



DO'S AND DON'TS OF DATA GOVERNANCE



DO GOVERN DATA FROM WITHIN THE BUSINESS

Business users are ultimately the creators, repairers, and users of your organization's data assets. While it can seem as if IT is the most interested in data governance, the most successful programs make decisions based on business needs.



DON'T GOVERN DATA IN SILOS

Organizations tend to approach governance programs at a department level because it's easier to develop and maintain. However, data is rarely contained within departments and can cause issues when sent to other business groups that may have different data glossaries or standards for data quality. You should always govern data with the entire organization in mind.



DO SECURE BUY-IN FROM BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Successful business initiatives have buy-in from the top down. For your governance program, you'll want to get the support of an influential business leader who understands the importance of your program and is able to communicate this to other business stakeholders.



DON'T ASSUME EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS THE VALUE OF DATA

While some stakeholders in your organization are highly involved in everything that goes into fixing data errors and appreciate the value that data brings to the organization, others may be unaware. Only seeing the output of clean data and not the resources consumed to get it to that trusted state may cause others to have less appreciation for its value.



DO ESTABLISH ENTERPRISE DATA GOVERNANCE

Data governance should be an enterprise-wide program. Definitions and processes around data should be scalable across the organization and consistent between departments. A cross-functional governance council should be created to ensure that the program maintains its vision over time.



DON'T USE MEANINGLESS METRICS

In order to demonstrate the effectiveness of your governance program, you're going to need to put some metrics in place. When determining the metric you will report on, consider the needs of all your stakeholders. By measuring how improvements to data governance are helping each department make progress towards their goals, you can articulate value in terms they can understand.



DO COMMUNICATE THE IMPACTS OF POOR DATA QUALITY AND THE BENEFITS OF GOVERNANCE

The most successful programs are able to stay top of mind for executives. That's why it's critical to communicate the benefits of your data governance program, especially in light of the harmful effects poor data quality can have. You should involve your business stakeholders whenever possible to translate your data's value into business value.



DON'T TREAT DATA GOVERNANCE AS A PROJECT

Many organizations tend to think in projects. They plan what they want to accomplish, strategize their tactics, get resources and funding, and execute the project according to established timelines and budgets. The problem with this approach is that it creates an expectation that there is an endpoint in terms of funding and participation. It is critical to differentiate your data governance initiative as an ongoing program for the business.



DO MEASURE IMPACT AND PROGRESS

When you're heavily focused on the technical aspects of your data governance program, it can be easy to overlook the key performance metrics you are aiming to achieve. While you personally may feel satisfied with the number of terms you've added to your business glossary, it's important to continue to measure progress against your business goals. By communicating these regularly, you can ensure your program has their continued support.



DON'T OVERLOOK THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR DATA CULTURE

Data governance should be by the people, for the people. From the start, you should ensure that your data governance model fits your organizational culture. You will want to fully integrate data governance into your operations so that it receives the necessary resources and funding moving forward. In addition, your program will need to be easy-to-use and simple-to-understand in order to effect the kind of widespread behavior change you are looking for.

Implementing a successful data governance program at your organization is no small task, but the benefits of making more data-driven decisions will be felt across every area of the business. Following these do's and don'ts should set your data governance program on a path to success.



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