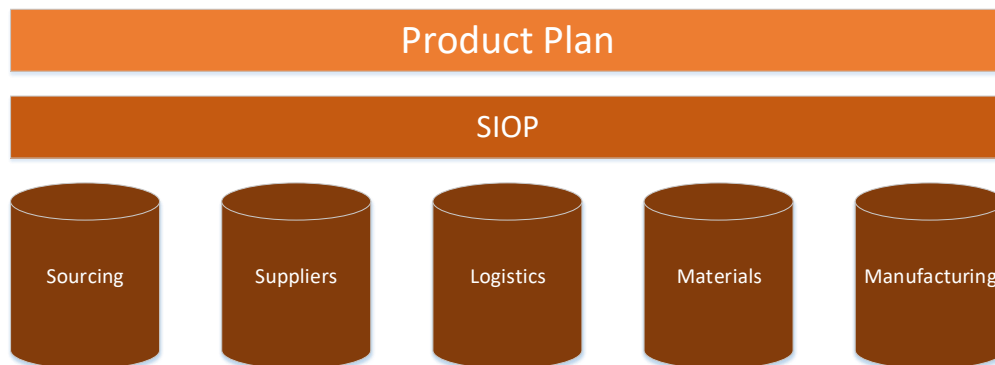


Bench Strength

Every great coach knows that you need a strong bench to win and that you can't rely on just one player to get the job done. The same rings true in supply chain. As supply chain leaders, we know that change is inevitable, and we need a plan A, plan B, and sometimes a plan C to mitigate risk and react swiftly to changing conditions.



The most important factor in developing a strong supply chain is working cross-functionally and understanding company strategy and each unique Product Plan that sales and marketing established to identify the critical path of supply chain. The cross-functional team must develop a SIOPlan with inputs from sourcing, purchasing, logistics, materials, production, sales, and finance.



Part of the supply chain review is risk analysis and mitigation, as simple as asking your team to develop a list of, "What if?" What if there is disruption at a primary supplier? What if geopolitical changes make a sourcing strategy financially unviable? How will we support unplanned customer demand increases or decreases? What if a natural disaster affects our ability to produce? What if a supplier stops producing or supporting a necessary part?

Compile a comprehensive list of potential risks, rate and rank them, then develop your mitigation to each one. This becomes your bench strength: Designing alternative production plans, developing secondary (or tertiary) suppliers, engaging engineering for potential redesign of sole sourced items. Your list will be unique to each plant, each product, each supplier, and each logistics channel.

Build your bench strength so you can react to unplanned change, limit disruption, and ensure production continuity. Just as a coach adjusts for each play and win, your value as a strong supply chain leader supports financial and corporate goals without excuses but with robust strategies.