

ISM-NJ · SUPPLY CHAIN INNOVATION DAY · RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

# From Storm to Strength

Building Antifragile Supply Chains  
in a World of Continuous Disruption

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*Tom just showed you the storm.*  
**Now let's talk about how to  
THRIVE in it.**

**Tariffs are a symptom.**

The disease is supply chain fragility.

**Disruption is permanent.**

The question is: what do you do next?

**Resilience isn't enough.**

Antifragility is the competitive edge.

# The Strait of Hormuz Is Effectively Closed

Feb. 28, 2026: US-Israeli strikes on Iran → IRGC declares Strait closed. 21 confirmed attacks on merchant ships. Maersk & Hapag-Lloyd suspend Mideast operations.



## 20M

barrels/day normally transit  
= 20% of global seaborne oil  
Now down to a trickle



## 21+

confirmed IRGC attacks  
on merchant ships  
Major carriers suspended



## \$90+

Brent crude/barrel (was \$73)  
EU natural gas futures +30%  
Oil: worst disruption in history\*

### Beyond Oil — The Supply Chain Cascade:

1/3 of global  
fertilizer trade

Urea prices  
+43% (\$475→\$680)

Aluminum  
& metals

Helium for  
MRI machines

Plastics, rubber,  
pharmaceuticals

IEA Chief Fatih Birol: **"The largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market."** One chokepoint. Infinite consequences.

PART 1

# The New Normal Is Disruption

Understanding the landscape your supply chain must navigate

# Seven Disruptions. Six Years. Zero Signs of Stopping.

2020 — 2026



**82%**

of supply chains disrupted by 2025 tariffs alone

Source: McKinsey

**\$1.5M**

average cost of disruption per day per company

Source: Procurement Tactics

**7 events**

in 7 years — disruption IS the operating environment

# What Fragility Actually Costs You

**20–40%**

of supply chain activity impacted by 2025 tariffs

*Not a rounding error — a structural wound in your cost base and planning models*

McKinsey 2025

**39%**

of companies saw material costs spike

*Nearly 4 in 10 procurement teams had no plan to absorb or offset the increase*

McKinsey 2025

**45%**

are now stockpiling inventory as a hedge

*Cash tied up in safety stock = less capital available for growth, innovation & agility*

McKinsey 2025

The Fragility Doom Loop:

Disruption hits

Costs spike

Inventory stockpile

Cash tied up

Less flexibility

**MORE exposed next time**



**The Hormuz lesson:** Companies without tier-2/3 visibility didn't know they had Gulf exposure. They found out when ships stopped moving — the worst possible moment to discover your fragility.

The companies thriving right now didn't just become more efficient — ***they changed their relationship with disruption itself.***

PART 2

# The Resilience Spectrum

From fragile to resilient to antifragile — and why only one wins

# Where Does Your Supply Chain Sit?



## FRAGILE

*Breaks  
under stress*

- 
- Single-source suppliers
  - Reactive, not proactive
  - No visibility past tier 1
  - Cost-only procurement mindset



## RESILIENT

*Survives  
stress*

- 
- Dual sourcing strategies
  - Business continuity plans
  - Supplier relationship programs
  - Risk management frameworks



## ANTIFRAGILE

*GAINS  
from stress*

- 
- Ecosystem of strategic partners
  - AI-enabled real-time sensing
  - Learns & adapts from disruption
  - Innovation from supply base

# Antifragility: The Concept That Changes Everything

*"Some things benefit from shocks; they thrive and grow when exposed to volatility, randomness, disorder, and stressors."*

— Nassim Nicholas Taleb  
Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder

## Applied to supply chains:

An antifragile supply chain doesn't just bounce back — it uses disruption as a catalyst to emerge stronger, smarter, and more competitive than before.

*I trained at Unilever — one of Gartner's four Supply Chain Masters. Antifragility is not theory. It is built, decision by decision, in the field.*

Gartner's Top 25 Supply Chain Masters:

Amazon · Apple · P&G · Unilever

*"Advancing toward antifragility requires shifts in decision-making, technology, network design, and strategy."*

## The VUCA World



Volatile

Uncertain

Complex

Ambiguous

# 5 Characteristics of an Antifragile Supply Chain

## Adaptability

Flexible manufacturing, dynamic inventory, rapid response to demand shifts

## Redundancy & Diversity

Multi-supplier strategies, diversified procurement — no single point of failure

## Decentralization

Distributed functions reduce localized risk; parts respond independently

## Continuous Improvement

Feedback loops: learn from every disruption, implement smarter buffers

## Agility

Real-time analytics, AI/IoT sensing, swift action on market signals

PART 3

# Building Your Antifragile Supply Chain

The strategic moves that separate leaders from followers

# The Supplier Ecosystem: Your Greatest Resilience Asset

*"Procurement is no longer just about cost savings and supply chain efficiency. It's about strategic value creation, innovation, and resilience."*



## Customer of Choice

Build relationships where suppliers WANT to prioritize you. In a disruption, your best suppliers allocate first to their best customers. Are you that customer?



## Strategic, Not Transactional

Strategic sourcing unlocks innovation, working capital, and top-line growth — not just cost savings. Procurement is a value creation function.



## Multi-Tier Visibility

You can't manage what you can't see. Know your Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers. Hormuz showed us: you may have Gulf exposure you don't even know about.

# AI & Technology: The Antifragility Accelerator

## The Disruption That Helps You Fight Disruption



Demand sensing: anticipate signals before they become shortages



ML supplier risk scoring: flag health deterioration weeks before failure



Digital twins: simulate a Hormuz closure in YOUR supply chain today



Multi-tier visibility: see tier-2/3 risk exposure in real time

*Unlike the industrial revolution — which took decades — the AI revolution is leaping forward over weeks and months. Leaders who invest now will have a structural advantage.*

### DDMRP

Demand-Driven MRP

### IBP/S&OP

Integrated Business Planning

### Digital Twins

Scenario Simulation

### AI Forecasting

Demand Sensing

# Creating a Culture of Antifragility

For decades the supply chain ran smoothly. Then — **2020. 2021. 2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026: Hormuz.** Disruption is the baseline. Culture is your response.

## Leadership Shift

C-suite must invest in resilience infrastructure — not just manage each crisis reactively.

## Empowered Teams

Psychological safety is a supply chain tool. People who can raise risks early are your early warning system.

## Feedback Loops

After every disruption: review, learn, adapt. Treat every crisis as a paid stress test.

## Data-Driven Decisions

Move from gut-feel purchasing to intelligence-led procurement. Real-time data is now a survival requirement.

# Your 5-Step Antifragility Action Plan

1

## Audit Your Fragility

Map single-source dependencies. Time your disruption response. Ask: do we know our tier-2 exposure? Do we have Hormuz or Gulf-region risk we can't see?

2

## Build Your Supplier Ecosystem

Start with your 10 most critical suppliers. Visit them. Invest in becoming a Customer of Choice. This is your single greatest resilience asset.

3

## Implement Dual Sourcing

For every critical material: identify and qualify a secondary source. 39% of companies are doing this now. Don't let a crisis be the trigger — get ahead of it.

4

## Invest in AI-Driven Visibility

Demand sensing, predictive analytics, digital twin scenario planning. These are table stakes now — not premium capabilities. Move now.

5

## Create a Disruption Learning Loop

After every shock: document, review, adapt. Build institutional knowledge. Your supply chain should be smarter on the other side of every disruption.

DISRUPTION IS THE ONLY CERTAINTY.

# Build Strength From It.

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*The companies that will lead the next decade are not those who avoided disruption.  
They are those who used disruption as a crucible for becoming stronger.*



*Antifragile Supply Chains: Building Resilience Through Better Strategy and Stronger Relationships*

# Let's Keep the Conversation Going



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## Antifragile Supply Chains

*Building Resilience Through Better  
Strategy and Stronger Relationships*

by Anna McGovern

