

AN EXTENDED ABSTRACT OF

THE POWER OF POSITIVITY: AN ABDUCTIVE EXPLORATION INTO IMPROVING

CROSS-BORDER ACQUISITION INTEGRATION

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This paper takes a Positive Organizational Scholarship lens to post-acquisition integration, seeking to find the means for supporting positivity during post-acquisition integration in order to ease the integration process and thereby improve acquisition outcomes. Through a moderate constructionist abductive study, this paper proposes a framework of positive post-acquisition integration that centers on interactive communication, the generation of positive emotions, and the maintenance of a positive emotional climate during change. The framework is built based on a Finnish–German merger completed in late 2013, and I examine the analytical power of this framework through a German–Finnish acquisition completed in early 2017. The findings suggest that positive emotions following acquisitions can enhance employee identification with the post-acquisition organization as well as increase motivation and engagement in acquisition-related change. Conversely, negative emotions are likely to cause protectionist, change-resistant behaviors. This paper extends knowledge through a more balanced view of emotions following acquisitions, considering how and why emotions emerge and how they are dynamic in nature. The findings help practitioners improve their understanding and planning of post-acquisition changes.

Keywords. Emotion, interaction, emotional climate, integration, abductive research