MIT | EXperimental Learning

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Big Data and Social Analytics certificate course

MODULE 8 UNIT 1
Video 1 Transcript

MIT BDA Module 8 Unit 1 Video 1 Transcript

Speaker key

AP: Alex Pentland

HY: Hapyak

AP: So, let's talk a little bit about data in context. So, I do a lot of teaching of senior executives, particularly chief information officers, chief technical officers, things like that. And what I'm seeing is a really interesting thing. These areas that used to be just you know somewhere in the back office of a corporation, are now becoming strategic assets. They're really beginning to be things that shape the direction that an organization goes because the insights come from the big data.

00:00:44

So what that means for you is you can't just be the guy in the back room, you have to begin to ask what is this company, what is this organization trying to achieve, what's the broader context, so that you can guide your exploration of the data, your analysis of the data in ways that support the company or the organization. So not just what you're told to look for, but you need to look a little more broadly and understand the context.

00:01:10

 And this is an opportunity for you to begin to put on a hat for strategic analysis, which incidentally pays a lot better than even data analysis. Looking around is also a classic way that people become more valuable to their organization. So for instance in one of the classic studies of really high performing engineers and white collar workers, they found the ones that were the most familiar with other parts of the company, people who knew about the sort of strategic goals, the limitations, the problems of the company in more depth were the ones that were far more productive. So you should think about the data analysis not as just a little silo in your job that you do, but as an opportunity to explore more generally for the organization that you are a part of, and discover new things that could turn out to be important.

HY: How would you describe the role of the data analyst in your organization?

   a.   Sits in a dark corner at my organization
   b.   Is involved in every aspect of the organization
   c.   Is involved relevant aspects of the organization
   d.   I've never seen a data analyst at my organization

IN COLLABORATION WITH getsmarter