
How to Master M&A Narratives

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Abstract

This presentation offers a fresh perspective on mergers and acquisitions (M&A), moving beyond linear models to explore the emotional and narrative dynamics that shape these complex transitions. Through a systemic, constructivist lens, it brings overlooked voices, especially middle managers, into focus and reveals how acquisition communication is more than just information delivery. It's a co-authored, emotionally sequenced process that begins long before official announcements.

Introducing a circular storytelling architecture, we reframe how narratives are constructed, balanced, and experienced. Drawing on national and global case studies and the participants' experiences, it shows how legitimacy and consonance emerge—or falter—through sequenced messaging, authorship choices, and evolving narrative roles.

This work bridges theory and practice, offering new conceptual tools for researchers and reflective insights for practitioners navigating organisational change.