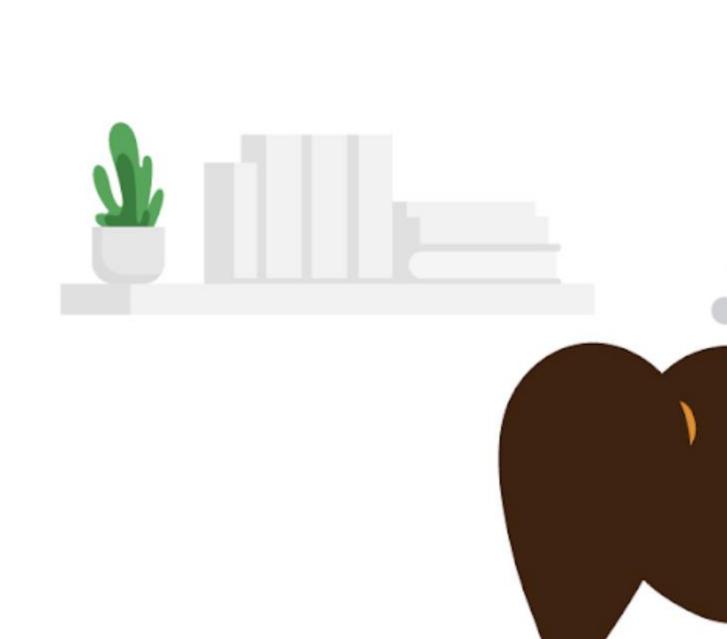# Know your stakeholders and their goals

Previously, you learned about the four different types of stakeholders you might encounter as a business intelligence professional:

- **Project sponsor:** A person who provides support and resources for a project and is accountable for enabling its success.
- **Developer**: A person who uses programming languages to create, execute, test, and troubleshoot software applications. This includes application software developers and systems software developers.
- **Systems analyst:** A person who identifies ways to design, implement, and advance information systems in order to ensure that they help make it possible to achieve business goals.
- **Business stakeholders:** Business stakeholders can include one or more of the following groups of people:
  - **The executive team:** The executive team provides strategic and operational leadership to the company. They set goals, develop strategy, and make sure that strategy is executed effectively. The executive team might include vice presidents, the chief marketing officer, and senior-level professionals who help plan and direct the company's work.
  - **The customer-facing team:** The customer-facing team includes anyone in an organization who has some level of interaction with customers and potential customers. Typically they compile information, set expectations, and communicate customer feedback to other parts of the internal organization.
  - **The data science team**: The data science team explores the data that's already out there and finds patterns and insights that data scientists can use to uncover future trends with machine learning. This includes data analysts, data scientists, and data engineers.

Now that you're more familiar with these different types of stakeholders, explore how they function in an actual business context.

The business

In this scenario, you are a BI professional working with an e-book retail company. The customer-facing team is interested in using customer data collected from the company's e-reading app in order to better understand user reading habits, then optimize the app accordingly. They have asked you to create a system that will ingest customer data about purchases and reading time on the app so that the data is accessible to their analysts. But before you can get started, you need to understand all of your stakeholders' needs and goals to help them achieve them.

The stakeholders and their goals

Project sponsor

A project sponsor is the person who provides support and resources for a project and is accountable for enabling its success. In this case, the project sponsor is the team lead for the customer-facing team. You know from your discussions with this team that they are interested in optimizing the e-reading app. In order to do so, they need a system that will deliver customer data about purchases and reading time to a database for their analysts to work with. The analysts can then use this data to gain insights about purchasing habits and reading times in order to find out what genres are most popular, how long readers are using the app, and how often they are buying new books to make recommendations to the UI design team.

Developers

The developers are the people who use programming languages to create, execute, test, and troubleshoot software applications. This includes application software developers and systems software developers. If your new BI workflow includes software applications and tools, or you are going to need to create new tools, then you'll need to collaborate with the developers. Their goal is to create and manage your business's software tools, so they need to understand what tools you plan to use and what you need those tools to do. For this example, the developers you work with will be the ones responsible for managing the data captured on the e-reading app.

Systems analyst

The systems analyst identifies ways to design, implement, and advance information systems in order to ensure that they help make it possible to achieve business goals. Their primary goal is to understand how the business is using its computer hardware and software, cloud services, and related technologies, then they figure out how to improve these tools. So the system analyst will be ensuring that the data captured by the developers can be accessed internally as raw data.

Business stakeholders

In addition to the customer-facing team, who is the project sponsor for this project, there may also be other business stakeholders for this project such as project managers, senior-level professionals, and other executives. These stakeholders are interested in guiding business strategy for the entire business; their goal is to continue to improve business processes, increase revenue, and reach company goals. So your work may even reach the chief technology officer! These are generally people who need bigger-picture insights that will help them make larger scale decisions as opposed to detail-oriented insights about software tools or data systems.

Conclusion

Often, BI projects encompass a lot of teams and stakeholders who have different goals depending on their function within the organization. Understanding their perspectives is important because it enables you to consider a variety of use cases for your BI tools. And the more useful your tools, the more impactful they will be!