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Managing change in EU cross-border mergers and acquisitions

A Critical Analysis

HOW TO SURVIVE in the present highly competitive and continuously growing business environment undoubtedly successful management of change remains highly crucial. Mergers and Acquisitions just as strategic alliances and joint ventures, have become a growing trend amongst those global organisations in recent times, and managing the change process successfully remains critical to the organisations ability to achieve its long term goals. There are various reasons which companies have used to support the deployment of these types of strategy and some of the most recently identified include a) "the opportunity to use resources that neither organisation by itself has", and b) "the opportunity to improve cost effectiveness by reducing redundancy" (Buse 2002).

The inevitability of this occurrence becomes more apparent where the merger occurs between two trans-national organisations that are similar in scope and of similar equal size. However, in some instances of such as mergers and acquisitions there is also the likelihood of failure, and this holds true going forward has been revealed by leaders of merged and acquiring companies in analysis of the objectives of their decision to merge (Buse 2002).



The poor success rates and the failures that have been recorded from studies conducted on a wide range of inter-organisational realtions have concluded that the following conditions or circumstances were responsible:

- lack of clear goals and actionable indication to measure the progress of goals;
- inequality in the level of expertise, prestige, status between the merging parties;
- discrepancy in power sharing and control between the merged parties;
- "the lack of plan "B".

Success on the other hand, has been attributed to some of the following:

- the ability for both parties to create mutual gain;
- creating a proper balance of expertise, power and status;
- committed leadership to achieve equity.

European Cross Border Analysis

Cross border merger and acquisitions within the European continent has been on the rise in the last ten years, especially with the growth of the European Union and the subsequent opening of the Euro Zone. This has resulted in a boom in sectors such as financial services, manufacturing, energy, etc. Cross border retail banking has increased, since the introduction of the Euro on 1st January 1999, with eight financial services mergers valued at above \$20n having involved European specialised banking firms. Similarly was the emergence of the merger of KLM and Air France (Deakin 2005). The introduction of the Euro has paved way for European centred sea in

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