

# 10 TIPS

## Future-Proof Your Supply Chain

Unpredictable demand has become standard, but there is no reason why it should cause your business to be unaware, unfocused, and unready. Consider these action items to overcome challenges and future-ready your operations during peak seasons.

### 1 CONSIDER NEW INNOVATION AND IDEAS.

*Peak season is an opportunity to demonstrate the value that you and your team contribute to your business every year. Therefore, gain advantage by being open and receptive to new innovations and ideas that can optimize operations and better manage peak seasonality fluctuations.*

### 2 UTILIZE THE INTERIM TIME BETWEEN “PEAKS” FOR OPTIMIZATION.

Effectively manage the time between peak periods for review, consideration, and improvement in order to future-proof operations before the next peak season.

### 3 FINE-TUNE STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS.

Ask everyone from vendors and manufacturing to supply chain management, carriers, brokers, and truckers this question: “Who are you in business with and why?” Need to review and understand advantages, disadvantages, successes, failures, concerns, potential ongoing problems? Address areas of concern and work to eliminate any unaddressed weaknesses or issues before the next peak season.

### 4 CREATE A PEAK SEASON PLAN.

Your plan ought to be an ever-evolving document that specifies what you

are expected to deliver—when, where, why, and how much. Put it all together in a well-organized document that everyone involved understands.

### 5 ESTABLISH EXPECTATIONS AND DELIVERABLES.

Don’t draft the operational plan separately. In order to have an action plan that leads to positive outcomes, clear expectations, responsibilities, and deliverables need to be in place after the plan is finalized.

### 6 CONCENTRATE ON PLAN EXECUTION WITH AGREED ALIGNMENTS.

Gather stakeholders from the outset to ensure that no one is confused about the immediate objectives of the plan. Prior to deployment, ensure that it is formalized with secure sign-offs from all stakeholders.

### 7 BOLSTER DAILY STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS.

Ensure that all stakeholders are kept up-to-date on how things are progressing daily, from the time the draft is completed to the conclusion of the peak season. Also create a simple dashboard that provides all concerned with needed callouts. And schedule regular conference calls with stakeholders to discuss relevant matters and address those issues promptly.

### 8 RELY ON ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES AS BACK-UP.

The best laid plans will always encounter issues that can range from the departure of a key staff member to a supplier not being able to deliver in full. It’s always a good idea to have a backup plan and remain “open for business” with alternative providers.

### 9 INTEGRATE EXCEPTION MANAGEMENT.

It is frequently thought that this is difficult to achieve, but if you get ahead of the process with your plan, your peak season should arrive at a point where everything is functioning well and the only issues that arise should be exceptions. If you lay the groundwork, you will have created the space to solve the inevitable challenges by implementing a well-thought-out plan that puts the majority of the increased peak workload on autopilot.

### 10 REMAIN FOCUSED ON BOTTOM-LINE DELIVERABLES.

*As you prepare and implement the plan during peak season, remember to ask yourself if any new matter you have been asked to assist with or develop is as critical as what you’ve been asked to accomplish during peak. Be comfortable with declining new commitments or projects that might prevent you from meeting your peak season goals.*