

The greatest risk an organization faces during the integration of two entities is the potential for the acquisition to not yield the expected return on the investment. It would be absurd not to enlist legal counsel and accounting experts when engaging in acquisition discussions as part of the due diligence. Point North feels strongly that an objective party should be involved in the analysis and planning of the necessary integration of business process, people, and technology to insure that once the transaction closes, the merged entity goes further, faster.

The expertise to navigate the post-acquisition landscape is typically not sought until spiraling disasters are rampant across parallel organizations struggling to become one. It is this fundamental need for proper assessment and planning for post-acquisition integration which has guided Point North Consulting to develop a methodology that can quickly and effectively be adopted to reduce risk and greatly increase the rate at which organizations can begin taking advantage of the acquired company's core competencies and key profit centers.

Point North Consulting realizes that complex integration problems come with significant risk of failure when executed without proper analysis and planning. Thus, by following our proven methodology, we first begin to examine the company vision and their business objectives to start building a framework and effective approach. We are also careful to define a scope that is both realistic and manageable for both organizations engaged in the merger. These first steps quickly establish the foundation to provide on-time deliverables and to meet expectations.

Point North is skilled and experienced in executing the types of tasks included in a typical *Integration Assessment* required to navigate any post-acquisition integration effort. In order to better understand the Point North methodology, we offer a simplified, high-level breakdown of its four primary components:

**Core Business Process Mapping:** By evaluating and mapping the core processes which have been identified as the most significant contributors to the overall return on investment, we can begin to outline potential gaps in service and offer recommendations for closing them. Documentation of the complete set of key business processes, workflow diagrams and business rules are the standard deliverables for this part of the assessment.

**The Identification of Priority Initiatives:** Always in accordance with the executive vision, Point North focuses on those initiatives that take advantage of known synergies between both organizations. Initiatives are developed to provide quick measurable results that offer the least amount of disruption to daily activities. These initiatives can span from combining infrastructure overlap to streamlining processes or transactions that offer little to no business value.

**Communication Planning:** Developing a reliable framework for communication across business units is the cornerstone from which crucial business decisions are made, information is exchanged and where important documents can be collaborated on effectively. Also Point North understands that establishing communication pipelines and protocols serves to deliver the Executive Team's vision through a cascading message to all principal members heavily involved in the integration process. By keeping all levels of management and individual contributors focused on short-term objectives, each team member will better understand their role in the success of the merger.

**Establishing an Implementation Roadmap:** This section describes a detailed set of recommendations offered to help executives manage their post-acquisition initiatives and help them reduce the risk of engaging in activities that could otherwise jeopardize their investment

Point North's primary function in any engagement is to manage the *Integration Plan* for the acquisition so that the Executive Team can focus on their core business. Your investment with Point North Consulting during the Assessment Phase of the project accomplishes three of the main objectives of any acquisition:

- 1) Minimize the risk of the acquisition not yielding expected results
- 2) Accelerate the integration timeline through sound planning
- 3) Enable you to get further, faster by establishing a plan to best utilize the acquired company's core competencies and profit centers.