

RESILIENT
BY DESIGN

IN A WORLD INCREASINGLY shaped by disruption – from pandemics to natural disasters – the resilience of supply chains can make or break a business. Often invisible until they falter, supply chains are the hidden engines that keep industries moving. And when those engines stall, the consequences ripple far and wide.

Adé Oyedijo, PhD, an assistant professor of Management at Baylor University’s Hankamer School of Business and a leading voice in supply chain management, often highlights the critical importance of preparedness.

Whether groceries on store shelves, critical medications in hospitals or the raw materials powering innovation, supply chains touch nearly every facet of modern life. When these systems falter, the consequences extend beyond profits – affecting public health, safety and livelihoods.

“Supply chains are like the unseen lifelines of our daily lives,” Oyedijo said. “If they’re not ready for disruptive times, businesses might not survive.”

Recent global events have underscored these vulnerabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, exposed weak links when even minor disruptions cascaded into significant operational hurdles.

“The pandemic brought many lessons,” Oyedijo said. “It showed that supply chain preparedness isn’t just about profit – it’s about survival.”

COVID-19 wasn’t the only situation where supply chains have been disrupted. In September 2024, Hurricane Helene dropped excessive rainfall across western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, resulting in widespread flooding. In January 2025, wildfires impacted the greater Los Angeles area, forcing more than 200,000 people to evacuate and destroying more than 18,000 homes and structures.

These events are no longer anomalies – they’re a wake-up call. So how can organizations build supply chains that are efficient and resilient in the face of crisis?

“To create resilient systems, companies need to understand their entire supply chain – every link, every partner,” Oyedijo said. “Transparency and mapping are essential.”

Oyedijo believes organizations must be prepared for instability within supply chains. Disruptions are not a matter of if, but when – and companies must prepare accordingly.

“Businesses must anticipate potential disruptions, not react to them,” he said.

Oyedijo believes that ethical considerations must play a part in managing supply chains. In his work with the World Economic Forum, he advocates for balancing efficiency with ethical sourcing and fair labor practices.

“We must manage supply chains not just for economic gain but for the good of communities involved,” he said.

That means avoiding exploitative labor practices, ensuring environmental sustainability and supporting suppliers in vulnerable regions. Companies that neglect these factors risk reputational damage and long-term instability in their supply networks. As consumers increasingly seek company transparency and accountability, Oyedijo believes this approach is ethically responsible and may contribute to long-term business success.

At Baylor, Oyedijo plays a critical role in equipping the next generation of business leaders with the knowledge and values they need.

“When students learn the importance of resilient, ethical supply chains, they leave prepared to make responsible decisions,” Oyedijo said.

By instilling these principles, Baylor ensures that its graduates are industry-ready and capable of leading with integrity in a global marketplace.

“Preparedness isn’t just a strategy; it’s a lifeline,” Oyedijo said. ■



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