APPENDIX 2 | Integrative Activities Evidence

As described in Module 5, the evidence base for the value integrative activities create is not large, but we believe such activities are essential components for health system transformation. Below are examples of the type of evidence—in the form of journal articles, news stories, or white papers—that could be used as a starting point when building a value case for integrative activities.

We present each item starting with the article’s title, then we highlight a few key quotes and provide the full citation so you can learn more. The quotes are meant to give you a sense of what evidence the article or research presents and are taken out of context. If you read them and find your interest piqued or wonder about definitions or more detail, you can follow the link to read the full article.

We split the evidence into three categories: one that demonstrates the value of people and organizations that perform integrative activities, another that displays the value of the integrative activities themselves, and a third for other resources.

Value of People and Organizations That Perform Integrative Activities

Integrative Public Leadership: Catalyzing Collaboration to Create Public Value

QUOTES

“Integrative public leadership is a process of developing partnerships across organizational, sectoral, and/or jurisdictional boundaries that create public value.”

“Boundary organizations provide a structural context for partnership development; boundary experiences and boundary objects serve to bridge differences and create a common purpose; and boundary spanners exhibit entrepreneurial qualities and leverage relationship capital in order to facilitate integration.”


The Leadership Premium: How Companies Win the Confidence of Investors

QUOTES

“On average, we discovered a premium of 15.7 percent for particularly effective leadership—and a discount of 19.8 percent for its opposite.”

“Furthermore, leaders in small companies tend to be less constrained in their actions by long-established processes and protocols, giving them more freedom to alter the direction of the company.”

Calculating the Market Value of Leadership

QUOTE

“Wise, long-term investors recognize that leadership affects firm performance. But too often, assessments of leadership are haphazard and narrow. For instance, in our research, we found that investors allocate about 30% of their decision making based on quality of leadership, and they have much less confidence in their ability to assess leadership than in their assessments of financial or intangible performance.”


Great Leaders Can Double Profits, Research Shows

QUOTE

“In summary, poor leaders lost money; good leaders made profit; and extraordinary leaders more than doubled the company’s profits in comparison to the other 90%!”


Case Study: The Power of Convening for Social Impact

QUOTE

“Bringing people together in an environment that encourages and facilitates idea exchange is one of the most powerful communications strategies for driving change.”


Ten Ways Data Integration Provides Business Value

QUOTES

“Many valuable data-driven business practices depend on one or more forms of data integration.”

“Data integration and related practices (such as data quality and master data management) add value to data, which in turn increases the value of business processes that use the data.”


Five Ways Innovation Can Boost Company Values

QUOTE

“Innovative companies are almost always more valuable. They offer more potential and investors are especially interested in companies who own patents or use innovative methods or technology to boost efficiency, save time, improve customer service, and drive profits. In short—innovation pays off over and over.”

Creativity’s Bottom Line: How Winning Companies Turn Creativity into Business Value and Growth

QUOTE

“But when we dug more deeply, we found that the most creative companies did certain things differently. Specifically, they exhibited a set of four business practices that we believe drive their marketing creativity, their ability to innovate, and their capacity to translate those virtues into business value.”


Strategic Product Value Management: How Companies Can Improve Innovation, Reduce Costs, and Mitigate Risk

QUOTES

“In our 10-year analysis, need seekers* are more likely to show stronger financial performance than their competitors, and they are more likely to align their innovation strategy with their overall business strategy.”

“The ability to effectively manage risks has a direct correlation with a company’s innovation success. It keeps the innovators focused on aligning their product or service with the customer’s true needs, rather than just innovation for its own sake. In this way, risk management is akin to guardrails that establish the true boundaries for innovation and ensure that the resulting products or services link to the organization’s overall strategy and fulfill their mandate of creating value for customers.”

* The article defines a “need seeker” as companies “such as Apple, Procter & Gamble, and Tesla, [that] use superior insights about their customers to generate new product ideas.”


Stories about Value of Integrative Activities

Lessons Learned from Our Conversations with Experienced Backbone Leaders

QUOTES

“Good backbone leaders build the capacity of others to continue the work in light of uncertainties such as elected officials’ coming and going, funding fluctuations, and personnel turnover in partner organizations. According to Kat Allen at Communities that Care Coalition, ‘the reality is that funding can go away at any time and we have to be prepared to leave a legacy of effective strategies and population-level change. When we set up a new strategy, we are thinking about long-term sustainability from the get-go . . . we have built buy-in and capacity so that our stakeholders are doing the work themselves.’ Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend at Project U-Turn concurs, noting, ‘To sustain the initiative, it can’t be just my job. In Philadelphia, there is a real sense of communal ownership around moving the needle.’”

“Experienced backbone leaders have an exceptional instinct for managing interpersonal dynamics. For example, Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend makes sure to include key stakeholders before reports are released: ‘We vet the data with leaders in the system [before releasing important reports]. Of all the things we do to advance partnerships and align to the common goal, vetting reports with system leaders prior to publication is the most powerful approach we have.’”

Measuring Backbone Contributions to Collective Impact

QUOTES
This article highlighted four measures of influence that can help to demonstrate the backbone’s contributions:

Leveraged funding
“Certain stakeholders seek a single quantitative measure of a backbone’s contributions. For such individuals or groups, it can be useful to provide an estimate of the amount of funding that the backbone organization has helped to catalyze, pool, or redirect in support of the initiative’s common agenda.”

“Measuring leverage is one of the most powerful ways to demonstrate the strategic nature and fundamental difference of investing in a backbone organization, as opposed to more traditional program investments.”

Indicators of initiative progress
“Backbones can also share initial project outcomes—related to either process or initiative-level impacts—as a measure of their influence. Initiative-level indicators, such as legislation passed in support of common goals, can demonstrate how a backbone is critical to moving the needle on social problems.”

Evidence of systems change
“During interviews with stakeholders in the Greater Cincinnati region, we found that one of the best ways to gauge a backbone’s influence was to listen to the stories that participants shared about systems changes in their communities. These stories describe the shifts taking place in the way that the community makes decisions about policies, programs, and/or the allocation of its resources, and in the way the community delivers services and supports its citizens.”

Stakeholder perceptions of backbone value
“Observations from community members about the importance of the backbone organization can further help to define its influence.”


The Ecosystem of Shared Value

QUOTE
“The backbone function ensures that all the working groups remain aligned and informed. Companies cannot be the backbone—they are not neutral players. They can, however, provide funding to launch it, technology support for online communication, and mentoring or coaching....”


Other Resources

(Mis)Understanding Overhead

QUOTE
“Indeed, more people are realizing that costs may have nothing to do with how effective a nonprofit is. In fact, overhead that is too low is more concerning as it relates to effectiveness. Instead the focus is shifting toward a nonprofit’s impact and effectiveness. It is our hope that everyone who invests in a charitable nonprofit’s mission—the staff and board of a nonprofit, as well as individual donors, businesses, private foundations, and government—become aware that operating a charity is not free (gasp!). It costs something to deliver a nonprofit’s mission.”

The Overhead Myth: Moving Toward an Overhead Solution

QUOTE

“We write to ask for your help to end the Overhead Myth—the false conception that financial ratios are a proxy for overall nonprofit performance. Last year we wrote a letter to the donors of America asking them to consider the results (especially outcomes and impact) created by nonprofits, and to not judge you solely on percent of charity expenses that go to administrative and fundraising costs. While overhead can help us identify cases of fraud or gross mismanagement and serve as a part of an organization’s dashboard of financial management metrics, it tells us nothing about the results of your work (i.e., how you meet your mission).”


Unrestricted Core Support: Strengthening the Capacity of our Nonprofit Sector

QUOTES:

“Core support is the ‘working capital’ nonprofits need to sustain and strengthen their infrastructure in order to achieve organizational effectiveness.”

“In just three years, our core support funding has allowed our grantees to maintain and strengthen their capacity by: 1) continuing to support their core programs and services; 2) strengthening their organizational infrastructure; 3) providing the flexibility in funding to adapt, innovate, and take advantage of opportunities; 4) creating a more open and honest relationship with us; and 5) working together to establish clear outcomes and objectives.”


Why Funding Overhead Is Not the Real Issue: The Case to Cover Full Costs

QUOTE:

“Paying nonprofits their full costs is how we prevent crises and interrupted services for communities and allow leadership to stay focused on mission and outcomes. Anyone who has worked in a cash-constrained nonprofit knows that when a cash-flow crisis hits, mission stops, strategy stops, and all the energies of management and board are diverted to moving up receivables, delaying payables, and securing cash however they can. Appropriate working capital prevents program disruption due to cash flow shortfalls.”