



**International  
Collaborative  
Leadership  
Institute**

www.ICLIInstitute.org



**Dedicated to Elevating..... the Course of History,  
the Destiny of Nations, and the Fate of People**

# WHITE PAPER

## **The Hidden Power of Integration**

### ***Transforming Organizations to Produce Quantum Jumps in Profits and Competitive Advantage***

*By Robert Porter Lynch*

***What skill do Alliance Professionals Possess that contributes most to their success?***

Hint: It's not their Mastery of Best Practices! That's #2.

It's their ability as Integrators.

What makes a great Integrator? How do you recognize them?

Knowing these answers unlocks leverageable success.

Alliance success requires managing strategies, systems, analytics, people, and innovation in a rapidly changing world.

### ***Role of the Integrator***

The most successful Alliance Professionals have one trait in common – they are excellent Integrators. They know how to turn technical talk into marketing talk. They cross functional and cultural barriers, cutting through red tape and bureaucracies.



In a world of increasing complexity, the role of the Integrator is far more imperative than ever before. Recent studies have shown that good integration in companies and alliances can produce 30-40% improvement in results.

However, while Integrators are fundamental to success, their work often is seemingly “invisible” and thus they seldom get credit for the critical work they do.

Integrators seldom know their unique mindset because what they do just comes “naturally.” They seldom realize their brains are “wired differently” from the norm.

HR Professionals don’t have much of a clue how to select great integrators, nor where they fit in organizations. It’s not just in alliances where they excel.

Perhaps it’s not surprising that the best integrators are not right out of college or grad school. They are more seasoned, and thus much wiser – wisdom is a core attribute of the Integrator.

Senior Execs need to learn how to identify the best prospective Integrators, and especially how to reinforce, foster, protect, reward, and promote them.

## ***Research Studies***

There is a significant amount of research that validates the value of integration. Here are a few examples:

- A 2018 study by Harvard Business Review found that companies that integrated their data and analytics functions were able to improve their decision-making by 50% and their profitability by 10%.
- A 2019 study by McKinsey & Company found that companies that integrated their IT and marketing functions were able to increase their customer satisfaction by 20% and their revenue growth by 15%.
- Another McKinsey study in 2019 found that “cross-functional operations transformations typically outperform their single-function counterparts by between 30 and 40 percent. Cross-functional transformations also reduce enterprise risk, enhance resiliency across the organization—especially helpful during the current period of economic volatility—and help businesses keep pace with lightning-quick changes in the competitive and macroeconomic landscapes.”
- A 2020 study by Deloitte found that companies that integrated their supply chain and manufacturing functions were able to reduce their costs by 10% and improve their customer satisfaction by 15%.

These studies show that integration can have a significant positive impact on a company's bottom line. By integrating their different functions and systems, companies can improve their efficiency, productivity, and customer satisfaction.



Here are some of the specific benefits of integration:

- **Improved Innovation:** Integration enables numerous innovations to flourish using the positive impact of differentials in thinking, kindling new ideas and opening opportunities.
- **Improved Efficiency:** Integration can help companies to streamline their operations and eliminate duplicate tasks. This can lead to significant cost savings and improved efficiency.
- **Improved Productivity:** Integration can help companies to automate many of their manual tasks. This frees up employees to focus on more strategic tasks and can lead to improved productivity.
- **Improved Customer Satisfaction:** Integration can help companies to provide a more seamless and personalized experience for their customers. This can lead to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- **Improved Decision-Making:** Integration can help companies to make better decisions by providing them with a more complete and accurate view of their data. This can lead to better business outcomes.
- **Increased Revenue & Profitability:** Integration can help companies to improve their efficiency, productivity, and customer satisfaction. This can lead to increased revenue and profitability.

It is the sum-total of these benefits that quickly adds up to the 25-40% total advantage.

Overall, the research shows that integration can have a significant positive impact on a company's bottom line. Companies that are not integrated are at a competitive disadvantage.

## ***Key Mindsets and Skillsets Required for Integration***

### **Mindsets:**

- **Systems Thinking:** The ability to see the big picture and how different parts of a system interact.
- **Collaboration & Trust:** The ability to work effectively with others from different departments and backgrounds and honor those who think differently.
- **Diverse Backgrounds:** Having a broad set of personal interests that explore the nature of things from many perspectives
- **Inquiry & Curiosity:** The ability to find out how things work, delve into root cause, and understand Why? What? When? Where? Who? and How?
- **Transformational Opportunity:** The ability to see where problems are opportunities and transform the way people believe, perceive, conceive, achieve and receive new results.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The commitment to continuous improvement and the willingness to learn and grow. This is the result of being in a “Perpetual State of Enlightened Dissatisfaction.”



## Skillsets:

- **Data analysis:** The ability to collect, analyze, and interpret data.
- **Breakdown Barriers:** The ability to tear down mental, cultural, and organizational walls.
- **Turn Breakdowns into Breakthroughs:** The ability learn and overcome the blame game.
- **Process improvement:** The ability to identify and improve processes & cycle times.
- **Communication:** The ability to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences.
- **Project management:** The ability to plan, execute, and monitor projects to get results.
- **Alliance Partnering:** The ability to build bridges, connect functions, & optimize resources.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Use AI to explore inter-connectedness, root causes, and context.

In addition to these mindsets and skillsets, it is also important to have a strong understanding of the different functions and systems that are being integrated. This will help you to identify opportunities for improvement and to develop effective integration solutions.

## Tips for Success

Here are some tips for developing the mindsets and skillsets required for integration:

- **Educate yourself about systems thinking, collaboration, managing transformation, continuous improvement and forming partnering arrangements.**
- **Seek out opportunities to work with people from different departments and backgrounds.**
- **Volunteer to lead or participate in integration projects.**
- **Take on new challenges and step outside of your comfort zone.**
- **Seek out feedback from others and learn from your mistakes.**

Integration is a complex and challenging process, but it is essential for businesses that want to succeed in the digital age.

By developing the right mindsets and skillsets, and choosing the right people to serve as integrators, you can play a key role in helping your organization to achieve its integration strategies and widen its alliance capabilities.

If you want to learn more about how to use integrators, or test people for their integration skills, please contact me at [Robert@ICLIInstitute.org](mailto:Robert@ICLIInstitute.org)



**International  
Collaborative  
Leadership  
Institute**