



Overview

Futures Study 2020

2016

The following reports related to this project are currently available to our member companies at www.capsresearch.org.

- Research Report
- Brief

The Research Project

This Overview provides a glimpse of the key points and information within *Futures Study 2020*, a major project from CAPS Research. The research team collected perspectives from 113 supply management professionals (i.e., vice presidents, directors, and managers) and asked them to look ahead to 2020 and identify their expectations for the profession. Similar to other “Futures” surveys conducted by CAPS Research, most recently in 2007, the project asked about the future in four key areas: external forces of change, top-level business strategies, supply function mission and goals, and supply strategies and practices. Two other documents are available: (1) the complete Research Report related to this project details all the survey results and compares results of this Futures survey with past Futures surveys and (2) a Brief highlights the most salient points. For more information on these publications, contact CAPS Research at www.capsresearch.org.

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Executive Summary — Research Report

In 2015, CAPS Research collected perspectives from 113 supply management professionals (i.e., vice presidents, directors, and managers) to look ahead to 2020 and tell us what to expect for the profession. Similar to a survey conducted by CAPS Research in 2007, we asked about the future in four key areas: External forces of change, top-level business strategies, supply function mission and goals, and supply strategies and practices.

When we asked respondents to anticipate the disruptive forces of change in the business environment, the top force that emerged was **changing customer requirements**. The second highest future disruptor was predicted to be **governmental regulations**.

When we asked them to identify the most important business-level strategy elements of the future, the top element for success was **achieving high service quality**. Furthermore, **synergies across strategic business units** was second highest, while other top strategy elements related to costs, both for internal processes as well as purchased goods and services.

When we asked about the most important supply goals and performance expectations, the number one mission that emerged was **achieving consistent cost savings from suppliers**. The second most important supply mission will be to **ensure supply continuity**.

When we asked professionals to rate the importance of various sets of supply strategies in the future, the most important was having **alignment between supply management's strategy and the overall company goals**. The next two top strategies for the future will focus on methods of category management — specifically, employing **formal processes to build category strategies** and **managing total expenditures of spend categories**.

In looking at the results as a whole, we see that a customer-centric supply management approach is an area of opportunity in the coming years. We also see that a holistic, business-level view will be required of supply managers. The supply professional of the future will need to be an integrator across functions, a source and disseminator of supply-related knowledge, and the key player in ensuring the core of the supply function is efficient and effective.



The full complement of reports for *Futures Study 2020* is available for our members at www.capsresearch.org

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