong: 48\%
  - Not very strong: 14\%
  - Not strong at all: 1\%
  - Don’t know: 2\%

- **Long term (5-10 years)**
  - Very strong: 53\%
  - Somewhat strong: 33\%
  - Not very strong: 9\%
  - Not strong at all: 2\%
  - Don’t know: 3\%
While every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of this information, The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd. cannot accept any responsibility or liability for reliance by any person on this report or any of the information, opinions or conclusions set out in this report.

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