



## PMI in times of pandemic

As we learn to live with Covid, now is a good time to reflect on the impact the pandemic has had, and will continue to have, on the way we work.

If someone had told me in 2019 that we would successfully drive a global post-merger integration to completion almost 100% remotely, I would probably have thought it was wishful thinking at best and more likely that it should be classified as 'Mission Impossible'. But, as with a lot of things in life, the best learning emerges from being proven wrong.

The objective of the project we managed from July 2019 until July 2021 was to support a global pharma client to merge its legal entities across the world with the entities from a recently acquired global competitor. The scope was nothing short of staggering, with legal entities in 44 countries spanning all continents and time zones and divided into six waves of integration. We deployed a team of 25 a-connect Independent Professionals with experience in pharma post-merger integrations and, as much as possible, from the countries where the client team was based. To support this team, we also had a dedicated a-connect PMO team comprising one partner and two project managers, complemented by our admin and legal staff.

In March 2020 when the pandemic hit, all our consultants and client team members had to start working from home and we thought the integration deadlines would be compromised. But rapidly we understood that we could achieve the deadlines working from home if we implemented a couple of measures to compensate for the distancing.

Firstly, the consultants had to increase the frequency of touch points with their direct clients. When you work from the office, consultant–client interactions happen naturally on a daily basis; however, in a remote situation, no one sees you or knows for sure what you are working on or how the work is progressing. This can generate some doubts and frustrations.

Secondly, since all the meetings and workshops involving large client teams would have to be done remotely, we shared some guidelines on how to run those more effectively. Should you be interested, you can find those guidelines [here](#).

In the end, the legal entities integration has been delivered with flying colors with almost no major issues or delays in all countries in scope. The significant team effort to deliver in the midst of the pandemic has also been recognized by our client CEO, who granted the program a well-deserved President Award for outstanding achievement.

Finally, while I hope that the pandemic will be a thing of the past soon, all the valuable learnings and found memories from this project will last much longer.

visit our website [www.a-connect.com](http://www.a-connect.com)