



## Foundation for Leveraging Organizational Workstreams

### Underlying concept

Regardless of the size, complexity, or nature of the deal, or the planning or administrative and managerial techniques used to move the initiative along, the bedrock foundation of successfully executing an enterprise-to-enterprise M&A transaction reduces to a single concept:

### *timely exchange of mission critical data*

You already know this - without meaningful data exchange, nothing happens.

Accordingly, the CRISP™ Method is based on the following foundational assumptions:

1. Individual action
  - a. It is the sum of individual efforts producing, exchanging and using mission critical data that determine whether the execution of an initiative exceeds, meets or fails to meet expectations.
2. Known data
  - a. For most individuals, the mission critical data and information they need to do their part is limited and known well in advance of it being actually being needed.
3. Known process sets
  - a. Process sets (what to do to achieve a result, like onboard an employee) at the macro level are well known, as are processes at the mid and micro levels, by at least one SME in any Party.
4. Self-inflicted noise
  - a. Most delays and confusion are caused unintentionally by the presence of noise created by existing practices or the lack thereof.

Here's the detail behind each assumption and how CRISP™ addresses them.

#### Individual action

While teams or workgroups may be involved in the creation of any work product, a single person, an individual contributor in HR-speak, is ultimately responsible for delivery. This is not to suggest that team or group strategizing, planning or problem solving, in all its various forms, is not necessary. Quite the contrary.

What isn't necessary is to burden individuals with scores of disparate requirement gathering meetings, repeated status collection processes or unanticipated interruptions. Since most contributors are not just working on the initiative but are doing their "day jobs" as well, any time they are forced to stop what they are doing and spend time on unnecessary activities automatically degrades their efficiency and performance, and not just for the initiative.

There is neuroscience<sup>1</sup> to back up the positive effects of curtailing the forced participation and multi-tasking often present in M&A transactions. And that by doing so can improve the timely exchange of mission critical data.



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Through simply designed protocols and artifacts, CRISP™ minimizes distractions by ensuring the individuals who need mission critical data and the people responsible for delivering that data are in agreement as to when, where, and what will be delivered.

### Known data

Experience (and common sense) show there is a high probability that most of the mission critical data already exists in various forms and locations. At the highest level, the terms and conditions contained within a P&S dictate both high-level data points (key dates, personnel, etc.) and often granular items (asset transfers, individual services, etc.).

But determining precisely what mission critical data is, even though it is easy to do, is often downplayed or ignored. Many longstanding M&A management practices focus on generic tasks and not critical data, even though there's an easy test to identify it.

Here's the test: if someone can't do their job in the service of the initiative because they don't have the data they need, that's mission critical. Reinforcing this notion is the fact that after decades of direct and indirect feedback from initiative performers, the number one reason given for delivery issues is SMEs not getting what they need from people outside their Work-streams (cross-functional/cross-entity - CF/CE) when they need it.

While most folks working in this space experience complaints from the technology group that the "business" doesn't get them what they need when they need it, the fact is the same scenario plays out between Operations and HR, Finance and Risk, and all other Work-stream and Party combinations. The *lack* of timely exchange of mission critical data can be pervasive and inefficient.

The design of CRISP™ addresses this problem head-on by focusing on only the CF/CE data/information. All other data is confined within its respective Work-stream. Not only does this keep the focus on what's important, it also reduces noise, the last assumption.

### Known process sets

Think about some obvious processes that are crucial to the success of any M&A initiative. There are many but let's take getting people paid as an example. And we'll use an acquisition transaction as the context to support this explanation.

In most organizations, the individual steps and associated data to pay people are well established. HR has its role, as does IT, Finance, etc., first to determine who is getting paid, then how much and in what way, then ... you get the picture. Everything related to processing payroll is already known, and is practiced over and over again by the SMEs handling payroll.

What's not known, in this example, is who exactly the new employees are and their particulars. Data, that is absolutely known, just not by those who will need it. Process often interferes with the timely exchange of mission critical data.



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CRISP™ efficiently elicits the corresponding CF/CE deliverables through focused ceremonies and makes them available to whoever needs them in easy to use Key Artifacts. So whether the Work-stream is Finance (like the Treasury group setting up bank accounts) or IT (charged with establishing email and network accounts), CRISP™ leverages existing and familiar processes by making sure contributors get the data they need, when they need it.

### Self-inflicted noise

Noise is present in all initiatives in a variety of ways. Regardless of the cause: convoluted, voluminous and repetitive emails, non-relevant meetings or recurring interruptions, it is almost always a product of organizational behavior embedded in the way Work-stream processes and policies are defined and followed (or not).

Sometimes the noise doesn't really seem that bad, especially from an individual's perspective. That's because internal Work-stream-related noise is often tamped-down or worked around by the SMEs who encounter it every day. They are used to it and know how to block or ignore it. But in the context of a transaction, and viewed from the initiative-level, the level of noise can be serious.

Arguably, the noise with the greatest impact on any transaction is the noise that occurs where CF/CE communication is concerned. When noise comes from outside your Work-stream or Entity there are few opportunities to ignore or work around it. And lots of opportunities for delay coming from miscommunication.

In this context, remember that noise also comes in the form of interruptions. This is often caused by the search for missing information. Think of the chain of disruption as people try to locate a piece of data: emails, phone calls, instant messaging all taking effort to send and respond to. What makes matters worse is that more often than not, the data is known and available far in advance of when the search begins, as mentioned above. Noise impedes the timely exchange of mission critical data and must be mitigated to avoid undesired outcomes.

The CRISP™ Method reduces all variations of this noise by replacing chaotic, disjointed or scattered data collection and distribution behavior with predictable and focused protocols and artifacts.