
Tips and Tools to Connect to the American Job Centers: From Isolation to Integration

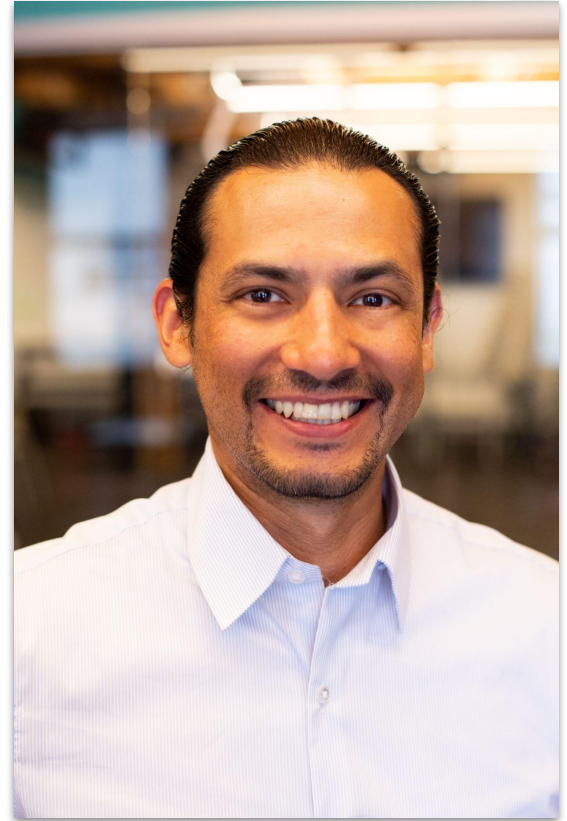
Robert Guzman and Gabriel Pérez

May 11, 2023



ScaleLIT Director of External Affairs

**Robert Guzman,
Director of External Affairs**



Agenda & Objective

Objective: identify strategies to help your agency move along the Integration Continuum

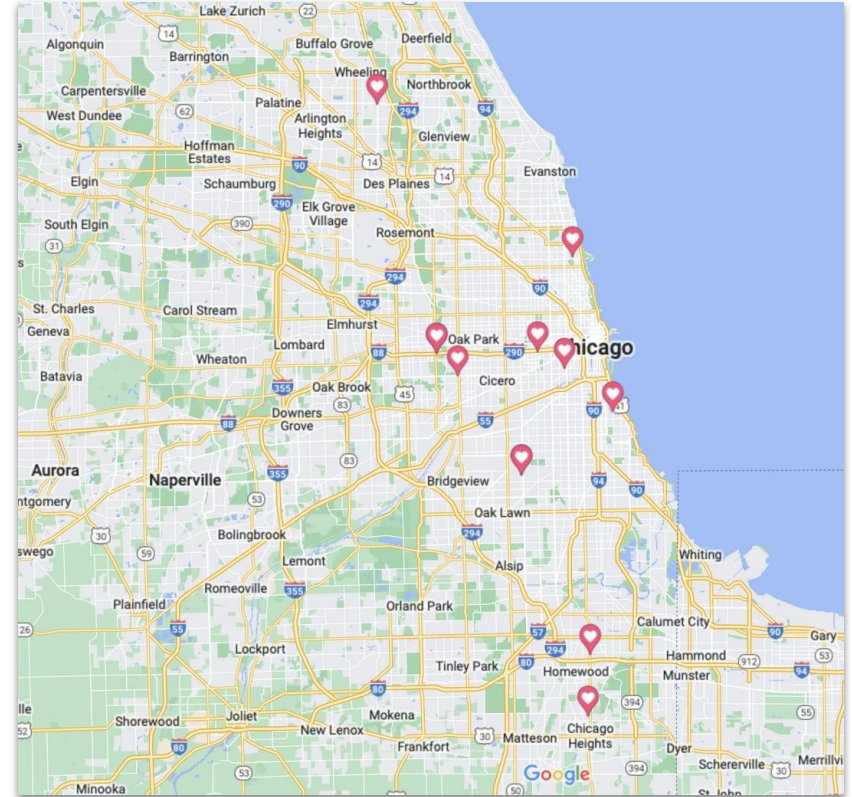
Agenda:

- **Introduction to scaleLIT: One-Stop Operator and Career Pathways Navigators**
- **The Service Integration Continuum**
- **Lessons Learned and Strategies for Partners**

AJC Services

ScaleLIT is connected to the American Job Centers (AJC) in Cook County area in two ways:

1. Cook County (LWIA 7) One-Stop Operator
2. Career Pathways Navigators at 8 centers



AJC Services

American Job Centers (AJC) help people search for jobs, find training, and answer other employment-related questions

We provide AJC staff with resources and support to improve efficiency

How we do it:

One-Stop Operator

- **Facilitate communication within AJCs**
- **Provide tools to streamline service delivery and integration**

Career Pathways Navigators

- **Assist job seekers**
- **Strengthen partnerships with organizations at AJCs**

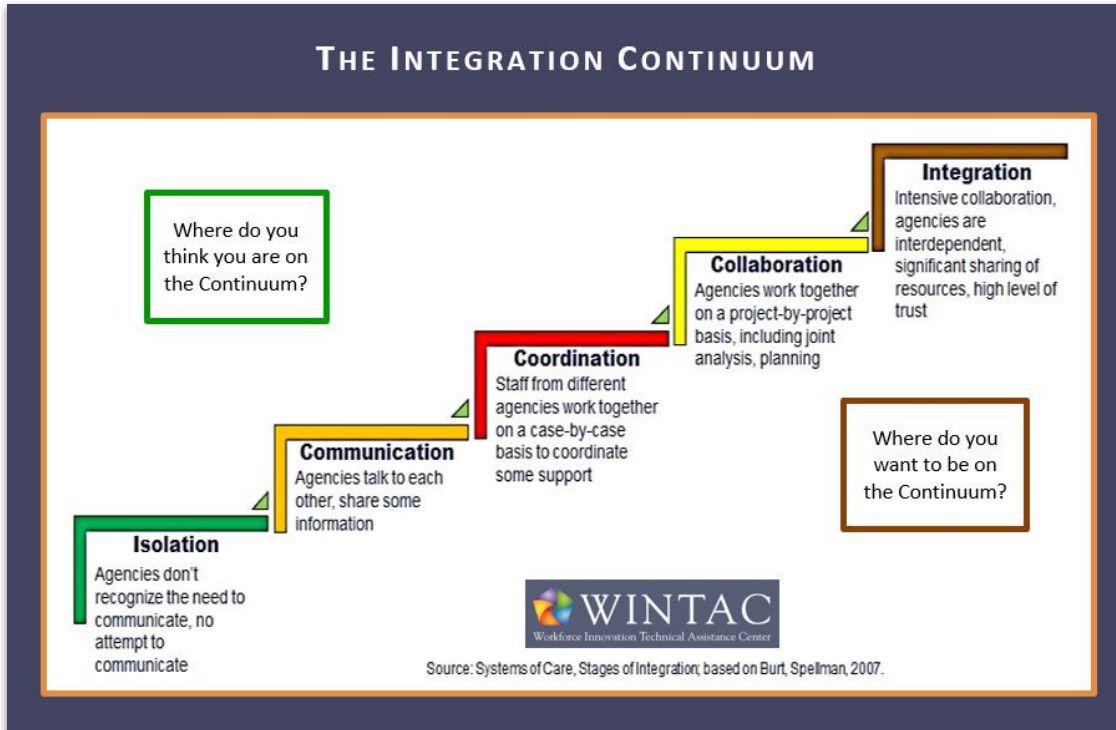
What is the One-Stop Operator?

The One-Stop Operator (OSO)

team aims to make the workforce development system more accessible to job seekers and more integrated for agencies



The Service Integration Continuum



Take a moment to reflect
on the partnerships at
your American Job
Center or agency:

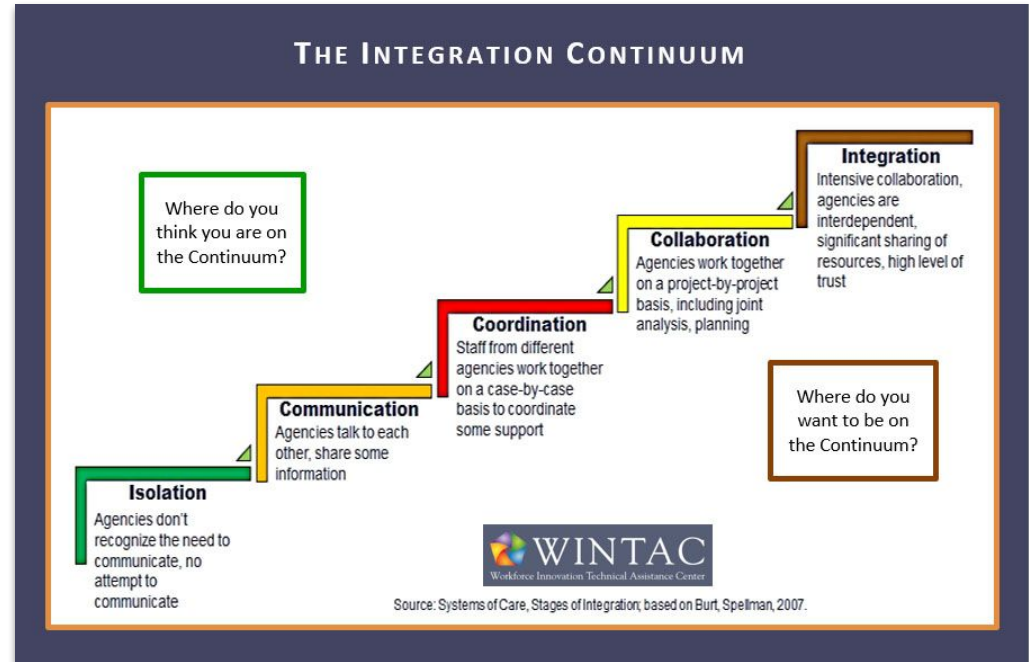
*Where are you on this
Integration Continuum?*

Integration Continuum

Isolation: no exchange of information, time commitment, or trust

Communication: information exchange is the primary focus without *mutual* sharing of resources

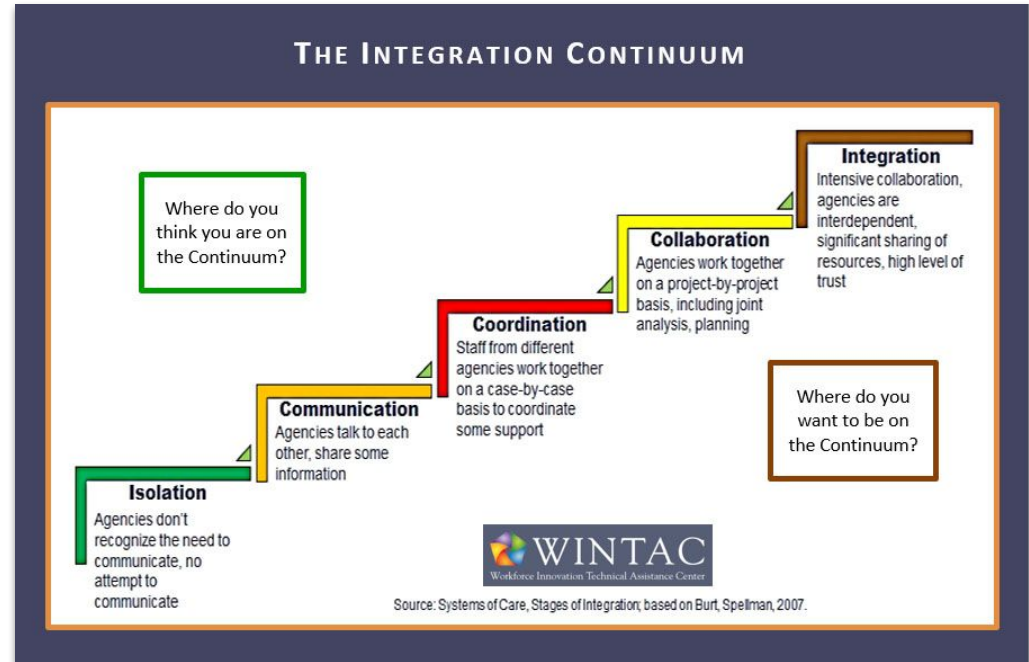
Coordination: exchanging information for mutual benefit by a *case-by-case basis*



Integration Continuum

Collaboration:

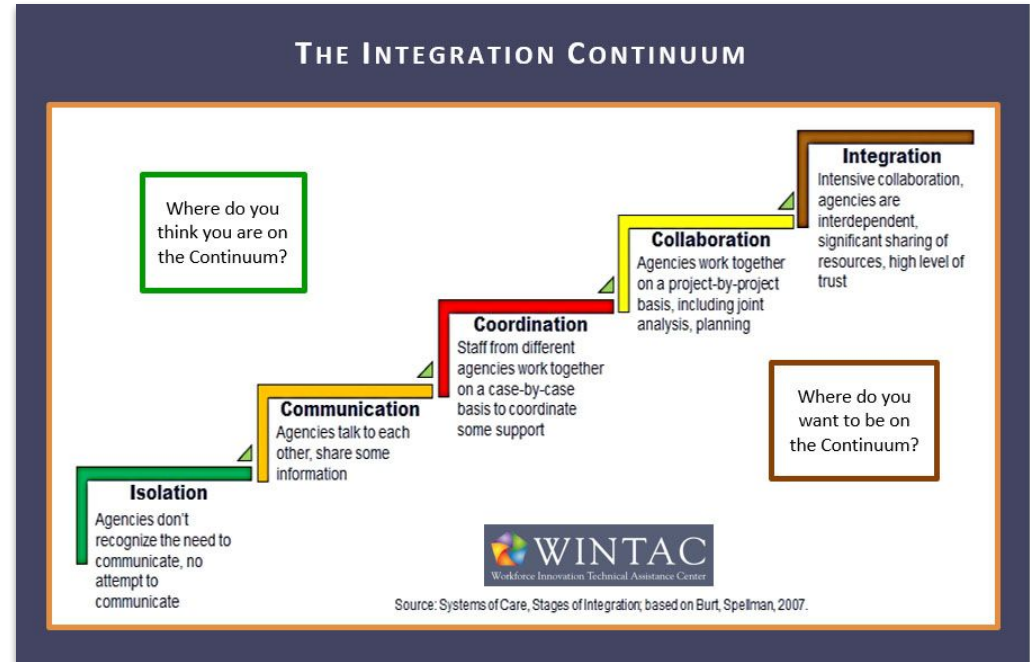
1. Exchanging information to achieve common purpose
2. Substantial time commitments
3. High level of trust and access to each other's turf
4. *Moderate sharing of resources, risks, responsibilities, and rewards*



Integration Continuum

Integration:

1. Exchanging information to achieve common purpose and enhance the capacity of the system
2. Very high levels of trust
3. Access to common turf
4. Extensive sharing of resources and full sharing of risks and responsibilities



Integration Continuum Themes

**Time
commitment,
trust, and
turf**



**Resources
and
information**



**Sharing
activities, risks,
responsibilities,
and rewards**





Near West Career Pathways Navigator

Gabriel Pérez,

Near West Career Pathways Navigator

- **CJC Workforce Credential**
- **NAWDP Leadership Development Academy**
- **ICCB Area Planning Committee 508 Officer**
- **WIOA Title II (Adult Ed.) representative (12)**
- **Member of Three Countywide Councils**
- **Member of Little Village Education Groups**
- **Lifelong member of the community I serve**
- **Worked in Adult Ed, digital literacy, HUD programs, arts administration, National Service administration, museum administration and cultural competency and language justice initiatives.**



What is a Navigator?

The Career Pathways Navigator is a first touch point for anyone trying to navigate the complex workforce development system

Navigators may work with:

- Job seekers and Adult Education Students
- Individuals with barriers to employment
 - Individuals experiencing homelessness
 - Individuals with disabilities



A black and white photograph of two women in an office setting. They are both smiling and looking at a large document or map they are holding together. The woman on the left is wearing a dark jacket, and the woman on the right is wearing a light-colored sweater with a circular logo on the chest. A large window is visible in the background, showing a view of a city or waterfront. The image is framed by a light green border on the left and right sides.

**LESSON 1. DEVELOP DEEP RELATIONSHIPS:
TIME COMMITMENT, TRUST, AND TURF**

Develop Deep Relationships

Show up for your partners:

Start with Site Visits and attending their important events



First step

Site Visits

Introduce yourself to staff at partner sites, make sure you are connecting with staff from all levels

Start your Listening Tour!

Second step

Attend Partner Events

Bring your staff and promote to your participants

Third step

Share your experience with others

This is important: **other organizations will take note of your commitment and join along**

Fourth step

Keep showing up

Don't disappear! Keep visiting your partner's sites and attending their events. Invite those same partners to your site and events

Time Commitment

Create a schedule to visit your partners' sites and set up regular meetings

- **Gabriel works at the Near West American Job Center in Pilsen on Tuesdays and Thursdays**
 - Partners come onsite on Thursdays
- **He also conducts Site Visits with his Adult Education Partners**



Building Trust

Stick to your engagement or outreach schedule

- **Use this time to discuss current initiatives, new programs and staff, etc.**

Gabriel tracks his outreach events and site visits to confirm he is committed to all his partners



Develop Deep Relationships

Offer support:

Bring energy and positivity

- **Our partners know that we are in a supportive position**

Secret sauce:

Pay attention to your partner's successes and celebrate their wins!

Find ways to collaborate, work together, and celebrate for mutual benefit.





**LESSON 2. SHARE RESOURCES & INFORMATION:
BE KNOWLEDGEABLE, SHOW EMPATHY,
BECOME A SPOKESPERSON**

Share Resources and Information

Be knowledgeable:

Develop deep knowledge of all programs

When you receive resources from your partner, make sure to share with:

1. Our colleagues
2. Other partners
3. Customers / job seekers



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Discover and connect with community resources and employers at the fifth annual Careers de Mayo!

- Meet local organizations serving Pilsen and the surrounding communities
 - Enjoy treats and sweets from local vendors
- Network and connect with employers seeking to hire
- Advance your life and your career with our expert-led workshops!
- Receive giveaways and win prizes (including gift cards!)
 - And much more!

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Share Information and Resources

Show empathy:

Be intentional and connect with staff at every level, from directors to frontline

Find ways to help

- **Empathy is thoughts, feelings, and actions**
 - **Listen to partners and share ideas**
 - **Try to understand their experience**
 - **Create plans to assist**



Share Information and Resources

Become a spokesperson for your partners

Their success is your success!

Secret sauce:

Identify the goals you share with your partners

It is easier to remain committed to each other when goals are aligned



CAREERS

BY NATIONAL ABLE NETWORK

ARE YOU LOOKING TO GET INTO THE WORKFORCE?
WANT TO START A NEW CAREER?
WE CAN HELP!

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IT CAREER LAB

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YOUR FUTURE.



Microsoft Imagine Academy



LESSON 3. SHARING IS CARING: STAY CONSISTENT, IT DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT



Sharing Responsibilities, Risks, and Rewards

Change doesn't happen overnight

- Without the connections we made in the Career Pathways pilot model in 2018, we wouldn't have this level of success at AJCs

We remained committed to these partnerships, despite:

- Staff turnaround and consistent onboarding
- Post-pandemic changes to activities / collaboration
- No universal referral process (yet)



Sharing Responsibilities, Risks, and Rewards

Everyone has expertise and brings value to their partners

We all have a responsibility to our partners and participants to work together





Lesson 1.

**DEVELOP DEEP
RELATIONSHIPS:**

**TIME COMMITMENT,
TRUST,
AND
TURF**



Lesson 2.

SHARE RESOURCES & INFORMATION:

**BE KNOWLEDGEABLE,
SHOW EMPATHY,
BECOME A
SPOKESPERSON**

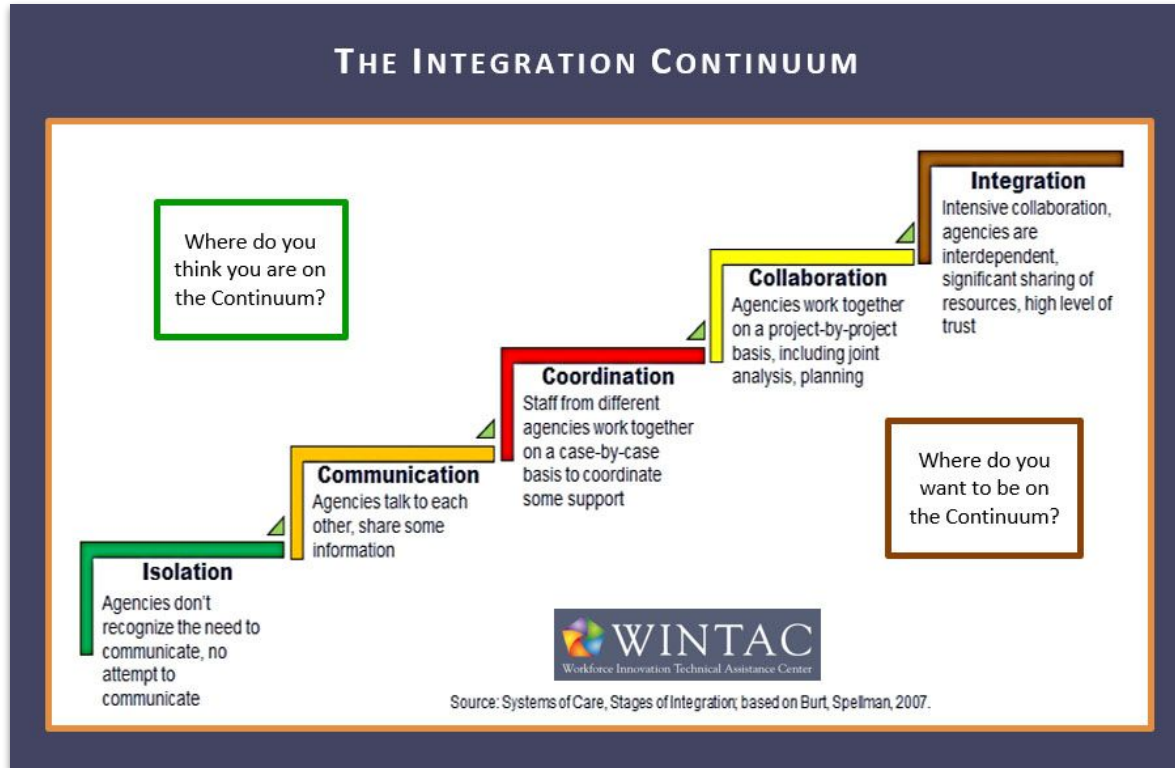


Lesson 3.

SHARING IS CARING:

**STAY CONSISTENT,
IT DOESN'T HAPPEN
OVERNIGHT**

The Service Integration Continuum



ScaleLIT Resources on the Whova App



American Job Center Orientation Video(s)

Navigator One-Pager and Near West Career Pathways Navigator Flyer

Near West AJC Resources Newsletter

Contact the scaleLIT Team!

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