**Learning Log: Consider what data means to you**

**Instructions**You can use this document as a template for the learning log activity: Consider how data analysts approach tasks. Type your answers in this document, and save it on your computer or Google Drive.

We recommend that you save every learning log in one folder and include a date in the file name to help you stay organized. Important information like course number, title, and activity name are already included. After you finish your learning log entry, you can come back and reread your responses later to understand how your opinions on different topics may have changed throughout the courses.

To review detailed instructions on how to complete this activity, please return to Coursera: [Learning Log: Consider what data means to you](https://www.coursera.org/learn/ask-questions-make-decisions/supplement/8LO5m/learning-log-consider-what-data-means-to-you).

| **Date:** <enter date> | **Course/topic:** Course 2: Ask Questions to Make Data-Driven Decisions | | |
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| **Learning Log:** Consider what data means to you | | |
| **Data and problem-solving** | Pause for a moment and think about the word “data.” What does it mean to you?  Although it’s clear that data is a major part of a data analyst’s job, it’s only part of the “big picture.” The other part is problem solving. Being a successful data analyst means understanding that each problem is unique and working methodically to solve that problem with data.  By definition, most new problems data analysts face start in “unknown territory." It’s up to the data analyst and their problem solving skills to think strategically, ask good questions, and use data to come up with solutions to these problems. | | |
| **Reflection:** | Write 3-5 sentences (60-100 words) reflecting on what data means to you. Then write 2-3 sentences (40-60 words) reflecting on the problem-solving process by answering each of the questions below: | | |
| **Questions and responses:** | * What does data mean to you?   *Data is recorded information about the world. In an abstract sense, we only have access to data about the world, which is not necessarily equivalent to the world itself. So data are like clues about the world. Since we are creatures that have goals--stay alive, have a stable environment, improve our standard of living--data is a resource that makes behavioral adaptation possible.*   * When you come across a problem and you aren’t sure of the answer or solution, what do you do?   *I’m fine with Googling the problem to start; why reinvent the wheel? If that doesn’t work, then I bust out the pencil and paper and start trying to come up with solutions, or at the very least ideas. I like to consult with others about the problem too, since solving the problem is the most important thing, although I tend to feel more proud if I can do it myself.*   * How do you identify new and interesting problems to begin with? Is there a process you use to identify problems you want to solve?   *I have certain issues that are important to me--some personal, some societal--and if I come up with some goal out of examination of that issue, then problems arise in the pursuit of that goal. I’ll also find that interesting subproblems show up on the way to solving a big problem, and these subproblems create more incentives to pursue information.* | | |