

Dispositional Antecedents to Post- Acquisition Employee Commitment

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(Abstract)

This study explores the influence of employee perception of acquisition success and the dispositional antecedents of positive affect and adaptive coping on employee-organization commitment during the 60-day period following a business acquisition. Allen & Meyer's affective, normative and continuance model of commitment was used for the dependent variables. A single sample was analyzed using a hierarchical regression approach. The survey was conducted with TRW's GIT Division, and included 51 employees who participated in three web-based surveys. The surveys were administered at (a) the change of control date, (b) 30 days, and (c) 60 days after the change of control date. Through a full-model regression, the combined dispositional and demographic variables were found to have a significant impact on the three components of employee-organization commitment. Specifically, the dispositional attribute of positive affect had a statistically significant predictive relationship to affective and normative commitment. Employee perception of acquisition success was found to have limited influence only on affective commitment, and finally, company service was determined to have a small predictive value for continuance commitment. The changing nature of the relationships between the independent variables and the dependents over time led to the conclusion that the employee sample was experiencing several symptoms of merger syndrome during the initial post-acquisition time period. As a single case, the study cannot be considered conclusive, however, the study does provide insights into the changing nature of employee-organization commitment during a specific time of organizational change. Research into additional dispositional antecedents to employee commitment is suggested, as well as further research on employee commitment after the initial 60-day post-acquisition integration period.