African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Vol. 5 (1) - (2016) ISSN: 2223-814X

An Appreciative Merger and Acquisition Team Coaching Strategy for the South African Hotel Industry

R.G. Visagie*
University of Johannesburg
Visagrg@Unisa.ac.za

M.P. Poggenpoel and C.P.H. Myburgh
University of Johannesburg

Corresponding author*

Abstract

The South African hotel industry needs to improve its global competitiveness and could do so to an extent by adopting appropriate globalization strategies. Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As) are a core organisational restructuring method that has been adopted by many companies to face the current economic crisis. For some it is viewed as a very efficient and rapid way to expand their market share as they engage with different markets and expand their capabilities. However, creating an M&A does not automatically ensure that the new entity will succeed in all of its objectives. Middle managers act as a buffer between top management's financially driven M&A intent and reporting colleagues' need for job security during M&A activities. Furthermore, M&A change creates personal and collective disharmony, posing a threat to the mental health of middle managers relevant to the change. We (authors) argue that while hotel companies need to take important steps to strengthen their position in both the domestic and international markets through M&A deals, clear and suitable post-M&A integration strategies that are responsive to the mental health needs of middle managers, are critical for M&A success. Companies often merge in terms of structural and procedural processes, but fail to merge potential human threats and possibilities that are an intrinsic part of the change process. This article extends Positive Organisational Scholarship in the hospitality industry by proposing an Appreciative M&A team coaching strategy that can be implemented by hotel companies in South Africa to improve the acquirer's chances for successful M&A integration.

Keywords: Mergers, acquisitions, Appreciative Inquiry (AI), coaching, change, globalization, mental health

Introduction

"I have not ceased being fearful, but I have ceased to let fear control me. I have accepted fear as part of my life – specifically the fear of change, the fear of the unknown, (the fear of the empty spaces haunting me) and I have gone ahead despite the pounding in my heart that says: turn back, turn back…"
Erica Jong as adapted (in Maurer, 1996:151)

Being involved in a Merger and Acquisition (M&A) can be compared to the most stressful events in a person's life, such as divorce or separation, the death of a loved one, moving house and job loss (Hubbard, 1999:18). The difference between M&A change and other organisational changes are embedded in the complexity of the situation. Organisational change usually involves modifications to existing structures and processes, whereas M&A change involves being confronted with a new employer, procedures, cultures, leaders, management styles and no underlying basis for trust (Hubbard, 1999:27).

M&As have been an integral part of modern capitalism since the beginning of the twentieth century (Schweiger, 2002:2; Steger & Kummer in Morosini & Steger, 2004:3). The terms 'merger' and 'acquisition' refer to a type of organisational takeover, meaning that two companies come together to become one. M&A activity is a response to "unexpected industry-related shocks" during periods marked by economic instability (Andrade, et al. 2001:107). Drivers for this type of corporate restructuring include unpredicted technological innovations, supply, or regulatory changes (Andrade, et al. 2001:107). In addition, socio-political changes and investors' perceptions of the health of a country's economy and its attractiveness as a location for new investments, act as drivers for M&As. Consequently, M&As continue to be a prominent global corporate restructuring strategy to deal with economic shocks and compete in a global market.

De Villiers, et al. (2004:21) link the boom in M&As in South Africa during the early 2000s to Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE). B-BBEE, private equity, and cross-border transactions remain key local M&A drivers (Thayser, 2007:3) in the fight for economic survival (Kummer & Steger, 2008:45). The South African economy has been plagued by dwindling public trust in politicians, security concerns for doing business, and significant labour unrest across different sectors during recent years (Schwab, 2013:43). The Competition Commission's Annual Reports for the period 2000 to 2014 indicate that M&A activities in South Africa remained resilient in spite of socio-political challenges, periods of economic uncertainty, and the adoption of stricter M&A regulatory control in 2010. This resilience is further demonstrated by a 35.7% increase in the total number of notified M&As in the local market for the 2013/14 period (from 291 in 2011/12 to 395 in 2013/14). Likewise, consolidation, expansion, and takeovers drive critical hotel chain growth (Rogerson, 2014:135). Taking part in an M&A gamble is often seen by hoteliers and investors as a quick way of getting 'bums in beds', thus lowering their resistance to taking M&A risks in their quest for expansion, consolidation and diversification (Visagie, 2009:3).

Despite record-breaking deals, M&As mostly fail to be successful (De Villiers, et al. 2004:21; Kummer & Steger, 2008:44; Mitchell & Hill, 2004:26). Estimates of the success rates of M&As has remained relatively consistent over time at no more than 50% (Mitchell & Hill, 2004:23). The success rates of cross-border M&As are estimated to vary between 20% and 50% (Grotenhuis, 2009:45). Therefore, more often than not, the M&As end up destroying, instead of creating, expected value for the companies involved. Failure to successfully integrate conflicting corporate cultures that arise before and during the integration phase remains the most critical area of concern (Deloitte, 2014:10; Habeck, et al. 2000:81; Risberg, 1997:257; Sherman, 1998:226). A culture clash is deemed "a shocking surprise to most combining companies" (Habeck, et al. 2000:81). Other pitfalls include a lack of understanding of the consequences of the acquisition before it is made, linked to inefficient post-merger integration strategies (Horovitz in Morosini & Steger, 2004:116/117). Insufficient human due diligence fuels these pitfalls.

Human due diligence refers to the ability of key stakeholders involved in an M&A deal to respond appropriately to the culture of the organisation and to understand the roles, capabilities, and attitudes of its people (Harding & Rouse, 2007:125). The organisational culture can be seen as a determinant of employee behaviour and provides a formula of how things are done in a company (Hubbard, 1999:31). The importance of people-issues are too often simply ignored or under-estimated by M&A deal makers (Harding & Rouse, 2007:125; Mitchell & Hill, 2004:28). Visagie (2002:89) argues that "neglect of the human factor is a reality in M&A contexts where the focus is primarily on securing investment capital". The ambiguity to be acquired by another company is generally a fear-provoking experience for all stakeholders involved, resulting in human suffering and an unhealthy corporate culture (Hubbard, 1999:31).

Middle managers act as a buffer between top management's financially driven M&A intent and reporting colleagues' need for job security during M&A activities, yet, their expectations are often misunderstood and ignored, which results in dissatisfaction (Hubbard, 1999:18,23). Visagie (2009:90) asserts that M&A change has the potential to create personal and collective disharmony; eventually threatening the mental health of middle managers in the hotel industry. This is especially of concern during the post M&A integration phase. Mental health is an evolving, interactive process characterised by a harmonious relationship between an individual's internal demands and needs and the demands and expectations of the external environment (Visagie, 2009:24). Disharmony between an individual's internal and external environments results in decreased productivity and organisational performance, thus compromising M&A success. The hotel industry - rooted in the service sector - "depends largely on quality" (UNWTO Annual Report, 2010:45). A skilled and motivated workforce is, therefore, non-negotiable. However, too often human resource integration strategies fail to recognise the importance of implementing holistic M&A interventions that acknowledge the potentially detrimental impact of M&A change on the mental health of middle managers. We (authors) argue that while hotel companies need to take important steps to strengthen their position in both the domestic and international markets through M&A deals, clear and suitable post-M&A integration strategies that are responsive to the mental health needs of middle managers are critical for M&A success. Team coaching is a highly acclaimed organisational development strategy that can create new meaning in teams facing organisational changes (Johnson & Drake, 2000:1; Skiffington & Zeus, 2003:11). Similarly, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is recognised as a strength-based organisational change approach based on its positive development potential (Cooperrider, et al. 2008). Consequently, M&A team coaching, following an Appreciative Inquiry approach and targeting middle managers as a key stakeholder group, is proposed as a vital M&A integration strategy for M&A success in the hotel industry.

This article extends Positive Organisational Scholarship in the hospitality industry based on previous research conducted by the first author relevant to this field and industry (Visagie, 2002; Visagie, 2009). Furthermore, it is a response to the substantial body of evidence confirming the need for M&A-based research to inform theory, empirical work and practice (Hitt, et al. 2012:x). However, the significant contribution is a proposed Appreciative M&A team coaching strategy that can be implemented by hotel companies in South Africa, and beyond its boundaries, to improve the acquirer's chances for successful M&A integration.

Section one aims to contextualise M&A activities within the current South African hotel milieu. Section two provides a theoretical overview of the reasons why companies choose to participate in M&As, in particular, applying efficiency, monopoly, and disturbance theory to hotel-related M&As. Section three aims to describe the influence of M&A change on the mental health of middle managers during the integration phase, departing from an organisation-human systems integrated perspective. In section four, Appreciative M&A team coaching is proposed as an M&A integration strategy that creates possibilities to facilitate middle managers' mental health. To this end, we explore *why* and *how* Appreciative M&A team coaching can contribute to fostering "an affirmative, mental health-enhancing environment" (Visagie, 2009).

Current hotel milieu

The hotel industry forms part of the travel and tourism industry. The latter is the fastest growing international industry. Furthermore, it is recognised by the South African government as one of the six core pillars of economic growth (Hanekom, 2016). According to the latest economic impact report published by the World Travel and Tourism Council, tourism contributed 9.4% to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2014, and almost 10% to employment. In addition, South Africa is *the* top travel destination in Sub-Saharan Africa according to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Ranking for 2015 (World Economic Forum, 2015), thus providing an agile environment for growth through M&As in the hotel sector. In contrast to the current global and national decline in M&As in some industries, a report by Ernest and Young (2015) mentions a recent surge in M&A activity in the hospitality industry associated with the impact of this industry on the global economy. Robust investor interest and a continuation of the upwards growth trend in this sector is predicted in the foreseeable future. In South Africa, as in other parts of the globe, M&As will continue to remain part of the business expansion and consolidation game (Ernest & Young, 2015).

There is currently a huge need for hotel companies to construct global brands and improve their images by forging resilient worldwide networks. The global economic crisis has affected countries in different ways. The international hotel industry, including South Africa, is facing constant changes in the business environment. Many hotel owners, top management and investors realise the need for a globalisation strategy and have thus sought to create strategic alliances. A fair number has opted for M&As to acquire relevant competencies, for example branding, and to remain sustainable and gain additional market share. These stakeholders thus view M&As as the solution to tackle economic instabilities integral to the economic crisis. The South African hotel industry is a critical contributor to the national GDP and a relatively cheap destination for foreign visitors. It is evident from the literature that both National and International M&As are significant tools to aid hotel companies to remain sustainable and viable. Feldmeth and Rocha (2015) assert that the top global brands with the strongest growth in their brand value utilise acquisitions to develop their business.

Essentially Africa has attracted foreign tourists to game reserves for many decades, which resulted in the construction of safari resorts and lodges. In 2012, the international arrivals surpassed the 50 million mark for the first time, and generated $33bn in revenues for the continent. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (WTO) in fact, forecasts that arrivals to Africa will exceed 85 million by 2020. Hotel industry executives are seeking opportunities to meet this expected burgeoning demand and ways to profit alongside international chains. One significant way is clearly via the M&A route. Major chains from across the globe are looking increasingly to Africa, and especially Southern Africa, to expand their chains. Economies of scale, globalisation, and a need to grow markets all play a significant part in the move by hotel groups to expand their operations through M&As. This trend is accelerating as the balance of power in the international industry is shifting. There are, of course, many reasons for seeking to engage in an M&A.

Merger and Acquisition intentions

Merger and acquisition intentions refer to the motives why companies choose to take part in M&As. Merger motives are complex, mixed and caused by multiple motivations simultaneously (Kummer & Steger, 2008:45; Trautwein, 1990:283). In this section, we examine the theory that portrays M&A activity as a cyclic business phenomenon that occurs in distinct waves (Gaughan, 2015; Kummer & Steger, 2008:44). In addition, we provide a brief overview of the theories of merger motives and create contextual links between the theory and the hotel sector.

The six historical major M&A waves described in the scholarly literature have distinct key business drivers or motives (Gaughan, 2015; Steger & Kummer in Morisini & Steger, 2004:3). “Mergers for monopoly” represents the first wave. Between 1897 and 1904 rapid expansion of industries resulted in companies that aimed to gain influence and market power. Between 1918 and 1932 one of the key drivers behind the second wave, “mergers for oligopoly”, was early globalisation, followed by the third wave, “conglomerate mergers” that took place between 1955 and 1975 in pursuit of diversification. The 1980s were primarily known for hostile takeovers (fourth wave). These megadeals – highly profitable, yet speculative – were pursued as an acceptable form of corporate expansion by so-called “corporate raiders” (Gaughan, 2015:58). A hostile takeover was typically opposed by the target company’s board of directors and management (Gaughan, 2015:64). The Walt Disney Company-Saul P. Steinberg takeover war in 1984 is a prominent example in the hotel industry of an attempted hostile takeover by a so-called “corporate raider” (Saul P. Steinberg). The target company (Walt Disney Company) survived the attack through skilful manoeuvring in the form of corporate restructuring. The fifth wave commenced in 1992 and peaked in 2000. “Global mergers” has emerged as a corporate trend in an attempt to attain environmental influence on an international scale, as well as to meet the growth expectations of capital markets. This wave is considered to be the biggest in history and was driven by “globalization, technological change, and market deregulation and liberalization” (Schweiger, 2002:3). The sixth merger wave started in 2001 as a consequence of a number of global economic shocks, such as 9/11 and a brief period of economic recession in the USA. The wave was characterised by an initial slowdown in M&A activity in response to economic uncertainty. However, the M&A market was reversed in 2004 as a result of increased privatisation. The sixth wave ended with the 2008 global recession (Gaughan, 2015:71).

Once companies merge their corporate distinctiveness, either via the process of a merger or an acquisition, they invariably craft a new entity. This presents them with an exceptional opportunity for developing attractive and distinctive positioning strategies (Balmer & Dinnie, 1999). The South African environment for making M&A deals has been strained by the unfolding political scenario which makes it tougher for investors, causing them to move more cautiously as they evaluate investment opportunities. Yet, M&As continue to take place for a wide range of reasons. Trautwein (1990) asserts that the theories of merger motives can be classified into seven categories: efficiency theory, monopoly theory, raider theory, valuation theory, empire building theory, process theory, and disturbance theory. Against the backdrop of the current South African hotel milieu, we found three theories to be significant in the hospitality and hotel sector, namely efficiency theory, monopoly theory, and disturbance theory.

The efficiency theory is closely related to a company’s drive for consolidation. A key assumption of this theory is the notion that mergers are created to attain synergies and strategic leverage. Doyle and Stern (2006) speak of synergies as “resources and capabilities that complement and reinforce one another”. The hotel industry is characterised by fragmentation and competition. Competition is a necessary business driver because it acts as an impetus to “improve efficiencies, increase product variety, quality and lower prices” (Hartzenburg, 2002:7). Macro-level business competition concerns in South Africa “arose from South Africa’s apartheid history, its economic isolation, financial sanctions and high levels of market and ownership concentration …” (Hartzenburg, 2002:7).

Synergies have the potential to serve a hotel well when it comes to, for example, increasing sales, service offerings, access to loyalty databases, and other aspects which are useful when it is necessary to decrease the costs involved with the operation. Slattery (2002:24) argues that consolidation is the most significant long-term development in the structure of the hospitality industry, including the hotel sector. The author states that consolidation is a trend that is “gathering pace, driven by the greater efficiency of chains over unaffiliated venues, the greater capital access of chains and their capacity to offer careers to graduates rather than operational jobs …” (Slattery, 2002:24). Trautwein (1990:293) doubts the validity of efficiency arguments and M&A prescriptions based on it. However, he agrees that efficiency considerations are important to market mergers. In a similar vein, Kummer and Steger (2008:46) argues that competition and periods of consolidation in an industry can compel companies to engage in M&As as a survival strategy.

Monopoly theory perceives mergers to be useful in efforts to capture markets and reduce competition, while keeping out new market entrants that would threaten business. In contrast to the synergy arguments underpinning the efficiency theory, the monopoly theory postulates collusive synergies that focus on wealth transfer from a company’s customers (Trautwein, 1990:286). Monopolistic driven M&As aim to increase an acquirer’s market power and influence. Marriott International was recently involved in the acquisition of the Protea Hotel Group making Marriot the largest hotel group in Africa. The acquisition involved a $200m-plus takeover of Protea, a top notch hotel group consisting of 116 hotels located in seven African nations (Sanchez, 2016). Marriot International’s response to economic downturns in the

United States is currently acting as a growth strategy by expanding its market dominance abroad (Sanchez, 2016). Gold Reef Resorts and Tsogo Sun Holdings likewise entered into an agreement to merge their gaming and hotel operations. This move created a pre-eminent gaming and hotel company in South Africa. It will undoubtedly develop a very significant ranking when it is viewed by market capitalisation, amongst a range of listed emerging-market peers in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region (Mail and Guardian, 2010). We recognise the notion that these deals are currently seen as profitable for both the acquirers and the target companies involved, however, the nature and size of the transactions could yield monopolistic outcomes in future.

The aforementioned merger theories (efficiency theory and monopoly theory) are viewed as “rational” explanations for M&As based on its inherently economically driven strategic intentions (Kummer & Steger, 2008:45). M&A choices are deemed “irrational” if the focus is on individuals, especially top managers who take part in these activities for personal reasons like “empire building” (Kummer & Steger, 2008:45).

Disturbance theory conceptualises M&A activity as a macroeconomic phenomenon that is caused by “economic disturbances” and fits the “irrational” explanation category (Trautwein, 1990:290). According to this theory, economic disturbances are important triggers for merger waves. Dramatic macroeconomic changes can cause great consternation and exacerbate situations which are already considered volatile, thus denting individual expectations severely. Previous non-owners of assets respond to the uncertainty by placing a higher value on assets than the owners, thereby creating greater M&A demand.

Organisation-human systems integrated perspective: Implications for mental health

Work is believed to provide an individual with economic gain, social status and a sense of belonging and meaning (Pratt & Ashforth in Cameron, et al. 2003:307). M&As, however, create a profound sense of perceived meaninglessness for employees related to the crisis situation it evokes. Visagie (2002:7) asserts that M&A change manifests as a “personal and collective crisis” that could influence middle managers’ mental health negatively related to “experiences of emotional turmoil, friction and alienation”. Kummer and Steger (2008:46) associate the apathy of organisations and people that follow M&A deals with resistance to change. The authors identify organisational and people apathy as an underestimated cause for M&A failure.

Resistance to change is deeply-rooted in individuals’ underlying fears. Dealing with employees’ fears and anxieties may be the most frequently found challenge in sustaining change and the hardest to overcome (Senge, et al. 1999:243). Mills and Smith (2008:433) refer to “persistent patterns of protest”. These ‘patterns of protest’ are triggered by the emotional turmoil created by organisational change. Resistance to change is likely caused by a sense of loss, misunderstanding and a lack of trust, contradictory views and low tolerance for change (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008:134). The sense of loss is inherently linked to employees’ experiences of “worker alienation”, whereby change initiatives are not perceived as enriching work-related tasks and roles, thus negatively influencing employees’ expectations of work as a source of meaning (Pratt & Ashforth in Cameron, et al. 2003:315). These patterns of protest often symbolise managers’ emotional distress, and might be a reflection of how they construct meaning of the perceived alienating and paradoxical nature of organisational change processes. Their perceptions could ultimately threaten their mental health. This discourse mirrors power as a major factor in organisational performance – power to fix versus power to enable in a positive way (Clegg, et al. 2006:17). Or as Clegg, et al. (2006:29) argue: “At the core of modern organizations there is a heart of darkness, one which stains not only history but also present realities.”

Meaninglessness and alienation are reflected in anomic patterns described in Durkheim's sociological texts (Gallo, 1974:31; Mizruchi, 1964:45). Anomie is closely associated with rapid changes occurring in the economic system. It reflects a social state in which the society's norms and goals are no longer capable of exerting social control over its members and the individual, rather than the group, must determine what goals should be sought (Mizruchi, 1964:45). M&A activities are known to create cultural diversity that may result in a process where the individual feels alienated in the work environment based on a breakdown in the cultural structure. Alienation during M&A change denotes an estrangement between a person's internal and external environment related to significant M&A specific-experiences. The feeling associated with the person's estrangement is combined with the loss of identity or authentic being (Gallo, 1974:28/29).

DeGrazia (in Mizruchi, 1964:47) describes three characteristics in response to Durkheim's work that forms part of the subjective experience of anomie which can be linked to M&A change, namely; a "painful uneasiness or anxiety, a feeling of separation from the group or isolation from group standards, a feeling of pointlessness." These subjective experiences are evident in declined productivity related to a weakening of employees' commitments to organisational goals. The organisational system plays a significant role in M&A related anomie by failing to communicate and reinforce negotiated cultural norms during the process of integration.

Anomic patterns, furthermore, impact on the psychological contract between the acquirer and employees, as there is a direct shift from collective goals to personal goals. According to Rousseau (in Linde & Schalk, 2008:305) the psychological contract consists of individual beliefs that are shaped by an organisation's culture and business practices. It entails an exchange agreement between individuals and their organisation. Individual beliefs are mostly seated in mutual expectations and obligations based on perceived promises. Employee promises relate, amongst others, to job performance, loyalty and ethical behaviour. The acquirers' promises are mostly embedded in the provision of organisational support, career development, supporting social activities, a fair managerial policy, and the provision of an optimal working environment (Linde & Schalk, 2008:307). An experience of contract violation is a consequence of perceptions by one or both parties that promises were made, but not kept in the acquirer-employee relationship (Linde & Schalk, 2008:317). Both parties involved in the M&A deal may feel that they are cheated in some way. The psychological consequences of perceptions of unfair human, labour and integration practices may result in personal and collective behaviour that hinders optimal organisational performance.

Previous M&A research on the experiences of two middle management teams in a South African hotel company supports the scholarly notion of psychological contract violation, in particular during the M&A integration phase (Visagie, 2002:62). Managers expressed experiences of unfulfilled promises that negatively influenced their commitment to the merged entity (Visagie, 2002:62). These managers expressed the fear of losing their dignity and pride in a context where they experienced that top management did not "appreciate" them and that "people don't really matter" (Visagie, 2002:63). Intentions to quit, rooted in an experience of pointlessness, become stronger where people feel unappreciated (Msoni, 2006:2). Employees' intentions to quit during M&A change are mostly fuelled by an increased sense of self-devaluation, an impaired sense of belonging, and anxiety as a result of employee-top management/investor value conflict. This clearly influences employees' performance patterns and may result in the company losing valuable talent (Harding & Rouse, 2007:125).

The high premium that investors place on economic survival and the tendency to measure work performance in terms of quantifiable financial indicators, may ultimately result in employee distress. Hubbard (1999:30) describes 'distress' as a decrease in self-worth, a drop in job performance and a sense of futility during M&A activities. Mental and physical health consequently suffers. Paradoxically, investors often get what they desperately do not want – economic extinction or mere survival instead of economic thriving. According to Mankins and

Steele (2005:65), most companies' strategies deliver only 60% of their promised financial value. This is linked to an ineffective relationship between strategy and execution. 'Strategy' refers to the planned M&A implementation, while 'execution' entails its direct or indirect operationalising by stakeholders. Middle managers are most vulnerable to the "execution gap" (Visagie, 2009:13). Pfeffer and Sutton (2000:6) link the execution gap to inefficient management systems and practices.

The centrality of employees in driving quality service in the hotel sector is echoed in the following assertion of Nickson (2013:x): " … it is important not to lose sight of the one thing that is paramount … the need to deliver quality service to customers and the need to manage people in such a way that they offer quality service". Improving quality service in the contemporary hotel sector with its high premium on branding and strategic alliances brings added challenges. Corporate clashes can further exacerbate these challenges during M&A change, thus motivating why a systemic, well managed integration process should be initiated "the minute that people from an acquirer and a target come into contact with each other" (Schweiger, 2002:15). Company culture integration denotes the alignment of managers' personal values and goals with the core ideology and goals of the acquirer, hence, generating behaviour that reflects sustained performance. Performance oriented behaviour includes productive output, the social processes used to perform tasks and a relational experience that contributes positively to the learning and personal well-being of employees (Hackman & Wageman, 2005:272).

Top management is increasingly investing in business coaching as a vehicle to bridge the execution gap during organisational change to reduce the likelihood of managerial performance shortfalls. Business coaching can be a one-on-one or a team intervention and is directed by a formally defined coaching agreement (Visagie, 2009:28). Whitmore (2009:10) proposes that "coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance", thereby improving organisational performance. Coaching is "multifaceted, multidimensional and highly variable according to purpose and circumstance" (Clutterbuck, 2007:10). Knowledge and skills transfer does not happen in a vacuum. It requires social interaction and exchange that culminate in collaboration, thus emphasising the value of for team coaching.

Towards an Appreciative M&A team coaching strategy

Appreciative Inquiry (AI), rooted in Social Constructionism, has emerged as an organisational change paradigm in the field of organisational development and human systems change during the late 1990s (Cooperrider & Avital, 2004:xi). AI celebrates human potential. Paradoxical realities is recognised as "a basic ontological condition of organizational processes" to bring about organisational and human system change (Thatchenkery in Cooperrider & Avital, 2004:77).

AI can simply be described as "a transformational organisational change process" in which people "inspire each other to leverage their most powerful collective stories in order to dream and design a new affirmative future" (Ricketts & Willis, 2001:5). Cooperrider (in Cooperrider, et al. 2004:xii) defines AI as a "constructive inquiry process that searches for everything that 'gives life' to organisations … when they are most alive, effective, creative and healthy in their interconnected ecology of relationships". Stavros and Hinrichs (2009:7) define "life giving forces" as those "elements or experiences within an organization's past or present that represent its strengths when it is operating at its very best". A life-giving force can be a single moment (Stavros & Hinrichs, 2009:7) or an enduring pattern of experience that represent a preferred reality. Visagie (2009:114) reported on "marginalised stories of hope and promise" during a particular M&A change process that represented life-giving forces. Middle managers responded constructively to these positively perceived experiences, since it created a sense of "being part of a family" (For a full account of the experiences of a middle management team of a cross-cultural M&A, consult Visagie, 2009). Kaufman (2006:22) confirms that negative emotions ensure survival by allowing an individual to focus narrowly on a problem that needs to be resolved quickly. In contrast, positive emotions increase an individual's psychological resourcefulness. They enable individuals to "widen the lens" and "see the big picture".

Appreciative M&A team coaching is an innovative post M&A integration strategy that departs from the core assumption that organisational realities are socially constructed through dialogue (Visagie, 2009:18). It implies a decisive shift from an individualised to a team based focus. Erden and Ozen (2003:131) argue that "the use of teams has become the symbol of an ideal model of work and working behaviour for organisations". Collective working methods are critical to optimise synergy between the different parts of an organisation. Team performance depends on strong social cohesion and a climate of trust (Erden & Ozen, 2003:131).

Dialogue is recognised as central to organisational change, whilst organisations are viewed as meaning-making systems (Burnes & Cooke, 2012:1411). Consequently, a middle management team is viewed as a socially constructed organisational entity that is responsible for operationalising the M&A strategy. Meaning, whether positive or negative, is socially negotiated through dialogue in the team. Appreciative M&A team coaching integrates AI during the post-M&A integration phase as an organisational change strategy to generate a mental-health enhancing environment for middle managers through strength based coaching. M&A change evokes, as previously stated, strong emotive reactions. Middle managers mostly try to adapt to the unstable organisational environment by using unhealthy coping mechanisms, thus, constraining their ability to recognise change as a source of growth. Knowledge and skills transfer does not happen in a vacuum. It requires social interaction and exchange that culminate in collaboration, thus emphasising the need for team coaching.

Team coaching is simultaneously performance and process driven. Hence, it can be defined as a goal-directed, results oriented, learning intervention intended to enable personal and collective capability of a group or team through a team coaching process (Clutterbuck, 2007:77). The goal-directedness and result oriented aspect refers to the fact that team coaching ultimately aims to create and sustain organisational performance. To this end, it entails purposeful interaction between the team coach and the team members, as well as between the team members as a mutually dependent sub-system. In addition, both the coach and the team members are obliged to deliver on results determined by executive management. Consequently, some coaching scholars refer to the interaction as a "triangular coaching relationship" (Dembkowski, et al. 2006:11; Sherman & Freas, 2004:85; Visagie, 2009:28).

Kombarakaran et al. (2008:79) declare that coaching interventions facilitate behaviour change. Likewise, Visagie (2009:167) asserts that team coaching facilitates team members' self-awareness, competence and ability to make and execute decisions in support of mutually agreed upon goals through the coaching process. The team coaching process, in particular, refers to the various phases involved in the establishment, progression and development of the triangular coaching relationship (Zeus & Skiffington, 2002:60).

The essence of Appreciative M&A team coaching is to connect middle managers' experiences of past and previous preferred realities to their aspirations and values. This is done through the implementation of a dialogical 4-D team coaching strategy that recognises the importance of unleashing managers' preferred realities to transform the organisational context into an appreciative learning context (Visagie, 2002:112). Srivastva and Cooperrider (1990:3) argue that organisations are "products of the affirmative mind" and needs "less fixing, less problem-solving and more appreciation".

The proposed 4-D Appreciative M&A team coaching strategy is based on an adapted version of the 4-D AI cycle described by Cooperrider, et al. (2008:7) that is represented in Figure 1 (Visagie, 2009:163). The Discovery phase aims to uncover the life-giving stories in order to ignite the collective imagination of "what might be" during the Dream phase (dialogue about possibilities). In the Design phase the future is co-constructed through the facilitation of team dialogue about "what should be" (Visagie, 2009:163). Cooperrider et al. (2008:7) describe the outcome of this phase as the "Design of an organizational architecture" that is provocative and represents strategic organisational intent. The ultimate outcome of the Destiny phase is "transformed, integrated middle managers" that are able to bring the organisation closer to the ideal through their commitment and ability to deliver on the strategic intent of the merged or acquired organisation.

AI always starts with the selection of an affirmative topic choice (Cooperrider, et al. 2008:35). This simply refers to the selection of topic(s) that will set the stage for applying the 4-D AI cycle. The topics represent what people want to discover and will likely evoke dialogue about the desired future (Cooperrider, et al. 2008:35/36). In the context of an Appreciative M&A team coaching strategy, the affirmative topic choices are carefully selected by a team coach with sound theoretical knowledge and practical experience of applying AI. The topic choices are confirmed with the project sponsor or owner and provide the scope of the inquiry.

Two broad questions, adapted from Cooperrider, et al. (2008: 36), inform the affirmative topics of the Appreciative M&A team coaching intervention:

- What aspects give life to this newly merged or acquired organisation when it is most successful and alive? This question aims to connect what the organisation has done well before the transition and is doing well in its current status.
- What possibilities provide opportunities for a more successful and vital merged or acquired organisation? This question compels middle managers to dream about what they envision the merged or acquired organisation to be and to design their most preferred future.

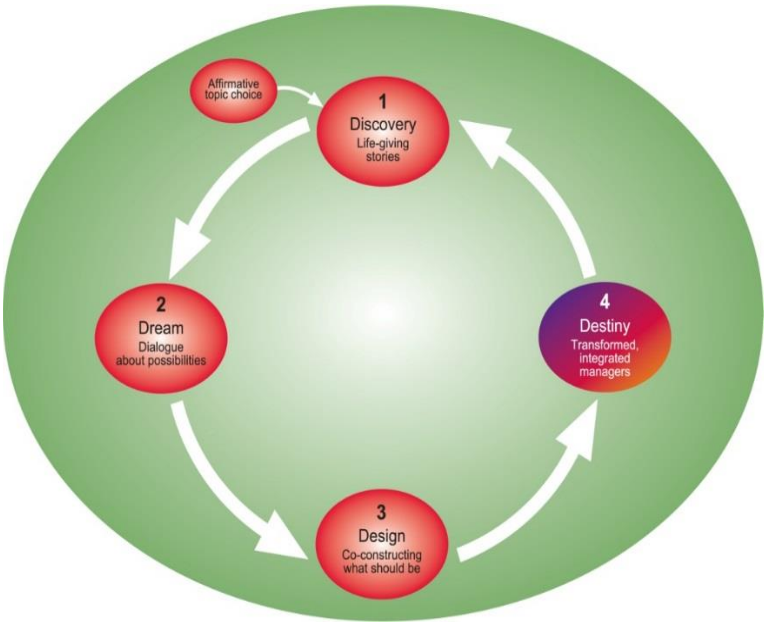

Figure 1 Appreciative M&A Inquiry 4-D cycle (Visagie, 2009:163)

The Appreciative M&A team coaching intervention consists of a three-day integration workshop, followed by an on-going process of ten monthly team coaching sessions to facilitate the process of delivering on the operational performance indicators. Each phase is composed of different sessions guided by a specific affirmative topic choice. In addition, specific outcomes are envisioned, such as the design of a socially negotiated transition plan towards managing the change process as a team, a mutually agreed to team vision, and an agreed to set of operational performance indicators to deliver the merged company (Visagie, 2002:116).

An outline of the intervention is provided in Table 1, followed by a brief description of the different phases.

Table 1 Outline of an Appreciative M&A team coaching integration intervention to facilitate middle managers mental health (adapted from Visagie, 2009)

Phase one: Discover new meaning through appreciating the "best of what is" Objective: Explore strengths and appreciating the "best of what is" • Affirmative topic choice 1: Recall the best previous team experiences • Affirmative topic choice 2: Present the "best of what is" related to your management style • Affirmative topic choice 3: Share the "best of what is" related to your personal strengths
Phase two: Dream about "what might be" Objective: Co-construct a new team identity by envisioning "what might be"
Phase three: Design best integration practices Objective: Design an M&A operational plan that is provocative and represents the strategic intent to deliver best integration practices
Step four: Destiny - inspire continued action through transformed, integrated middle managers Objective: Deliver on operational performance indicators to foster smooth integration

Phase one: Discover new meaning through appreciating the "best of what is"

Phase one is actualised through an intervention that marks the beginning of the new business entity. The objective of this phase is to appreciate the "best of what is" through the facilitation of the discovery phase of AI. In addition, the intent is to alleviate managers' fear and uncertainty. Organisational socialisation is critical to ensure smooth integration, which means that managers should become familiar with the organisation's values, norms, procedures and culture (Plunkett & Attner, 1997:659). By exploring strengths and appreciating the best of "what is", managers engage in a process allowing them to explore new possibilities. This may lay the groundwork for forming a meaningful psychological contract with the merged company. In forming sustainable psychological contracts, both the employer and employees need to believe that the other is doing his or her part, based on a sense of fairness and equity (Plunkett & Attner, 1997:659).

Three interrelated affirmative topic choices guide the discovery of the "best of what is".

- Affirmative topic choice 1: Recall the best previous team experiences

The session commences with an information sharing session that is facilitated by the Chief Executive Officer of the acquirer. Information regarding the organisation's vision, mission, core values, culture, organisation structure, products, current operating priorities, commitment towards clients through a people-employee centred focus, and previous stories of success are shared (Bushe, 2001:13).

The Chief Executive Officer presents a draft integration plan to managers. According to Hubbard (1999:39) "…with uncommunicated intent, employees will form their own expectations without the acquirer's input. In these circumstances, it is likely that their expectations will be (skewed)." The presentation ends with a 30-minute question and answer session allowing managers to express fears and uncertainties. Sherman (2000:321) is of the opinion that open communication is *the* "primary tool for dealing with fear, and many other emotions that surface during the course of acquisition transition".

Next, managers are requested to pair-up with another team member to reflect on his or her time in the previous company and to describe a story of a "best previous team experience". These interviews end with the individual managers sharing their stories with the rest of the team. The team is encouraged to be curious and to engage in dialogue with the manager who is sharing his or her story. When exploration of the "best experience" is exhausted, managers are requested to make a list and to reach consensus on the attributes of a winning team, thus summarising the attributes of the team at its best (Visagie, 2002:119).

An invitation to appreciate each other is implemented as closure of the session by requesting managers to acknowledge anything they have noted in others that are aligned to the listed attributes (Bushe, 2001:7/8). Bushe (1998:3) states that the "best team" Appreciative Inquiry is particularly appropriate for new teams and may help the team do important "norming" without having to go through "storming". Team formation processes may be greatly accelerated with this intervention (Bushe, 1998:3). In this context it would also mean showing respect towards those who may resist the change (Visagie, 2002:120).

- Affirmative topic choice 2: Present the "best of what is" related to your management style

The point of attention of this session is the discovery of managers' strengths, not only as managers, but also as potential leaders. It includes the sharing of ideas about cooperative relationships, meaningful communication patterns and managers' personal leadership strengths (Bushe, 2001:13; Mellish, 1998:2). A similar facilitation process as above is followed (Visagie, 2002:120). A suggested interview guide is: "Tell me about a person you respect as a leader. What do you value about this person? What is the most important attribute of this person?"

- Affirmative topic choice 3: Share the "best of what is" related to your personal strengths

Managers are requested to pair up with a partner and to engage in an interview to discover each other's passions, interests and future dreams on a personal level. Common questions to ask include: What excites you as a person? Where do you see yourself going in this company? What are the "best things" that you have learnt in the context of your family? The partner gives feedback to the group about what he or she has discovered about the other person (Visagie, 2002:120). This session is based on appreciative interviewing and culminates in increased self-awareness and team learning.

The next phase is about the articulation of "what might be" through linking vision and logic.

Phase two: Dream about "what might be"

The second phase of the Appreciative Inquiry allows managers to dream about "what might be" in order to envision and co-construct a new team identity. The ultimate outcome is the creation of a socially negotiated team vision, in line with the organisational vision, that signifies the integration of the two organisational cultures. This is based on provoking ideas about what are ideal and collaborative, thus sharing, affirming and coordinating efforts (Mellish, 1998:2).

The dream phase can begin by asking the managers to consider a focal question, such as: It is five (5) years from now. Inspired by the "best of what is", what have we accomplished as a merged company? What decisions and choices did we make to pave the way for realising our ideal merged company? (Questions adapted from Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010:186). Dream dialogue follows in small groups. This open-ended conversation ends with asking the groups to clarify their collective images of the future. A relevant question that can facilitate the co-construction of a collective dream is: "How will you recognise the ideal merged company?"

The dream can creatively be enacted through pictures, stories or poems that are created by the various small groups ultimately working together to create one big collective team mural (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010:186). After the presentations of the dream enactments, managers again divide into smaller groups to brainstorm ideal statements that would capture and define the spirit of the newly formed team (Mellish, 1998:4). Ideal statements are retold in the large group and consensus is reached about a team vision of the newly integrated team, followed by the creation of a team mission statement. According to Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987:13), "The executive mind works largely from the present and extends itself to the longer-term future. It is powerful to the extent that it is able to envision a desired future state which challenges perceptions of what is possible and what can be realized".

Phase three: Design best integration practices

Phase three aims to allow managers to come up with a set of best integration practices necessary for smooth integration. The objective is to design an M&A integration plan that is provocative and represents the strategic intent to deliver best integration practices (Visagie, 2002:121).

Managers are invited to work in small, self-selected groups to draft team norms and performance indicators that will govern the post-M&A integration process. Each manager is invited to recall images of "best integration practices" in their experience, and based on this input, norms are drafted and presented to the larger group (Bushe, 2001:14). Visagie (2002:121/122) suggests that performance indicators ought to include the following themes based on empirical research evidence:

- Decreased organisational insecurity
- Effective organisational communication practices
- Participatory management principles
- Cultural integration
- Dealing with resistance to change

Managers are requested to pair up with someone that they know the least and to create two provocative propositions that reflect the "ideal" shape and practice of the merged team, such as creating a supportive environment for learning or positive working relationships (Mellish, 1998:3). This is based on creating a system of team values through team-building language that will extend team colleagues' visions of new possibilities (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987:10).

A provocative proposition refers to an idea that is put forward for consideration, which stretches "beyond the norm into novel and more desired forms of interaction" (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010:205). These should be retold in the large group and grouped into themes like shared leadership, management or communication. Provocative propositions are grounded in the team's collective positive organisational experiences, reflecting the "ideal" shape that they wish to establish in the merged company (Visagie, 2002:121).

A consensus discussion follows in order to design a team integration action plan with starting and end dates and clear assignment of responsibilities to start realising the destiny. Next, managers present their integration plan to top management to bounce ideas regarding the feasibility of performance indicators, as well as to align the integration plan to the overall company strategic plan (Visagie, 2002:122). Visagie (2002:122) suggests that this session should end with a ritual that mirrors managers' hopes and dreams as a new team. A name-giving ceremony is held. Each manager is authorised to perform his functions in a symbolic way. This is a way of having fun as a team. Zimmer (in O'Reilly III & Pheffer, 2000:5) states: "Most business practices repress our natural tendency to have fun and socialize. The idea seems that in order to succeed, you have to suffer … I believe in an organisation … where (people) see cooperative effort that is all around them … When people feel connected to something with a purpose greater than themselves, it inspires people to reach for levels they might otherwise not obtain …".

Phase four: Destiny - inspire continued action through transformed, integrated managers

The emphasis of the destiny phase is on the on-going redesign of the core processes and systems to deliver on operational performance indicators for smooth integration. The focus remains on strengths rather than deficits, and on building a unifying work culture that stresses alignment between personal and organisational values. The overall aim of this phase is to accompany managers to sustain change and to deliver on key performance areas through on-going monthly M&A team coaching sessions.

In order to sustain change, the following aspects inherent to a smooth integration process should be consciously facilitated during team coaching:

- Working towards a common culture
- Developing a post-team identity
- Delivering best practice activities
- Maintaining or exceeding goals
- Establishing meaningful communication practices

It is proposed that an Appreciative M&A team coaching intervention should be assessed after the 10th M&A implementation coaching session to obtain clear evidence of its results. The business team coach must liberate stakeholders to integrate Appreciative M&A team coaching into existing processes and practices, creating new systems and structures on a daily basis (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005:47). The establishment of a supportive infrastructure include leadership support, a well-structured reward and recognition system, cross-team communication, and the cultivation of appreciative leadership (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010:205). In addition, a recommended practice to foster cooperative organisational learning is to cascade the process of Appreciative Inquiry to other employees in the company. It is proposed that the top management team, as well as the senior management team, should be engaged in a similar Appreciative M&A team coaching programme to enhance buy-in and work-related performance. Individual executive coaching is suggested as a complementary intervention for company leaders based on the demands that M&As place on these leaders' internal and external resources.

Conclusions

In decades past, small hospitality operations placed their entire focus on local markets and were happy to go solo. They also tended to stress the need for skilled workers who were convinced that the world of work is relatively constant. However, there is no doubt any longer that the hospitality industry, and especially hotels, have changed immensely as they grapple to accommodate huge growth and ever-changing guest needs and wants. Technology has taken the industry to new heights and this also calls for middle managers who are highly skilled in many facets of operation. Competition is now fiercer than ever before in the industry and hotels are obliged to be involved in target marketing. With this in mind, hotel companies are growing their operations and many seek growth in M&A activity in global markets. Strategic alliances are perceived to be a survival mechanism. While this is all good and well, it is critical for M&As to be conducted efficiently.

For M&As to be successful, it is vital that hotel owners and their managers fully understand the industry in an international context. They also need to be conversant with their internal strengths and the positive core of the organisation. Hotels need to be reformed by effective team coaching prior to and after M&As. Today guests are in a position to demand the best value for their money which means that for a business to flourish it must be aligned with best practices globally. This can be very taxing, especially for managers, and is stressful in many ways. Hotels that face increasing demands for consolidation, strategic alliances or M&As must seek new and creative ways to boost their market reputations, and to do this, they require highly effective managers. They also need to expand their business operations in a wide range of ways, but if they wish to establish long-term relationships via M&As, they need to carefully approach the method by which they coach their managers so as to promote mental health for long-term sustainable service. For South African hotels, planning for future growth is non-negotiable and M&As are on the increase, but care must be taken to manage the human consequences. Failure to do this makes M&A failure an inevitability. Consequently, the aim of this research was to extend Positive Organisation Scholarship by proposing the implementation of an Appreciative M&A team coaching strategy to facilitate a successful M&A integration. The proposed strategy offers a way to improve the lives and mental health of middle managers as a key stakeholder group involved in M&A change.

Professional development of employees, by means of Appreciative M&A team coaching, is thus proposed as a strategy to facilitate a mental health enhancing environment, in particular during the M&A integration phase. Continuous professional development aims to provide management teams with the necessary capability to adapt to the adverse influence of the M&A change, whilst remaining focused on the realisation of strategic imperatives (for instance quality service), and not losing sight of the opportunities for systemic growth that change provides. Team coaching provides an “artful, compassionate and incisive” way in which an environment may be reorganised for team learning to emerge (Senge, et al. 1999:106). Team coaching is generally more cost effective and time efficient for clients (Skiffington & Zeus, 2003:11). In addition, it allows a team to reflect on performance, to work towards mutually negotiated goals and “boosts performance”, improve communication, and build rapport (Clutterbuck, 2007:2).

We propose that the scientific merit of the strategy should be evaluated through future qualitative and quantitative research. Business coaching, including team coaching and Appreciative Inquiry, are relatively new strategies in the field of organisational development. This opens up vast opportunities for researchers to address these areas of interest. Exploratory research regarding the integration of African philosophy and Appreciative M&A team coaching is needed to generate culturally congruent organisational change approaches in the South African hotel sector.

Acknowledgement
This article is based on Retha Visagie’s doctoral thesis, *‘Appreciative Merger and Acquisition Team Coaching Programme to Facilitate Managers’ Mental Health in a Cross-cultural Context’*.

References

Andrade, G., Mitchell, M. & Stafford, E. (2001). New evidence and perspectives on mergers. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 15(2):103-120.

The Competition Commission, South Africa. (2000 - 2014). Annual Reports for the period 2000 to 2014. Available from: http://www.compcom.co.za/annual-reports/

Balmer, M.T. & Dinnie, K. (1999). Corporate identity and corporate communications: the antidote to merger madness. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 4(4):182-192.

Burnes, B. & Cooke, B. (2012). The past, present and future of organization development: Taking the long view. *Human Relations*, 63 (11):1395 - 1411.

Cameron, K.S., Dutton, J.E. & Quinn, R.E. (Editors). (2003). *Positive organizational scholarship*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Cooperrider, D.L. & Avital, M. (Editors). (2004). Constructive discourse and human organization. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Bushe, G.R. (1998). Appreciative inquiry with teams. *Organization Development Journal,* 16(3):41-50. Available from: http://www.gervasebushe.com/aiteams.htm:1-10.

Bushe, G.R. (2001). *What is Appreciative Process?* Available from: http://www.gervasebushe.com.

Clegg, S., Courpasson, D. & Phillips, N. (2006). *Power and organizations*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Clutterbuck, D. (2007). *Coaching the team at work*. London: Nicholas Brealey International.

Cooperrider, D.L. & Avital, M. (Editors). (2004). *Constructive discourse and human organization*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Cooperrider, D.L. & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 1:129-169. Available from: http://www.appreciative-inquiry.org/AI-life.htm. (Accessed 31 October 2002).

Cooperrider, D.L. & Whitney, D. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, Inc.

Cooperrider, D.L., Whitney, D. & Stavros, J.M. (2008). Appreciative Inquiry Handbook. Brunswick, Ohio: Crown Custom Publishing, Inc.

Dembkowski, S., Eldridge, F. & Hunter, I. (2006). *The seven steps of executive coaching*. London: Thorogood.

Deloite. (2014). M&A trends report 2014: A comprehensive look at the M&A market. Available from: http://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/mergers-and-acquisitions/articles/mergers-and-acquisitions-trends-report-2014.html

De Villiers, J., De Villiers, K. & Hattingh, B. (October/November 2004). M&A: Big deals that are hard to pull off. *Business Brief*, 9(5):21-26.

Doyle, P. & Stern, P. (2006). Marketing management and strategy. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Erdem, F. & Ozen, J. (2003). Cognitive and affective dimensions of trust in developing team performance. *Team Performance Management: An International Journal*, 9(5/6):131-135.

Ernest & Young Report. (2015). *Global Hospitality Insights. Top Thoughts for 2015*. Available from: http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-global-hospitality-insights-2015/$File/ey-global-hospitality-insights-2015.pdf

Feldmeth, J. & M. Rocha, (2015). Strategy:The evolving M&A, and architecture build for speed. Available from: http://interbrand.com/views/strategy-the-evolving-ma-and-architecture-built-for-speed/

Gallo, P.J. (1974). *Ethnic alienation: The Italian-Americans*. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Gaughan, P.A. (2015). *Mergers, Acquisitions, and Corporate Restructuring.* 6th edition. New Jersey: Wiley & Sons.

Grotenhuis, F.D.J. (2009).Mergers and Acquisitions in Japan: Lessons from a Dutch-Japanese Case Study. *Gobal business and Organizational Excellence. March/April 2009, 45 - 54.*

Habeck, M.M., Kröger, F. & Träm, M.R. (2000). *After the merger: Seven strategies for successful post-merger integration.* Great Britain: Prentice Hall.

Hackman, J.R. & Wageman, R. (2005). A theory of team coaching. *Academy of Management Review*. 30(2):269-287.

Hanekom, D. (2016). Tourism Dept Budget Vote 2015/16 speech.

Harding, D. & Rouse, T. (April 2007). Human due diligence. *Harvard Business Review*, pages 124-131.

Hartzenberg, T. (2002). *2002 Annual Forum: Competition Policy in SADC*. Available from: http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.517.8207&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Hitt, M.A., King, D., Krishnan, H, Makri, M. & Schijven, M. (2012). *Creating Value through Mergers and Acquisitions: Challenges and Opportunities.* The Handbook of Mergers and Acquisitions. Eds. Faulkner, D & Joseph, R.J. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Hubbard, N. (1999). *Acquisition: Strategy and implementation*. London: Macmillan.

Johnson, H. & Drake, H. (2000). *Enhancing business performance through corporate coaching.* Available from: http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/Resource.

Kauffman, C. (2006). *Positive Psychology: The Science at the heart of coaching.* Chapter 8, 219 - 253. Eds. Strober, D.R. & Grant, A.M. Evidence Based Coaching Handbook: Putting Best Practices to Work for Your Clients. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Kombarakaran, F.A., Yang, J.A., Baker, M.N. & Fernandes, P.B. (2008). EXECUTIVE COACHING: IT WORKS! Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60 (1), 78–90.

Kotter, J.P. & Schlesinger, L.A. (July/August 2008). Choosing strategies for change*. Harvard Business Review*, pages 130-139.

Kummer, C. & Steger, U. (2008). Why merger and acquisitions (M&As) waves reoccur: The vicious cycle from pressure to failure. *Strategic Management Review,* 2(1):44-63.

Linde, B. & Schalk, R. (2008). Influence of pre-merger employment relations and individual characteristics on the psychological contract. *South African Journal of Psychology,* 38(2):305-230.

Mail and Guardian (2010). Merger creates major SA gaming, Hotel Company. 18 February 2010.http://mg.co.za/article/2010-02-18-merger-creates-major-sa-gaming-hotel-company.

Mankins, M.C. & Steele, R. (July/August 2005). Turning great strategy into great performance. *Harvard Business Review*, July/November 2005: 65 – 72.

Maurer, R. (1996). *Beyond the wall of existence: Unconventional strategies that build support for change.* Austin, Texas: Bard Books.

Mellish, L.E. (1998). *A case study of appreciative inquiry in an Australian university*. Available from: http://www.mellish.com.au/Resources/appinquastuni.htm.

Mitchell, A. & Hill, S. (Autumn 2004). The great M&A gamble. *The Astridge Journal*, pages 23-31. Available on: http://www.ashridge.org.uk. (Accessed on 1 May 2009).

Mills, A. & Smith, J. (2008). How to be happy by calling for change: Constructs of happiness and meaningfulness amongst social movement activists. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(3):432-455. Available from: http://www.nova.evu/ssss/QR/QR13-3/mills.pdf. (Accessed 2 November 2008).

Mizruchi, E.H. (1964). *Success and opportunity, a study of anomie.* New York: Free Press.

Morosini, P. & Steger, U. (Editors). (2004). *Managing complex mergers: Real world lessons in implementing successful cross-cultural mergers and acquisitions*. London: Prentice Hall.

Msoni, D. (5 March 2006). Fusion of personal goals with company aims delivers profits. *City Press, Business Tim*es, 2.

Nickson, D. (2013). Human Resource Management for Hospitality, Tourism and Events. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

O'Reilly III, C.A. & Pheffer, J. (2000). *Hidden value: How great companies achieve extraordinary results with ordinary people.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Pfeffer, J. & Sutton, R.I. (2000). *The knowing-doing gap: How smart companies turn knowledge into action.* Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press.

Plunkett, W.R. & Attner, R.F. (1997). *Management: meeting and exceeding customer expectations.* 6th edition. Cincinnati, Ohio: South Western College.

Ricketts, M.W. & Willis, J.E. (2001). *Experiential AI: A practitioners guide to integrating appreciative inquiry with experiential learning*. Ohio: Taos.

Risberg, A. (1997). Ambiguity and communication in cross-cultural acquisitions: Towards a conceptual framework. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 18(5):257-266.

Rogerson, J.M. (2014). Unpacking the Growth of Hotel Chains in Africa. Enterprises and Patterns. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences,* 5(14):135-146. *Available online: DOI:10* 5901/mjss.2014.v5n14p135.

Sanchez, D. (2016). Marriot expands into Botswana, Rebrands Protea Hotel. Available from: http://afkinsider.com/127744/marriott-expands-into-botswana-rebrands-protea-hotels/

Schwab, K. (2013). The global competitiveness report: 2013 – 2014. Geneva: World Economic Forum. Available from: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalCompetitivenessReport_2013-14.pdf

Schweiger, D.M. (2002). *M&A integration. A framework for executives and managers.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R., Roth, G. & Smith, B. (1999). *The dance of change: The challenge of sustaining momentum in learning organizations*. London: Nicholas Brealey.

Sherman, A.J. (1998). *Mergers and acquisitions from A to Z.* New York: Amacon.

Sherman, S. & Freas, A. (November 2004). The wild west of executive coaching. *Harvard Business Review*, pages 82-90.

Skiffington, S. & Zeus, P. (2003). *Behavioral coaching: How to build sustainable personal and organizational strength.* Sydney: McGraw-Hill.

Slattery, P. (2002). Finding the Hospitality Industry. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education,* 1(1): 19-28.

Srivastva, S., Cooperrider, D.L. & Associates. (1990). P*ositive image, positive action of organizing.* Available from: http://www.appreciative-inquiry.org/Pos-ima.htm.

Stavros, J. & Hinrichs. (2009). *The Thin Book of SOAR: Building Strengths-based Strategy.* Thin Book Publishing Co.

Thatchenkery, T. (2004). Paradox and organizational change: The transformative power of hermeneutic appreciation. In *Advances in appreciative inquiry, Volume 1: Constructive discourse and human organizations.* Edited by Cooperrider, D.L. & Avital, M. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Thayser, D. (Editor). (2007). *Mergers and acquisitions: A review of activity for the year 2006.* Johannesburg: Ernst & Young.

Trautwein, F. (1990). Merger motives and merger prescriptions. *Strat. Mgmt. J.*, 11:283-295. Doi: 10.1002/smj.4250110404. Why Most M&A Deals End Up Badly. Shaun Rein, 2009. Forbes.com

Visagie, R.G. (2002). *Stories of merger and acquisition change: A team-based approach in promotion of mental health*. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University.

Visagie, R.G. (2009). *Appreciative Merger and Acquisition team coaching programme to facilitate managers' mental health in a cross-cultural context.* Doctor Curationis. University of Johannesburg: South Africa. Retrieved from: https://ujdigispace.uj.ac.za.

Whitmore, J. (2009). Coaching for performance: GROWing human potential and purpose. The principles and practice of coaching and leadership. London: Nicholas Brealey.

Whitney, D. & Trosten-Bloom, A. (2010). *The power of appreciative inquiry: A practical guide to positive change.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

World Economic Forum. (2015). The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2015: Growth through Shocks. Accessible from:
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/TT15/WEF_Global_Travel&Tourism_Report_2015.pdf

Zeus, P. & Skiffington, S. (2002). *The coaching at work toolkit. A complete guide to techniques and practices.* Sydney: McGraw-Hill.