

Navigating Change: Building Resilience, And Driving Growth Together



We are living through a time of constant change. The global economy is shifting faster than ever before, and every one of us — whether in manufacturing, services, or trade feels the impact in our own way. Change brings its share of uncertainty, but it also opens doors to new opportunities. What matters most is how we, as leaders and businesses, choose to respond. As I look at the months ahead, both for Sri Lanka and for our industries, one thing is clear: success will come from foresight, agility, and most importantly, collaboration.

Industry Outlook and Key Developments

In the industrial manufacturing and engineering sector, which OTR Engineered Solutions represents, we see the next chapter being shaped by innovation and integration. Whether it's improvements in precision engineering, the smarter use of digital tools, or the move toward sustainable materials, businesses are raising the bar on quality and efficiency every day. On a global scale, supply chains are also undergoing transformation.

They are becoming stronger and more diverse, but at the same time more complex. Every decision now requires balancing cost, quality, speed, and even geopolitics

Here in Sri Lanka, we stand at an important crossroads. Our country's location between East and West makes us a natural hub for logistics and trade. The growth of digitalization and the rising importance of green practices are giving us new strengths to compete globally. But challenges remain, fluctuating raw material prices, changing regulations, and the ongoing need to upskill our workforce to keep pace with international demands. What I believe strongly is this: the businesses that will thrive are the ones that embrace change, invest in new capabilities, and build partnerships that go beyond traditional boundaries.

The Value of AMCHAM Sri Lanka Membership

When we looked at different chambers and networks to engage with, AMCHAM Sri Lanka stood out as a unique forum a place where we could showcase who we are, partner with others, and amplify the voice of our business segment. We especially value the programs and networking events AMCHAM organizes, which help us expand our networks, grow our business, and build stronger relationships across industries.

For us, AMCHAM has become more than a membership; it is a community where we continue to learn, connect, and move forward together.

Leadership Insights: Lessons from a Time of Disruption

When I reflect on our own leadership journey at OTR Lanka, it began at one of the most difficult and uncertain times right after the COVID-19 pandemic. The environment was highly turbulent. Traditional business models no longer worked, forecasting and planning seemed irrelevant, and much of the workforce was disheartened, even “dreamless,” as survival became the only immediate focus.

At that point, our core competencies were being questioned—our skills, our quality standards, our ability to adapt. It was clear that we could not move forward with the old ways of thinking. We had to rebuild, transform, and scale up from the ground up

The first step was to bring transparency into decision-making. We worked to ensure that every team member—regardless of their role, hierarchy, or background—understood the challenges we faced and the direction we were heading. Through daily coaching, plant assemblies, training programs, and even WhatsApp updates, we made sure communication was clear and constant. Everyone had to feel part of the same journey



We then started very practically, very basic. Simple KPIs that everyone could follow, lean tools that could be applied on the ground, and a renewed focus on safety, health, and welfare. We provided accommodation for rural employees, improved communication with mobile connectivity, and supported our people with the essentials they needed to give their best.



At the same time, I learned an important truth: leaders must walk with their teams, not ahead of them. I joined every training session myself, I learned first so I could guide others, and I celebrated wins as collective achievements while taking ownership of setbacks. We gave opportunities to young newcomers, while encouraging seniors to step into roles as mentors and guides. This balance between fresh energy and experienced wisdom became our strength.

We also realized that many of our problems and solutions did not come from the “traditional” team structures. They emerged from engaging directly with people on the ground, listening carefully to our customers, and encouraging our teams to experiment with new ways of solving problems. In fact, more than 80% of the solutions that transformed our operations came not from our standard product portfolio but from the way we listened, learned, and responded.

Over time, this resilience turned into growth. We expanded our product capabilities in off-the-road wheels, adapted to serve low-volume as well as large-scale needs, and approached customers worldwide with humility and persistence—even if it meant waiting long days for an appointment. Today, many of those same customers who once saw us as a minor supplier now rely on us as a prime partner.

The most important lesson from this journey is that resilience is built, not inherited. It is built when leaders show transparency, when teams share accountability, and when organizations put people first.



A Call to Action

As leaders, we have a responsibility not just to grow our businesses but to help shape the industries and communities we are part of. The road ahead will have its challenges, but together we can create a more resilient, competitive, and inclusive business environment for Sri Lanka. To all my fellow members of AMCHAM Sri Lanka, I encourage you to keep sharing your knowledge, embracing innovation, and working together. By doing so, we will not only strengthen our own businesses but also contribute to building a stronger future for our country.

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