

# The informatology Forum

## *Raid*



Published: 02/02/2009

**Host: ABN AMRO**

**Raid: Integration Training  
on Tue 20 January 2009 in London**

## The Raiders said...

The participants at the ABN AMRO Company Raid from Clifford Chance, E2V Technologies, Kent County Council, KPMG, the LSC and Mellibank described the event as...

**Discussion Based; Engaging; Eye Opening; Fun; Informative; Inspiring; Interesting; Knowledge Sharing; Networking; Thought-Provoking and Useful**

They also said that

The number attending was good; Others are in a similar position; Sharing is good; An excellent session in the afternoon: directly appropriate/relevant to the integration process; The group discussion worked well; It was a good opportunity to network and hear others' perspectives; and It was good to share thoughts and ideas.

## Ten Key Points

a selection of suggestions and ideas from the hosts and raiders

### 1. Integration means different things to different people

Even though the banks involved have many experts with good experience, it has still proven difficult especially because this was a consortium and not a single company takeover. Therefore each consortium member will have a different expectation, methodology and strategy. It has certainly not been as straightforward as perhaps been anticipated at the outset.

### 2. The importance of focusing on the people

The banks did an excellent job of promoting the acquisition positively. Prominent branding does not in itself make a transformation; getting the logos right is only one step. More effort has to be invested in the people or the consequences are that people will not feel secure. People ultimately want to know what their role is in the future organisation, not just in the current or transitional phases.

### 3. Other key characteristics of a successful integration

It is important to have a clear idea of who in the new company owns integration and receive consistent communication. A strong supportive team mentality is vital to help staff through the stresses of any merger. This can be especially helpful when, as in this case, there is a negative publicity surrounding the merger and is combined with the economic situation. Business buy-in at the top, with results delivered through HR, is vital.

#### **4. The importance of being listened to**

The day of the Company Raid was also the day of President Obama's inauguration. Millions turned out in Washington to witness the occasion, inspired amongst other things by the election of a leader who seems willing to listen. Leaders in organisations going through a period of change could learn a great deal from this.

#### **5. Successful strategies**

Setting up an Employee Business Forum where employees express ideas through to leadership can play a key part in a successful strategy. Employees really must have the opportunity to be heard, and the medium to feel that they are being listened to, and to have influence. In another situation where two companies merged, employees were asked what their key values were in a short-term worldwide jam/blog. It generated a very healthy 65% response. This was a practical demonstration for all involved of how the people form the company and the community.

#### **6. A Psychological Contract**

A psychological contract would have been very helpful in this case. According to Wikipedia, this represents the mutual beliefs, perceptions, and informal obligations between an employer and an employee. It sets the dynamics for the relationship and defines the detailed practicality of the work to be done. It is distinguishable from the formal written contract of employment which, for the most part, only identifies mutual duties and responsibilities.

#### **7. The importance of being clear at the start**

Often a relationship can falter because of something not communicated at the outset. It is important for both/all sides to know what's in it for them, and what action could "break the deal". If this is not done at the beginning of a merger, fault lines can form early in the process.

#### **8. It's more about *unlearning* than about learning**

Learning is easy but unlearning is hard, and organisations with different cultures find it hard to unlearn. There is a tendency to undervalue experimentation. A successful merger is one that genuinely values difference. Co-petition rather than Competition.

#### **9. Values and commitment**

How important is it that the organisation has clearly stated values and/or principles? If they have a positive impact, how long does this last? How important is it that people dedicate heart and soul to the organisation, so that if you cut them they bleed the company?

#### **10. The importance of understanding oneself and others**

A group of habits, attitudes and patterns of behaviour has been identified which appear to be common denominators of high levels of success and achievement in all walks of life. A simple exercise can be introduced (the Pace Palette) to help people better understand just what makes them tick, and how other people react differently to the same situations. This can create tolerance and understanding.

## What is a Raid?

On a Raid you actually visit another organisation and learn direct from their L&D managers about an innovative and successful (possibly ongoing) project.

Each Raid addresses an issue, giving you unique insight into why the host is doing what they are doing, how they are doing it and what they have learned.

The Raid is a whole-day living case study, and is a most effective learning experience because...

### - Warts & All -

You gain real insight through the open sharing of what has not worked, alongside explanations of how the host is being successful.

### - Group Participation -

What sets a Raid alight is the group dialogue, where the gathered L&D managers from different sectors share their rich experience and insightful feedback.

### - Real Experience -

You benefit from the real-world knowledge and hard earned experience of all present, a unique group of individuals facing challenges similar to yours.

## Previous Raiders have said...

"The free and open discussion was very useful. It was reassuring to see others taking a similar approach to ours."

Competence Management Project Leader, **Bosch**

"This Raid was an eye-opener.

Most useful was how the host has implemented. There are many lessons here for how we operate in my organisation."

L&D Manager, **British Geological Survey**

"The 'warts & all' approach worked well, as did the open discussions and sharing of ideas."

E-Learning Manager, **Cheshire Constabulary**

"The group discussion worked extremely well, and with the right number of people."

E-Learning Adviser, **FCO**

"The host sharing the process, pitfalls and examples was invaluable.

Thank you."

Organisational Development Manager, **Indesit**

## Question

**Why do many acquisitions fail to add value?**

## Answer

**Largely because of poor integration**

## About the Host



ABNAMRO is a Netherlands based Bank dating back to 1892. Headquartered in Amsterdam it is proud of its heritage and employs circa 101,000 people in 53 countries with a truly global presence. It is known as a consensus bank with the mottos “One Bank - no Boundaries” and “Making More Possible”.

In 2007 ABNAMRO was the subject of a much publicised takeover with the successful owners deriving from a Consortium comprising RBS, Fortis and Santander. This is the foundation for today’s “Integration Training” Raid.

## RBS

Tracing its roots back to 1727 the Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS) has grown from being a leading Scottish bank to a major international group, acquiring many high quality businesses.

Headquartered at Edinburgh it employs circa 135,000 people in over 4,000 branches in thirty countries. Its mantra is “Make it Happen”.

## Fortis

Originating in 1720 Fortis has become one of the most successful financial institutions in Europe, growing from a Benelux base. It provides banking and insurance services to personal, business and institutional customers.

Fortis employs circa 57,000 people in 1,800 branches in 50 countries.

## Santander

Santander is an international group headquartered in Spain. Its life began on 15 May 1857, when Queen Isabel II signed a royal decree authorising the incorporation of the founding. It combines a solid local presence with strong global capabilities in retail and wholesale banking, asset management and insurance.

Santander employs circa 130,000 people in over 11,000 branches, in 40 countries. With around 12,000 members of staff and a budget of almost £900 million, they were set up under the Environment Act 1995.

## About the Raid

The focus for an acquisition must be to achieve the value of the potential business combination which motivated the transaction in the first place. So why does it seem so hard to realise this value after a deal is struck?

There are two often reported problems:

The first is the danger of losing focus on the value drivers which led to the deal at the outset.

The second is poor people management that can result from the struggle to combine two different cultures.

These problems are often compounded by a disconnect between the post-acquisition integration team and the original deal team; they often have two completely different agendas!

The ABN AMRO team uses an employee profiling solution to eliminate these complexities and to arrive at synergies. Their aim is to make it versatile and easy to use, and to share the output.

This is the focus for this Raid.

## The Agenda for the Raid

**10:00 arrival for a 10:30 start**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

An overview of the acquisition

### **The Acquisition Challenge**

Adding value, the original drivers, people management, disconnect between deal and integration teams

### **The Integration Process**

What does it mean? Who does it affect? Why do it? Who owns it? When should it start?

### **Buffet Lunch**

### **“Why People React as they do”**

The role of Values & Beliefs, Communication & Filters, the Inner Boss, Them vs Us or Them *and* Us, Choices, Journey

### **"How People React Differently"**

Curious about why you and others do things the way you do? The PACE Palette classifies an individual's temperament preference on how he or she approaches life. Four core temperaments are identified through a combination of colours - a simple diagnostic approach.

### **Impact**

How the integration training is working. Plans for the future

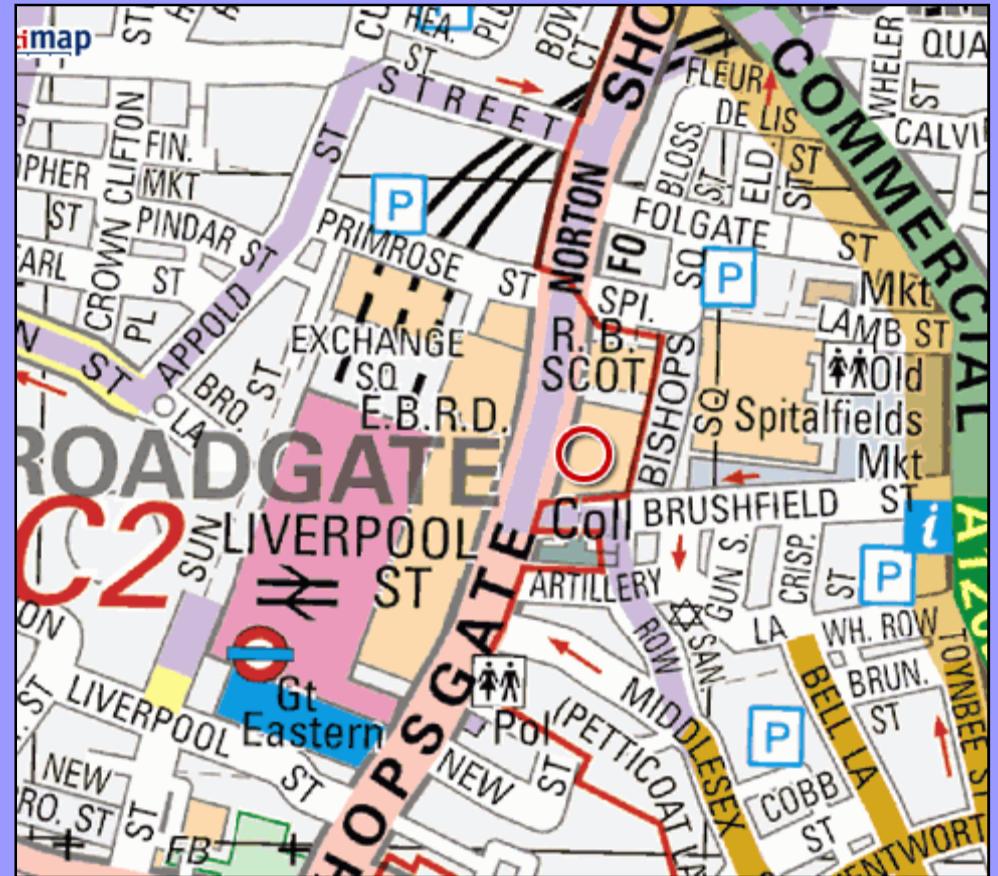
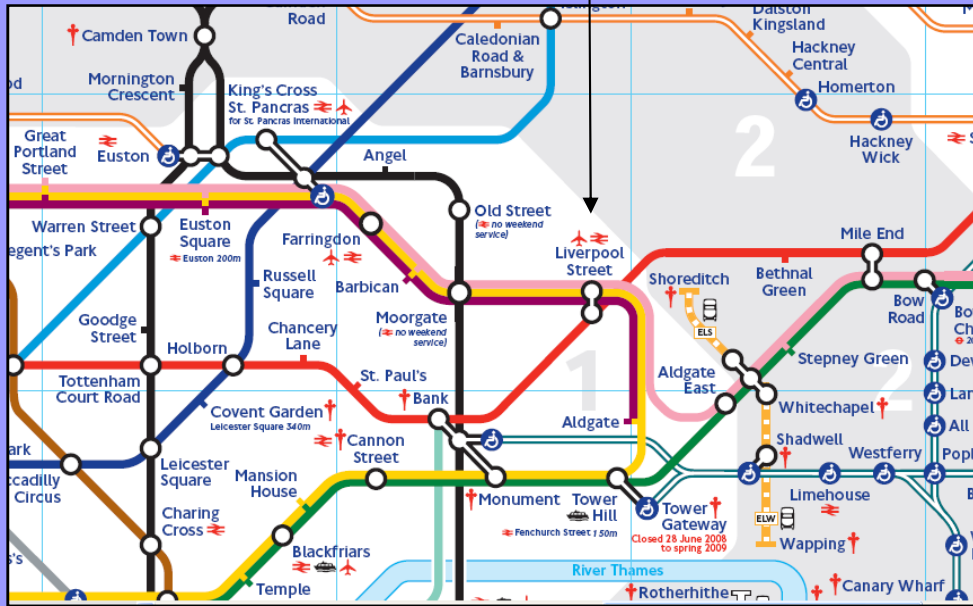
### **Summary and Feedback**

Outstanding questions and views

**16:30 end**

# The Venue

The Raid takes place at RBS  
250 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4AA



## Fees

1. If you have recently\* attended or are booked on an informatology conference or raid:-

- one place @ £400 [£470 with VAT]
- two places @ £800 [£940]
- a Forum Pack\*\* @ £1,200 [£1,410]

\* within the last 30 days

2. If you have **not** recently\* attended and are **not** booked on an informatology conference or raid:-

- one place @ £595 [£699.13]  
Early Bird: Book by 20 Oct @ £545.
- two places @ £995 [£1,169.13]  
Early Bird: Book by 20 Oct @ £945.
- a Forum Pack\*\* @ £1,395 [£1,639.13]

\*\* The Forum Pack is four tickets.

Tickets may be shared across your contacts, and applied to any Forum conference day or raid, subject to terms and availability. Call 020 8642 3980 for details.

This raid is considered most suitable for people responsible for Acquisitions & Mergers; Change; HR and/or L&D. It is not open to participants from training vendor companies. Places are allocated on a first-booked basis, and are subject to acceptance by the host. There is a limited availability of places on this raid.

Call 020 642 3980 to check availability.

To reserve your place email your participant details (name, job title, company, email, phone) and details for our invoice (address, p/o if needed, + are you paying by cheque, transfer or card) to [services@informatology.com](mailto:services@informatology.com)

Or book online by card at [www.informatology.com/raid-abn.htm](http://www.informatology.com/raid-abn.htm)

## The Raids Program

This Raid is one of a series of exciting, challenging and engaging experiential events arranged by the informatology Forum.

Raids offer unique insight gleaned direct from the hard-earned experience of practitioners that have discovered what works well and what does not. Candid “warts and all” living case studies with open interaction between informed peers.

### Would you like to host a Raid?

Contact Stephen Citron on 020 8642 3980 or at [stephen.citron@informatology.com](mailto:stephen.citron@informatology.com) to discuss.

All Raids listed at: [www.informatology.com](http://www.informatology.com), click on *Forum* and select [conferences/raids]

Further information about Raids is at...

[www.informatology.com/forum/informatology-Forum-Raids.pdf](http://www.informatology.com/forum/informatology-Forum-Raids.pdf)

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