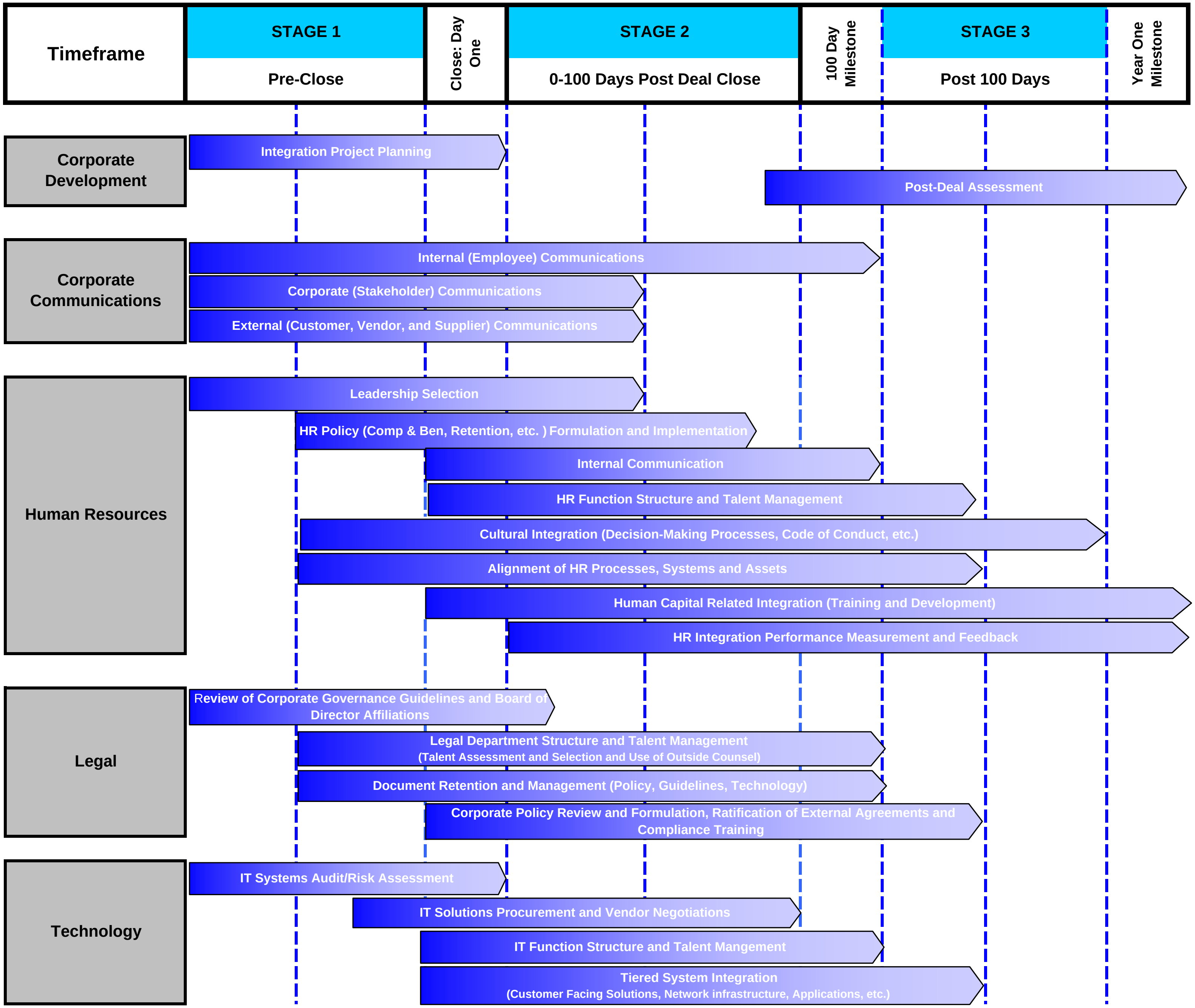
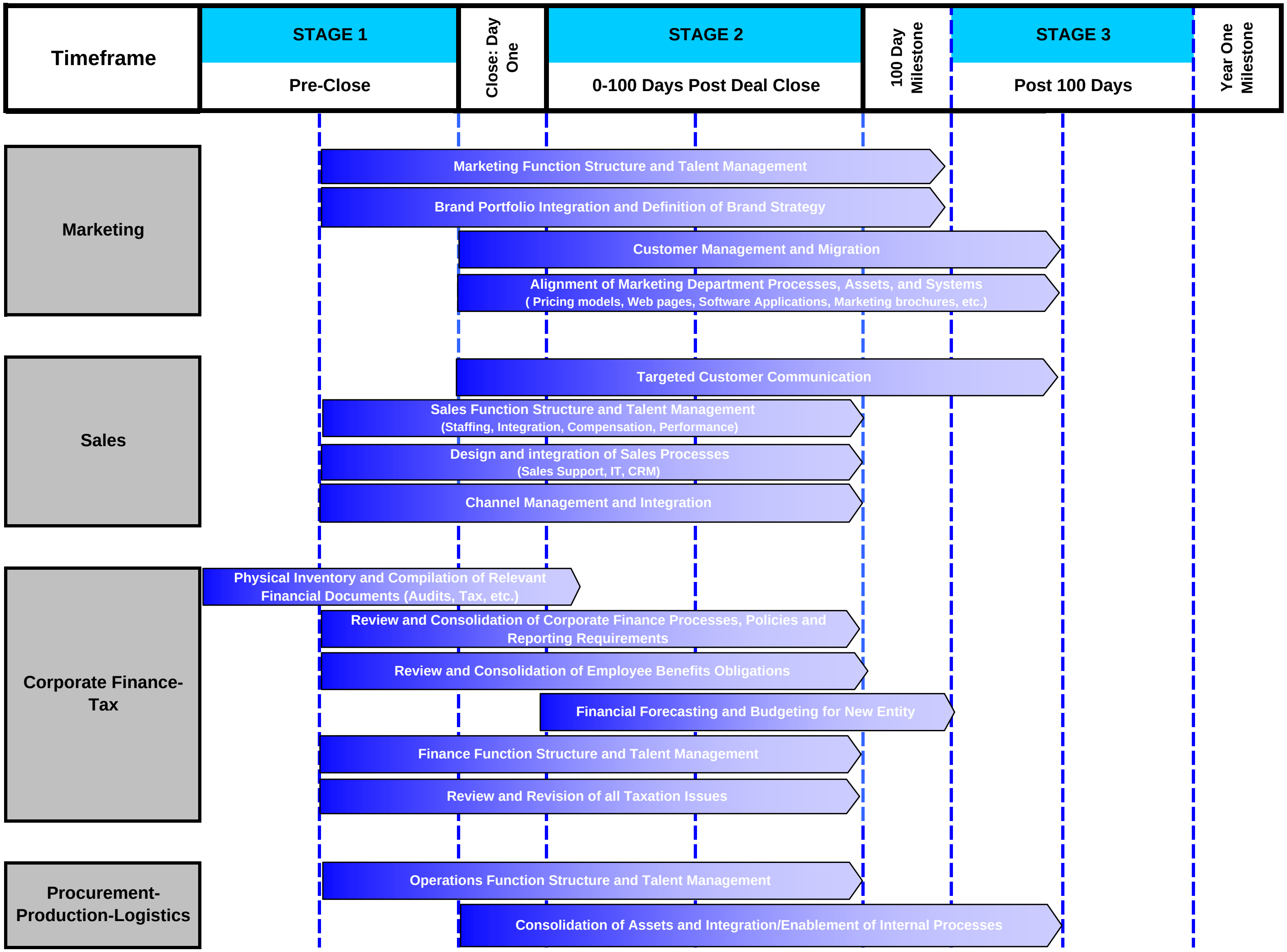
Successful acquirers take a long-term view and recognize that the cost of their investments in pre-close planning is minimal compared with the potential impact of failing to generate the desired level of return from the transaction. Outlined below are general guidelines that companies should adopt to ensure successful integration.

Guidelines for Pre-Close Acquisition Integration Planning	
Be Clear About Strategic Intent	Given that an acquisition is a tool to meet strategic objectives, a flawed strategy will inevitably lead to a failed acquisition. Ensure that the strategic rationale for the deal is translated into a shared vision (ideally with measurable targets) and communicated to all stakeholders.
	There should be clarity about which competency areas of acquired company need to protected and leveraged (be it management and employee expertise, access to customer base, production capability, etc) and to understand the priorities and risks associated with each.
Assess the Capabilities of the Top Management Team	Identify and involve the team who will be responsible for managing the new business, considering the role of the target company senior team in the future plans of the business.
	Decide any redundancy matters relating to the top team swiftly, while being cautious about making snap judgments about management
Determine Approach of Integration	Determine to what extent the acquired entity will be integrated as well as the style to be used to carry out the integration (This could be a directive approach requiring minimal involvement from the workforce or a facilitative approach that puts emphasis on managers/functional heads to find solutions). The decision on which approach to adopt may vary for different parts of the business (divisions, countries, functions) and is often based on the quality of the people, availability of resources, distance from customers, degree of risk, etc.
Involve The Right Team	Appoint an integration manger responsible for the entire integration process. The integration manager leads the integration process in four principal ways: expedite the process, create a structure for it, forge social connections between the two organizations, and help engineer quantifiable short-term success
	The Integration Manager (IM) should be one who thrives in complex situations, can relate to several levels of authority smoothly, and can bridge gaps in culture and perception. The IM could be a senior-line executive or a fast track high-potential (HIPO) employee with some traditional organizational strengths such as world-class project management skills, a deep understanding of the parent company, and enough clout to be effective
	Select a cross-functional team composed of individuals with M&A experience and operational management capabilities. The team should be employed full time, to enable them to give the acquisition integration implementation process their undivided attention.
Create the Integration Program Based on where Synergies with the Greatest Impact will be Derived	Build a plan to identify synergies beyond those originally envisaged and focus on those projects which will create the biggest impact, ensuring that the plan is underpinned and consistent with a common business vision/strategy
	Develop action plans setting out what should be done to realize those benefits, including allocating tasks, timings, responsibilities, milestones, and deliverables for the projects.
Address Cultural Issues	Assess cultural differences between the acquirer and the target; assessment should cover leadership style, management profile, organization structure, working practices, perceptions from the marketplace.
Develop a Communication Plan	Compose a communication plan for all external stakeholders and determine the timing of each communication message, noting that Day One communication is the most critical of all.
	The communication plan should also detail the process for cascading information through the organization, including decisions on the mix of one to one, group meetings and written communication and the content of each.

Guidelines for Post-Deal Close Acquisition Integration	
Ensure High Visibility of Directors and Executives	It is critical for executives to be actively involved in the integration. CEOs must lead from the front, appear approachable to new staff, and involve themselves directly in the merged company. The integration manager should be involved in securing senior executive participation.
Set New Directions for the New Business	The Senior Executive Team should agree on the strategy and vision for the new company and communicate it to the rest of the organization.
	The assumptions underlying the strategy should be tested and re-confirmed or redirected as necessary
	The strategy should be expediently operationalized to ensure all implementation plans are consistent with the overall mission
Create Momentum	Adopt a rigorous process to assess improvement opportunities against the vision for the business. As stakeholders will be looking for early signs of success, create a balance between achieving short-term wins and long-term benefits
Understand Timing and Scale of Synergies	Seek to confirm the critical integration activities/issues by assessing and identifying tasks that need to be completed immediately and those that can be completed at a later date to facilitate the capture of outlined synergies
Understand the Emotional, Political and Rational Issues Surrounding Integration	Identify all potential roadblocks by understanding the emotional, political and rational issues surrounding them, as many key decisions (which are influenced by political, emotional, financial and commercial factors) regarding the future of the business are made during the post-deal close 100-day period.
Maximize Involvement	Garner support for the change associated with the integration by maximizing employee involvement in the consultation process. While strong leadership is vital for successful integration, so is the need to cascade involvement in the process. By involving as many operational staff as possible in the development of ideas, the integration manager is able to harness energy, generate momentum, and identify problem areas early
	The more complex the integration, the more resources are required to manage it, in terms of skill and working capital. The integration team should comprise of staff who have credibility and influence within the organization. Managers from both companies should be included in joint teams to encourage buy-in and ensure rigor and applicability of the integration process
Continue to Focus on Communication	Ongoing communication is critical to the success of the post-deal close 100 day period and subsequent implementations; share with employees the vision of the new company, the nature and progress of the integration project and anticipated benefits, outcomes and timescales for future decisions. Timely and honest announcement of all key decisions can help reduce anxiety and uncertainty
	Project a clear confident and consistent external image for the new business via customer facing staff, marketing material, customer account management and controlled media management.
Provide Clarity Around Roles and Decision Lines	Work quickly to decide on the new structure, confirm roles, and identify any skill gaps in order to retain key staff, reduce employee uncertainty, and minimize the period of stress which damages employee productivity.
	It is essential that a clear decision making process is established, founded on solid information and analysis. There should be transparency around the process, clarity about the new roles and prompt communication of decisions, facilitating the funneling of all key decisions through clear lines of authority and avoiding bottlenecks at the most senior level
Consider All Legal Issues	Identify all legislative constraints that may limit the speed at which the integration will progress, and incorporate the, into the integration plan; if left unaccounted for they may severely hamper the timetable for the realization of acquisition synergies
Manage the Handover for Implementation	It is critical to the success of the integration implementation that by the end of the 100-day period, the business/ product lines, functions and departments are taking on increasing responsibility for delivery, staff know their roles and continue to focus on customer and the new corporate image is clear to stakeholders



Key Activities Map



Key Activities Map

CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT			
As the activities of the first 100 days after the deal's close will likely have the greatest impact on the value created by the acquisition, integration planning should begin during the pre-close period. Additionally, the corporate development team should facilitate the development of frameworks/metrics for measuring the progress of the integration and for making any appropriate mid-course corrections to that plan.			
Task	**Stage**	**Principal Owner**	**Additional Team Members**
Integration Planning			
Determine the right integration team structure (number of staff with functional expertise, corporate versus line/business team members) and participant roles	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy
Select members of the acquisition transition board, comprised of staff who are familiar with the acquisition vision (individuals involved in the due diligence process, typically including the President, CFO, Legal, Business Development, Business Unit General Management, HR, and CIO)	1	Senior Executive Team	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Corporate Development
Establish an organizational vision for the new entity and outline strategic and tactical guidelines for execution	1	Senior Executive Team	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Corporate Development
Appoint an integration manger responsible for the entire integration process. The IM could be a senior-line executive or a fast track high-potential (HIPO) employee with some traditional organizational strengths such as world-class project management skills, a deep understanding of the parent company, and enough authority to be an effective leader	1	Senior Executive Team	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Corporate Development
Define the integration management governance structure	1	Senior Executive Team	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Corporate Development
Agree on integration principles and approach (partial or complete absorption)	1	Senior Executive Team	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Corporate Development
Define organizational model/design and governance--Determine how the two organizations will work together, whether new business units will be formed, where central headquarters will be located, and how it will be staffed	1	Senior Executive Team	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Corporate Development
Determine if the services of a consulting company are required (to provide integration project management) or whether all integration activities will be conducted in-house	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy
Outline integration processes, expectations, and deliverables	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy
Review the due diligence report, prioritize activities to be completed, establish short-and long-term goals, create a timeline for the integration process and a detailed integration plan for all activities and/or functions	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy
Obtain human, financial, and organizational support resources for the integration process and assign accountability for implementation	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy
Establish aggressive but viable targets with clearly defined deliverables (budgets, status reports, issues log)	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy
Ensure that the documents associated with the acquisition are safeguarded from unauthorized access	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Legal
Compile all documentation relating to the acquisition and store in a central repository to provide business units/functions with a centralized means of managing and disseminating information throughout the organization; this permits quick access to important materials, expedient oboarding of integration staff, and a sound hand-off to the integration manager	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Head of Legal
Develop initial synergy estimates and set synergy targets to facilitate periodic performance assessment	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Establish key metrics across critical stages of the transaction and track milestone movement over time	1	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Organize cross-company integration teams for all functions and/or activities, e.g. finance, marketing, purchasing, information systems, etc., establish key objectives of functional integration, and assign roles and responsibilities	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads
Designate specific tasks, milestones, and metrics to integration team members and functional leaders	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads
Transfer the integration plan to the line and respective functions for its implementation	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads
Track implementation of the integration plan	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads
Identify and resolve key issues as they arise; maintain an issues log to improve visibility into "red flags"	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads
Integrate synergy targets and plans into new budgeting and planning processes for the combined entity	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads

Task	Stage	Principal Owner	Additional Team Members
Post-Deal Assessment			
Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each critical business process	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Finance
Monitor progression of process integration against established KPIs	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Finance
Conduct a comprehensive proactive review of business controls within 30 days after the acquisition close	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Follow-up on issues identified in the preacquisition due diligence report for further review and action	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Assess whether short-term improvement opportunities (early signs of success) are consistent with the long-term vision of the business	2	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Conduct post-acquisition due diligence to gain full insight into the target business, facilitate early identification of problems, as well as more robust information to refine and implement integration plans	3	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Conduct an initial semi-annual control assessment to critically self-assess the adequacy of the new entity's internal controls	3	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Monitor success and track the achievement of synergies	3	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit
Test pre-deal assumptions and reconfirm or redirect the strategy and implementation plans as necessary	3	Head of Corporate Development	Head of Corporate Strategy, Business Unit Heads, Internal Audit