

Mergers & Acquisitions – The Need for Early Project Management Engagement



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If you read any business publication or watch the business news you will be aware that mergers and acquisitions are announced on almost a daily basis. It's a staple of the business landscape we live in. M&A deals are obviously complex; financial and legal entanglements that take significant horse power to navigate. As much as the strategic objectives will be defined; business expansion, competitive positioning etc and the potential financial rewards evaluated, its often the post deal implementation planning that lacks depth.

By their nature M&A deal teams are a closed shop, an inner circle of company executives and business advisors thrashing out the commercial terms. Yes, there will be a set of post deal objectives and the broad strokes of an implementation plan but really this is the equivalent of plotting the journey from London to New York with pins in a map hanging on your wall. It may provide the direction of travel, but it is no substitute for a defined implementation framework and adequate planning.

It's essential that project management expertise participates in the internal deal discussions at the earliest opportunity, preferably once the deal intent is formalised. You are relying on a successful implementation to fully realise the deal benefits therefore you need project management to interpret the implementation objectives; the implications on people, processes and systems, the evaluation of implementation constraints and risks. The more you know the more you can mitigate, the smoother the implementation experience and the level of confidence in the overall outcome.

Early project management engagement will enhance the quality of M&A implementation, provide perspective and insight during the deal negotiations and be the bridge between the deal team ambition and implementation reality. In a world of fast track M&A deals and the need for realised financial results can any company afford not to have project management at the centre of their deal strategy?

About the Author: Mark has +20 years' experience in delivering complex, global business transformation programmes within the Pharmaceutical industry including manufacturing capacity optimisation, major system deployments and manufacturing facility acquisition and integration.

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