

# More on the phases of data analysis and this program

Each step in the data analysis process—ask, prepare, process, analyze, share, and act—plays a crucial role in extracting meaningful insights from data. As you navigate through each phase, from asking the right questions to taking informed actions, you harness the true power of data. In this reading, you'll explore how the data analysis process guides this program.

## The ask phase

At the start of any successful data analysis, the data analyst:

- Takes the time to fully understand stakeholder expectations
- Defines the problem to be solved
- Decides which questions to answer in order to solve the problem

Qualifying stakeholder expectations means determining who the stakeholders are, what they want, when they want it, why they want it, and how best to communicate with them. Defining the problem means looking at the current state and identifying the ways in which it's different from the ideal state. With expectations qualified and the problem defined, you can derive questions that will help achieve these goals.

In an upcoming course, you'll learn how to ask effective questions and define the problem by working with stakeholders. You'll also cover strategies that can help you share what you discover in a way that keeps people interested.

## The prepare phase

In the prepare phase, the emphasis is on identifying and locating data you can use to answer your questions. In an upcoming course, you'll learn more about the different types of data and how to identify which kinds of data are most useful for solving a particular problem. You'll also discover why it's so important that data and results are objective and unbiased. In other words, any decisions made from an analysis should always be based on facts and be fair and impartial.