
JOHN DARLING • VISITING PROFESSOR • HELSINKI SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

HANNU SERISTÖ • PROFESSOR • HELSINKI SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

MIKA GABRIELSSON • PROFESSOR • HELSINKI SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Anatomy of Crisis Management: A Case Focusing on a Major Cross-cultural Clash within Daimler-Chrysler

It is widely understood that in the case of international mergers, over half of them fail, at least in part, because the merging organizations' cultural norms, beliefs, and values are incompatible. The failure to successfully integrate the often very different organizational cultures of the merging firms give rise to crises that often threaten the existence of the entire newly formed firm. The DaimlerChrysler merger examined within this research is an interesting example of this due to the fact that the merger had embedded within it the existence of two very strong, yet quite different organizational cultures. Due to increased global competitive pressures, there will probably be an even higher number of global consolidations in the future,

resulting in cultural clashes calling for effective crisis management. The major result of this study is that the manager has to be alert for and recognize a crisis in its early phases, and begin to take control of such a crisis situation. The research calls for further research at this intersection of two research fields---mergers and acquisitions, and crisis management. Mergers and acquisitions have been primarily researched from an integration development viewpoint, but not from the possible crisis management perspective. We suggest further cross-fertilization between the mergers and acquisitions, and crisis management research fields. ■