



Communicating Throughout a Merger

The Challenge

Two Fortune 500 companies announced a \$5 billion merger. The acquirer planned to downsize to save \$150 million but wanted to communicate and build trust in order to keep essential employees from leaving and causing business interruptions and customer losses.

Schmalensee Partners' Approach

Mary Estes, an SP Partner . . .

1. Helped acquirer set a communications goal – 80% of acquired employees understand and agree with downsizing process after one year
2. Designed 12 month communications plan that focused on authentic messages and style, being high tech to be high touch
3. Coached CEO as he communicated regularly with honest, personal messages about retention incentive pay, payout packages, selection process, what would happen on first day after merger, what it felt like to lose valued colleagues

Results

- Surpassed goal. Achieved 83% understood and agreed with the process
- Company avoided disruptions of service

