Observe the Cyclistic team in action

Understanding your stakeholders and how they use the data is key to developing business intelligence solutions that will address their specific needs. In addition to meeting with stakeholders to discuss their project requirements, it can also be useful to observe the team at work and identify any patterns or frequently asked questions.

In this reading, you'll discover some of the ways that the Cyclistic team uses the data. This can inform the BI solution you develop for them and help you design the final reporting dashboard to be specific to their needs and useful to the whole team. As a BI professional, recognizing a team's needs and customizing their systems can support their work as they make key business decisions.

The team at work

As you learned during your previous meeting with Cyclistic, the product development team has begun planning for the next year of Cyclistic's bike-sharing program. Cyclistic's Customer Growth Team is creating a business plan for next year. The team wants to understand how their customers are using their bikes; their top priority is identifying customer demand at different station locations. The Cyclistic team posed an important primary question:

- How can we apply customer usage insights to inform new station growth?

Answering these questions starts with the data from the Cyclistic bikes themselves, which the team has provided you, and the reporting dashboard the team uses to gain insights. In addition to the explicit requests the stakeholders made, you realize a few key things about the team's current processes.

First, you realize that there are stakeholders from a variety of different departments accessing and using this data with different levels of technical expertise. There are stakeholders from these teams:

- Product development
- Customer data
- Engineering
- Data analytics
- Data warehousing
- API
- IT
- Cyclistic executive
- Project management

For example, you realize that Earnest Cox, the VP of product development, is often requesting high-level insights into the data and rarely needs detailed overviews of the data. Alternatively, Tessa Blackwell from the data analytics team does explore the data in-depth and spends a lot more time reviewing the dashboard views. As you develop your reporting tools, you will want to find a way to answer both of these stakeholders' needs.

Additionally, one of your coworkers finds out you're working on this project and shares a dataset they created recently for a project of their own that they think might help you: NYC zip codes. This dataset provides the zip codes for the different neighborhoods and boroughs in New York City; this will let you compare the bike data to the weather data more easily since you will be able to match the locations more accurately. It will also help you develop your map visualization later on.

Key takeaways

As you prepare to create the pipeline system that will deliver data to your reporting tables and eventually your dashboard, recognizing the different kinds of users, their specific needs and questions, and how they are currently using the data can help guide your development process. In this case, observing the Cyclistic team in action revealed that there are users who need different levels of detail and have different technical abilities. Additionally, you gained a useful tool from a colleague that will help you explore multiple datasets for this project. You can use these discoveries to design a BI solution that really addresses this organization’s unique needs–and demonstrate your skill and flexibility to future employers!