

Professionals in Transcultural Relationship Management

About JPB

- Founded in 1984
- Client profile: corporations with important cross-cultural interfaces - joint-ventures, subsidiaries, key clients, suppliers
- Expertise and services: MENTAL MERGER® process, consulting projects, tandem and team building, individual coaching, transcultural training
- Head office in France: Fontainebleau, Paris with privately owned teambuilding-centre: "La Feuilleraie"
- Consulting staff: trained coaches with international management experience, important partner network
- Experience: more than 12.000 managers & engineers in 30 industrial sectors
- Projects: Air Liquide, Framatome, Siemens, Matra, Valeo, EADS, Elf Atofina, Dassault, Merck, Thales, etc...

It seems so easy... unsuspected nightmares in cross-cultural interfaces

- Implicit assumptions on many management concepts: incompatibility
- Strategy and goals: realistic, feasible, consistent vs. global, flexible, ambitious
- Future: controllable if planned vs. unpredictable, requiring stress management
- Procedures and rules: logical adherence vs. flexible framework
- Key attribute of success: competency vs. political manoeuvring
- Interpretation of the other party's usual cultural management style: aggression

In which situations can JPB be useful?

- Preparation and integration in mergers and acquisitions
- Change management
- Crisis prevention and crisis management
- Remote project management
- New assignments for individual managers

How does JPB attain the client's goals?

- **Mediator:** understand and respect the other's culture
- **Catalyst:** handle human "soft issues" beyond the politically correct "hard issues"
- **Trust builder:** identify and cure "emotional viruses" which pollute mental focus
- **Optimiser:** benefit from the extra potential created by liberating trans-cultural value

Which methods does JPB use?

- Pragmatic and common sense processes
- Integration of proven elements from different coaching approaches and experiences
- Reliance on cultural differences to obtain permission to deal with "soft issues"

JPB's philosophy

"If you differ from me, far from hurting me, you enrich me."
(Antoine de Saint-Exupéry)

The JPB MENTAL MERGER® Process

General context

In times of growing globalisation, corporations are faced with a triple challenge:

1. **Succeed in establishing the co-operation between business units** and deal with the different objectives and ambitions of the counterparts
2. **Organise** projects based in **remote** facilities in different countries
3. **Overcome misunderstandings** due to **cultural differences**.

When business units in the same country have to work together, their success depends on the manager's skills in defining business objectives, compatible with the goals of both units, along with managing the hidden human agenda (power struggle and personal affinities). This management task is highly demanding, because the so called "emotional viruses" poison the relationship and generate a climate of mistrust.

When two or more different countries are involved, the complexity is increased significantly: the long-established, often unconscious mechanisms of interpreting other people's behaviour break down due to cultural differences in the value systems and the meaning of messages. This adds a new dimension to the process: misperceptions and misinterpretations of the intentions of the other party can lead to frustration, suspicion and mistrust. As a result, the "soft" issues of human behaviour, i.e. the ability to identify and treat the emotional viruses, become a key factor for the make-or-break of a co-operation.

JPB's approach

With over 20 years experience acquired in trans-cultural management, JPB has devised a unique approach to address this challenge: the MENTAL MERGER® Process. Benefiting from a profound understanding of intercultural differences in education, values and business traditions – along with its consequences on work methods and motivation – the MENTAL MERGER® Process provides clients with a speedy and effective method to overcome the hurdles of cultural misunderstandings and mistrust. In addition, JPB creates extra value from cultural differences by identifying common and complimentary characteristics.

The principal objective in the MENTAL MERGER® Process is to get the key players of an organisation to merge mentally by setting up a realistic basis of trust. Like a top athlete, who can only win thanks to a strong mental attitude, unaffected by emotional viruses (fears, doubts, etc.), corporations need executives and key-players to proceed confidently in their ability to reach common and ambitious goals.

In addition, the MENTAL MERGER® Process integrates hard issues, such as the definition of compatible business objectives, with an emphasis on the soft issues, whether they originate in general human character or whether they stem from cultural differences.

Each use of this method is tailor-made to handle the specific needs of the client's situation.

Attained results

The results of a successful MENTAL MERGER® process are:

- Agreement on business objectives, compatible with the goals of each unit and the personal goals of the managers involved
- Understanding, respect and acceptance of different work methods and processes
- Assessment of complimentary skills and competencies and their optimal utilisation for the agreed target
- Treatment of historical liabilities resulting from misunderstandings and misperceptions. Establishing mutual trust for handling future sources of dysfunction.

JPB's method

JPB's "MENTAL MERGER®" process consists in a three-step approach to reach this goal:

1. "Syndrome": Where is the real problem?

In this phase, JPB works with the client's executives and key-players to identify the client's specific needs, the scope of incompatibility of existing business and personal objectives, and the perception of the other party's intentions. On completing this phase, the types of solutions needed are then visible. JPB is accepted by both parties as a neutral mediator and understanding of the other party has been created.

2. "Syntony": How do we solve it?

In this stage, JPB helps the client to clear up past misunderstandings. Then, understanding of the other party is turned into accepting the other's strengths and limitations. We therefore bring key players together in a special environment and create the necessary basis for mutual trust by organising mono-cultural seminars followed by common workshops and open space conferences.

The potential for finding solutions within the team's resources is liberated. The common problem-solving process creates a spirit of trust and true co-operation.

3. "Synergy": How do we implement it?

JPB now helps the client to implement the solutions and to perpetuate the achievements of the MENTAL MERGER® process. JPB puts in place a **co-operation monitoring body**, **MENTAL MERGER® indicators**, and **coaches** the key players and key-tandems.

JPB's key-contributions to a successful Mental Merger®

1. GAINING THE TRUST OF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED

JPB knows from experience how to make sure that it is perceived as a **neutral, non-biased mediator**

2. GETTING THE COMMITMENT FROM TOP MANAGEMENT

JPB's approach requires the commitment from top management to support the MENTAL MERGER® process by demonstrating personal involvement with a **"top-down" approach**.

3. GOING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

JPB's Mental Merger® process **does not tolerate a superficial treatment** of hidden "emotional viruses" in politically correct discussions.

4. LIBERATING THE SOLUTIONS FROM WITHIN

The best consultants cannot produce solutions as sustainable as the ones found within the organisation. JPB's role is to **free the internal problem-solving potential** across hierarchical levels.

5. MOTIVATING KEY-PEOPLE TO REACH THE TIPPING POINT OF 7%

Experience shows that the tipping point for an effective MENTAL MERGER® is 7% of positively minded people. This means that only 7% of the people concerned are needed as **a catalyst** to make a co-operation work. JPB's implication is to identify the potential key-people and their personal motivation for supporting the co-operation.

6. KEEPING UP THE MOMENTUM

JPB helps those key-people to keep up their motivation: **strategic tandems, internal relationship monitoring body** and **networking** enables them to grow from their role as a catalyst into a **permanent in-house interface**.