



Lessons from the Trenches

A Khyanafi thought leadership publication series
based on real experience and proven results.

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#WINWITHDATA

HOW TO TRANSFORM & GROW YOUR BUSINESS WITH DATA EVEN IF YOU ARE JUST STARTING OR RESTARTING ?



WRITTEN BY

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"Do you have an article that we can reference for Data Enablement?" - A simple question with a complex answer.

A friend of mine asked me this question. This person mentioned that his company has a new Chief Data Officer (CDO) and asked if I had any articles related to Data Enablement to help them build their approach and plan.

Many companies are working on this path, while many still want to but don't know where to start. However, **several factors separate successful firms from those that cannot gain traction and sustain the results despite the large-scale investments made towards these initiatives.**

The challenge is that Data Enablement is a broad topic and involves several things, and the context and company situation matter a lot.

AN OUTLINE TO EXPAND UPON

This article is an outline and not the full content. I focus on highlighting all the "other topics" rarely thought about, debated, or even often misunderstood.

This outline is in no way comprehensive, and I have taken a "release-it-even-if-not-perfect" approach to it. I welcome all constructive criticism and feedback, as generating tangible results from our Data initiatives is an opportunity, and lack of it is a concern for everyone involved.

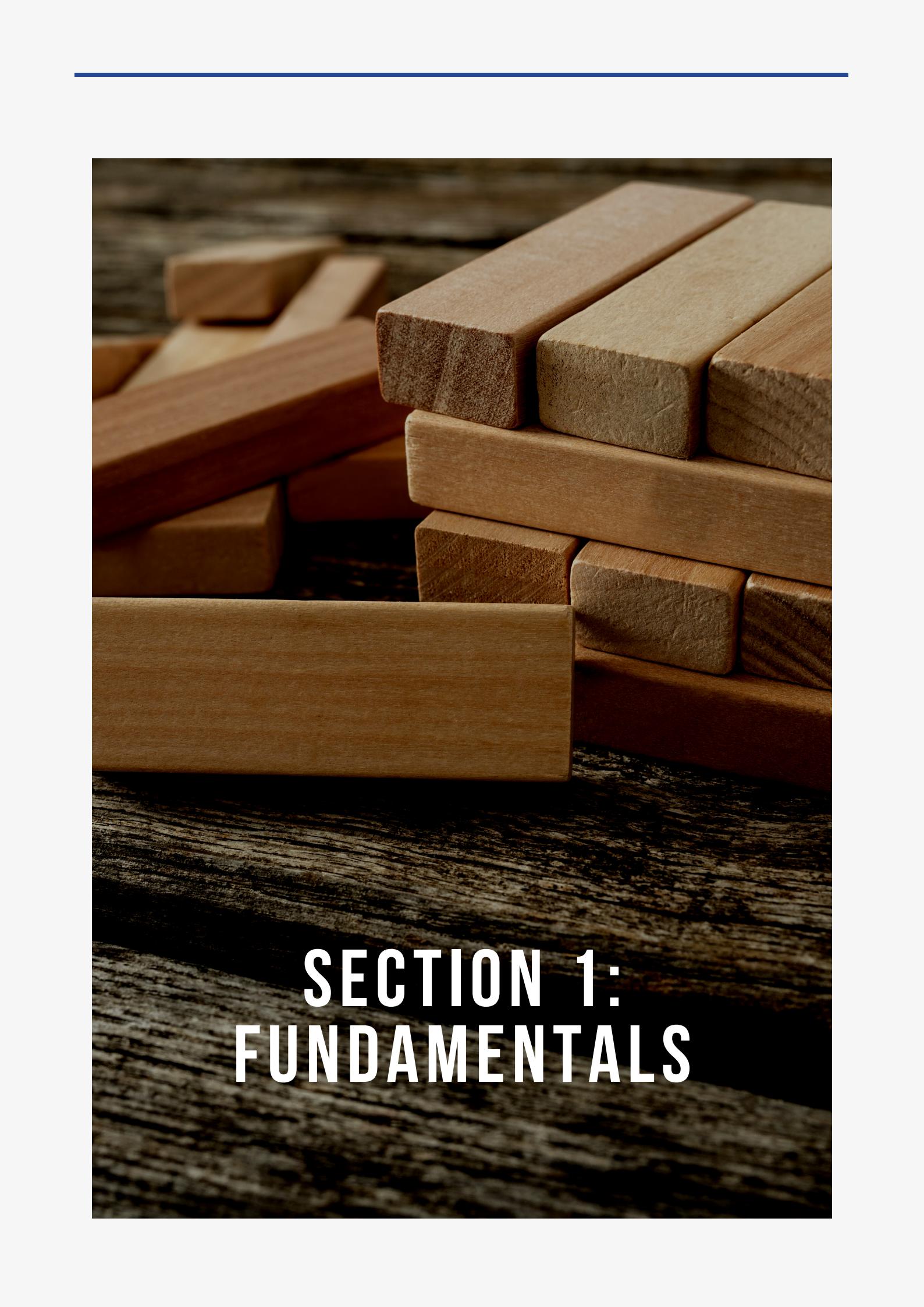
While every company and leader must chart their course on enabling the firm with data, the process must be based on solid foundational aspects.

It is about knowing certain critical information around accurately assessing the situation and doing specific work that must be done to create definite and impactful results.

CONTENTS

THIS DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED INTO THREE SECTIONS.

SECTION	COVERAGE
SECTION 1 FUNDAMENTALS	<p>The interpretation of the term "Data Enablement" matters. Are you trying to enable the use of data, or are you trying to enable your company's growth and long-term success using Data and all it can be utilized for? I am assuming you want the latter.</p> <p>The items I have covered under this section are essential but unconventional. These topics are not discussed much or even given the relevant focus they need within most companies of any size. The firms that can excel in delivering business outcomes using data can continue winning by bridging the gap in this category.</p>
SECTION 2 ACCELERATORS	<p>For companies, data leaders, and their teams to ensure that their investments and efforts deliver intended and even exceeding results, I have discussed a set of items in this section. These items are closely related to timing, context, focus, and strong interconnections of business processes, situations, data, and talent.</p>
SECTION 3 FOCUSED ACTION	<p>Many things are involved in effectively positioning data for use. Your company's situation is unique, and cookie-cutter approaches won't work. The items in this section are all activity-related and can get too complicated very quickly.</p> <p>This is why it is important to ensure that you create something suitable for your company's situation, talent availability, and, more importantly, something that can help you get started in a short timeframe with a smaller budget. As your business grows, you can continually expand. Getting these essential elements right is vital.</p>

A close-up photograph of several light-colored wooden blocks stacked in a staggered pattern on a dark, weathered wooden surface. The blocks have a visible grain and some texture. The lighting is warm and focused on the blocks.

SECTION 1: FUNDAMENTALS

THE OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE

The first question is, why do you want to focus on data?

Because everybody is doing it? – that's not a valid answer!

None of what we do in the data area is new. Even from the days of the early notebook ledgers (those are still around), companies and teams have always captured data, processed it somehow, and used that output to make decisions.

So, what is different now?

We can capture almost all of what happens, then process most of that Data as needed, analyze it in ways that were not possible earlier, and use the insights in automating critical business functions, selling more, and increasing customer experience. As a result, companies can pursue larger goals aimed at growth and expansion.

That is the opportunity with data.

As every company is a data company now, not doing it effectively and efficiently or not adopting data, analytics, and their variants across all areas of the company will test its very survival and longevity.

And that is the challenge.

Resonate with these ideas and want rapid results with data?

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START WITH "YOUR" WHY

FROM COMPANY STRATEGY TO DATA/DIGITAL STRATEGY

Most of us believe or want to believe that our business is unique, and therefore what works for others will not work for us. No and Yes.

In working with companies of various sizes, industry sectors, and complexity, I have observed that while the company strategy is worded or its depth of focus from year-over-year varies, the coverage can be aligned with a few prominent themes.

If your data/digital initiatives investments are tightly based on your company strategy themes, there is a much higher chance of success and continued growth. It helps if there is more than one theme in the mix, as it would help bring more comprehensive support from different areas of the company.

SIX THEMES OF COMPANY STRATEGY

You must align your data strategy and work within the data area with your company strategy. But you already know that.

At the top tier, we could say all companies want to grow in size, make money, attract and keep talent and make shareholders happy. One level below, this intent looks like:

- **Revenue**
- **Customer**
- **Efficiency & Productivity**
- **Risk and Compliance**
- **Impact**
- **Talent**

FOR INCREASING YOUR ODDS OF SUCCESS FROM DATA & DIGITAL WORK,
HAVE TWO OR MORE VISIBLE AND COMMITTED BUSINESS EXECUTIVES AS SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS.

Foundation for a strong Data & Digitalization Strategy



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Can you take a cookie-cutter approach to build your strategy, roadmap, planning, and execution of Data/Digital initiatives if the themes are alike?

Most probably not.

Your company is vastly different in the type of challenges you have from a market positioning, talent coverage, internal leadership capabilities, degree or level of risk appetite, and the challenges you face from outdated systems, disparate platforms, and other issues.

Your competitors also have these challenges, but the difference is how much and at what levels, which is why most cookie-cutter strategies or vendor-managed projects fail.

The problem stems from a lack of complete understanding of ground-level realities or even not knowing how to approach the process of uncovering the unknowns.

That comes from experience being in similar situations before. So it is not a lack of knowledge but a lack of perception of how to proceed when such unique conditions are presented.

SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS – FROM THE START

It is not just about doing the right things. Not doing the wrong things is crucial to ensuring long-term sustainable results.

What is the alternative? Strike a balance.

AS YOU BEGIN ANY PROGRAM INTENDED
TO BRING ABOUT LARGE-SCALE
TRANSFORMATION OR CHANGE,
BALANCING TARGET STATE VISION TO
GROUND-STATE REALITY IS VITAL.

If we are to reap benefits from Data & Digitalization...

01

Current State Blindness

Lack of clear understanding of current state – across systems, processes, function and overlapping responsibilities.

- Accurate Current State

02

Decision Paralysis

Lack of understanding of current state and insufficient data-points leads to delays in making or forces revisiting decisions.

- Decision enablement

03

Poor Prioritization

Without adequate inputs, and right timely decisions, we end up prioritizing the wrong initiatives – resulting in drain of critical resources, without much output to show.

- Objective Prioritization

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Avoiding current state blindness, decision paralysis, and poor prioritization is crucial. A moderate level of focus in all these three areas is critical from the start, but it is essential to be careful not to spend too much time that you stall or slow down than required.

The challenge facing most organizations and their leaders is usually around taking a step back, doing an overall assessment around what-is, while avoiding getting mixed with the organizational differences, power struggles, or creating a hazy picture of reality by analyzing everything.

Separating the people from the problem is vital to gain traction around this activity. However, it also helps allocate an adequate budget to this activity and not wait for a business-case justification, putting you in a catch-22 situation.

Resonate with these ideas and want rapid results with data?

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YOUR DATA STORY - HOW IS YOUR DATA CREATED?

Ask a few people about how a particular Data is created within your company?

While you may get easy answers for how an order, an invoice, or a shipment label ID comes to exist, defining the process of data creation would be hard for many.

In one of my early-career roles, I had the opportunity to work on a text-analytics product's initial phases. Before it became the full-blown customer experience suite that it is now, the initial focus for the development was around sentiment analysis. A colleague of mine then explained the concepts that made the analysis possible - Actor-Network Theory (ANT) that involves actors, objects, and action.

The idea is an actor acting on an object doing something in the context. Since then, I have loosely used ANT combined with a systems analysis approach (remember UML diagrams?) to quickly break down the process of understanding complex data areas across varied industries. This would then be my starting point for conceptual data models.

When you observe your business processes in this way, it becomes easier to identify the various actors involved, the range of possible and valid activities they can perform, and where and when.

THE FIVE VALUE-CHAINS

To properly build your vision for Data and Analytics and identify how you can use it to enable growth, a clear grasp of the following five value chains is needed. Unfortunately, it is common to see many companies and leaders rushing to start from the fourth or last step.

Going through this 5-step process, in the order, I have shown, will help you overcome current state blindness, help avoid analysis or decision paralysis, and end poor prioritization.

This value-chain process has been my primary tool for quickly ramping up when I take up any new data leadership roles or work with business and data leaders to enable their company's growth with data.

It is important to note that this need not be a complex approach. Still, it can be executed for specific segments, areas, and business functions, depending on where the business leader wants to focus.

1. BUSINESS/COMPANY VIEW

The reason your customers come to you instead of choosing your competitor has a lot to do with the way your company conducts its business through selling products or services and is unique to your company.

The business view varies within your company by product or service lines you offer. E.g., The steps involved in originating and servicing a mortgage loan are different from that of an auto loan or a credit card product. This includes operational processes that move from one step to another to complete a transaction, sale, or service and the cyclic steps at specific points.

An event or condition may trigger a separate set of activities or actions. For example, banking is around credit decisions, loan servicing operations, or delinquencies. It could be sub-assembly processes that feed into a more extensive assembly line with such cyclic processes in manufacturing.

Alternatively, you are aware that numerous tools and platforms are available if you are a sales leader. That number is only increasing to catch up with the availability and diverse options of marketing tools.

Instead of asking what I should be choosing or how I should hire a data scientist to make sense of the plethora of data available, I advise you to look into your sales processes first. Then, explore the interconnectivity of those processes to the other functions and how you can feed the insights from those processes into your business operations flow.



Datapreneur

FIVE VALUE CHAINS FOR DATA ENABLEMENT

01 BUSINESS/ COMPANY VIEW

What are the horizontal and vertical business processes involved in creating your products, delivering services, and executing your functional role? Which ones are critical, high-priority, risky, or wasteful?

02 FINANCIAL/ CONTROL VIEW

Do you know how your company makes money, can lose money, the type of risks/non-compliance items that can cause loss of reputation, goodwill, and monetary losses in the form of fines?

03 FUNCTIONAL/ ORG VIEW

Also called Organizational View, how are your functions and teams working together to deliver products and services? Do you understand the nature of interconnectivity, dependencies, and cross-leverage abilities?

04 BUSINESS- TECH VIEW

Do you have a clear understanding of the interdependency of the business processes and functional activities on the systems and applications? How much of these advanced tools and platforms do you actually need?

05 DATA-ANALYTICS VIEW

Have you organized your requirements into must-have, nice-to-have, and blue-sky thinking? Are you prioritizing basic analytics and insights needs over perceived advanced analytics wants from a fear of missing out?

Once you build your business views, you will understand what specific areas or points to focus on and which ones are non-value-added activities or low-priority items.

2. FINANCIAL/CONTROL VIEW

I am surprised why this is not in the employee onboarding training or, even better, as an annual refresher.

Every employee must know how their company makes money and can lose money, along with a high-level view of the cost built into the product or services.

Lastly, what type of risks/non-compliance items can cause severe damage to your company and its operations? That includes various control deficiencies, reputational damage and goodwill loss, and a substantial monetary impact.

Without having a basic understanding of how this financial and control equation is built, it is impossible to look for opportunities for improvement, innovate with data, or establish a culture of continuous improvement and growth. **Even brainstorming ideas and prioritization of initiatives becomes vague when these concepts and the ground-level picture are not understood well across the functions.** This understanding is not just for the finance or risk team members but also for every department. However, the depth of knowledge can vary depending on where you fit within the organization.

When this view is built, you are now equipped with information on what drives your company's bottom line and where your potential investments must go to start reaping quick results or protect the downside.

3. FUNCTIONAL/ORG VIEW

The least understood, most under-utilized, and often ignored aspect is how to rightly set up your data organization to achieve the maximum benefits from your investments. What's important is how the business process and data flows are aggregated to form high-level information in the organization.

FINANCIAL/
CONTROL VIEW **02**

Do you know how your company makes money, can lose money, the type of risks/non-compliance items that can cause loss of reputation, goodwill, and monetary losses in the form of fines?

03 FUNCTIONAL/
ORG VIEW

Also called Organizational View, how are your functions and teams working together to deliver products and services? Do you understand the nature of interconnectivity, dependencies, and cross-leverage abilities?

The old-school rigid organizations and functional boundaries will not enable significant benefits from your data and analytics investments.

Rigid organizational structures and tightly defined work boundaries make it harder to adopt agile delivery and an agile process, which is highly required for quicker results. Additionally, **as leaders and key personnel across the functions move, there is a constant leverage shift in capabilities, talent, and collective ability to deliver the expected results**. This requires that organizations shift from individual talent spots to collaborative team-based capabilities and expectations to drive long-term benefits.

Purpose-built matrixed organizations, temporary assignments, shared talent, and other creative approaches are possible when companies adopt a fluid approach to organizational design.

4. BUSINESS/TECH VIEW

We can also consider this segment as a function-systems value-chain. With the advances in cloud technology, digital trends, AI/ML, process automation, and subscription-based SaaS services, the business-technology processes are getting complicated even for medium to small companies.

BUSINESS-TECH VIEW 04

Do you have a clear understanding of the interdependency of the business processes and functional activities on the systems and applications? How much of these advanced tools and platforms do you actually need?

While the selling point is the ease of onboarding, use, support, and getting off these platforms, it is essential to know what system, vendor, or platform supports business functions to clearly understand the possibilities and challenges such a complex web of interactions can produce.

A clear understanding of the interdependency of the business processes and functional activities on the systems and applications and vice-versa enables a company to identify opportunities and risks proactively. While outdated systems can threaten business continuity, buying into overly complex, disparate applications with a steep internal learning curve or excessive dependency on vendors and consulting firms.

Also, **how much of these latest advanced tools and platforms does your company need?** It's like buying insurance. **Most tend to overbuy from a fear of missing out or without adequate information.**

You cannot do much, at least not in the short-term, about systems and applications already in place. Still, you will identify where your company made the suitable investments and focus your efforts to divest and retire some of these platforms, tools, and infrastructure.

5. DATA/ANALYTICS VIEW

Finally, and only when there is a clear understanding of the previous four views can we come to the point of assessing must-have, nice-to-have, and blue-sky thinking in terms of our data and analytics possibilities. Without it, while our teams will have some successes, many missed opportunities and mistakes will continue to occur.

05 DATA/ANALYTICS VIEW

Have you organized your requirements into must-have, nice-to-have, and blue-sky thinking? Are you prioritizing basic analytics and insights needs over perceived advanced analytics wants from a fear of missing out?

THIS PROCESS ENSURES THE RIGHT LEVEL OF INVESTMENTS, ATTENTION, AND RESOURCES TOWARDS ITEMS RELEVANT FOR THE COMPANY'S GROWTH, CONSIDERING WHERE YOU ARE, RATHER THAN SOME ARBITRARY VISION.

Similar to the business-technology situation discussed above, the data footprint continuously changes and expands. **Without the correct understanding of the overall flow and robust processes to manage, measure, monitor, and mitigate, any data system and the analytics dependent on it will fall out of step if they are not kept up to date.**

And lastly, the outcome analytics, models, and actionable insights produced through the continuous evolution of the program must be fed back to the first stage, towards transforming, changing, and expanding the business, improving customer experience, deepening customer relationships, increasing revenue, driving innovation and relentlessly enhancing efficiency and eliminating wasteful processes.

Resonate with these ideas and want rapid results with data?

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FOUR TYPES OF PLAYERS IN DATA & ANALYTICS

Everyone within the company and your vendors/platform providers can be grouped into the following four types of players in the context of data and analytics. Some may have dual roles, depending on the kind of work they do. And some may play a role, but the degree of usage, influence, and inter-dependency will vary based on who they are and how they are engaged with your core functions.

01

PRODUCERS

As most companies embrace digitalization across the spectrum and many adopt a 100% digital-only engagement, your prospects and customers interacting with your web/mobile apps and wearable gadgets are your primary producers.

Additionally, your frontline people across marketing, sales, operations, customer experience areas, support personnel across all regions produce most of the data points of interest.

Applications and systems interacting with one another, SaaS platforms, and vendor partners who work with you to keep your business processes going are also producers.

02

PROCESSORS

Processors comprise teams of people and interconnected systems involved in the heavy-lifting of the data pipelines, primarily dealing with the sourcing, sorting, transforming, storing, protecting, and serving of the data.

03

PREPARERS

These are generally the groups of people who work as a bridge between the processors and the end-consumers/planners. Sometimes the processors take on the job of preparers, or in a highly evolved self-service approach, the planners do some of the work of the preparers.

While processors handle some of the transformations related to the raw or close-to-raw data, this is the layer where Data is enriched with meaningful conversions, derivations, tagging, and secondary or complex data and business rules that take it closer to insights, modeling, and advanced analytics. Here is where the transition happens, where the ownership and involvement move close to business narratives/commentary to make the insights consumable.

04

PLANNERS

The benefits of all work with data and analytics are realized when this group uses the information and insights to drive business processes, sell more products, service customers, or manage risk. I view this group of people as the end-users, applications, and automated systems enabling business activity.

The company leaders and executives who plan and execute the growth strategies and sponsor work related to Data and analytics are part of this group of planners.

THE SIX TYPES OF DATA

All Data is not the same. **Your Data's importance varies by the scope, coverage, business process generating it, exposure/privacy needs, variety, level of attribution, history, uniqueness/redundancy of content, data quality, and associated reliability. Frequency of refresh, availability, timeliness, and other factors are important too.** However, all data can be categorized into the following broad segments. Of course, you may want to split them into more refined categories depending on your needs, and that is perfectly OK.

1

INTERNAL

All that is produced with the applications, systems, interfaces, web and mobile platforms your company owns, manages, or outsourced.

2

EXTERNAL

Vendor applications, SaaS platforms, outsourced done-for-you work with a two-way data flow.

3

SOCIAL

All social channels – owned, managed, and public platforms. Includes purchases and subscription channels.

4

SYSTEM/DEVICE

Sensors, logs, API exchanges, platform-level communications, IoT, wearables, and trackers.

5

DERIVED

Enhanced datasets from any person or managed process, reverse-feed from enhanced processing and output of model/analytics products.

6

USER-DEFINED

Sometimes valid reasons exist, but usually, these applications fall under the "shadow IT" category. This is because they typically fill a critical void in the business/technology landscape and must be deemed temporary.

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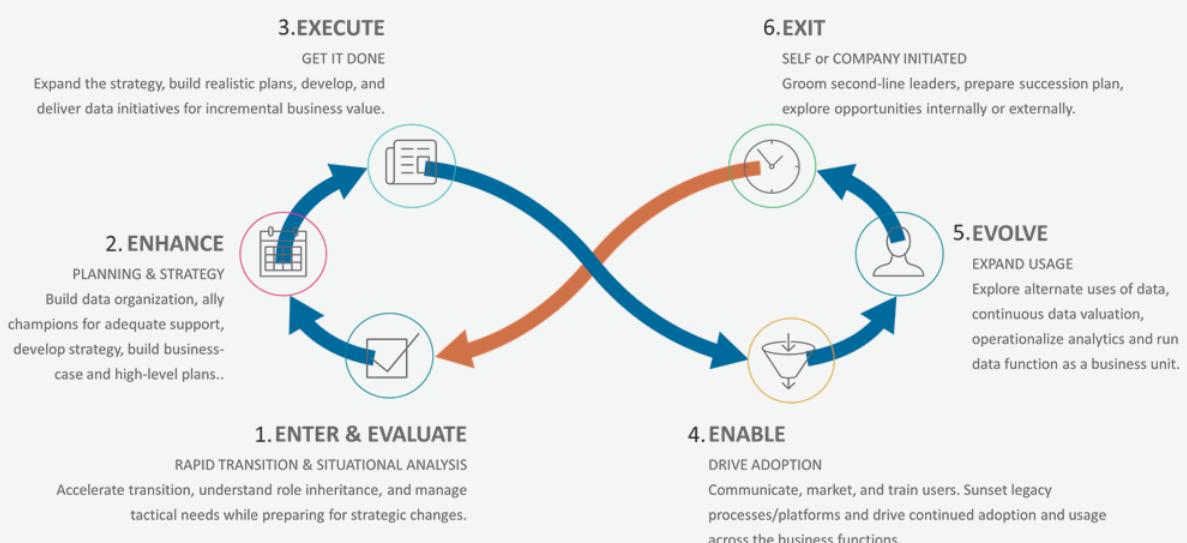


THE DATA LEADER'S CYCLE OF "INFINITE POSSIBILITIES"

If your company has hired someone dedicated to growing the data & analytics function, that's a significant step in the right direction. However, the company board's involvement, the CEO, C-level leaders, and the management team does not end there. **A Data leader's role is that of an enabler. They are responsible for bringing in industry best practices, co-creating a target vision, building a realistic plan, procuring a budget, and delivering on the planned initiatives.**

A mandatory last step is required for your company to transform and grow with Data & Analytics. That is, the output produced in the form of analytics, data products, and models must be extensively used across all areas of your business. The active support of business leaders and their teams is required at all phases of this journey.

The Data Leader's Role-Cycle



Every role is different, but every leader goes through these six stages from when they get into the new position until they leave or are asked to leave. If they leave for internal roles, they are positioned to take the company further by leveraging all the work they and their teams have done in the data and analytics areas.

From the moment a leader takes on a role till they leave, they are presented with numerous opportunities and challenges. However, if we view every challenge as an opportunity to transform and grow, it is easy to see that these stages are filled with possibilities.

Several items need attention depending on what a leader inherits in their new role. In that context, it is not just for the data leader to do the right thing at each stage, but for the company and the C-suite to extend the maximum support to help create sustainable results.

- **Enter - Accelerate Transition**
- **Enhance - Build Organization**
- **Execute - Get it done**
- **Enable - Enable Results**
- **Evolve - Expand Usage**
- **Exit - Succession Planning**

UNDERSTANDING "LEVERAGE"

I view leverage as the ease with which you can define, plan, create, and deliver your programs. There is an amount of leverage available initially when a new leader starts. However, when viewed along with the role-cycle mentioned above, it then becomes critical to act on the right initiatives at the right time to continue to build on the leverage bank.

It then becomes easier to execute even the most complex programs with high leverage. On the contrary, having low leverage makes it extremely difficult to enable the smooth execution of simple projects.

Whatever a leader and their team does (action) or fail to do (inaction) either adds to or takes away from your collective leverage bank. When the collective leverage of your team is high, you can get support and commitment from all areas of the business. However, it is essential to remember that you can only control portions of this leverage equation, and there are areas outside your control.

E.g., when a new company-wide initiative takes higher importance, when there is a merger or senior leadership changes at the company's highest levels, all these can disrupt or alter the leverage – in or against your favor. When such things happen, the data leader and their teams must regroup, strategize, and develop practical next steps.

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FIVE PILLARS TO #LEADWITHDATA



Your problems and opportunities are not isolated. And so, your strategies and solutions shouldn't be either. Data and analytics initiatives often fail to deliver the intended results because they are approached as a solo effort. The cross-impacts to that initiative from other areas are underestimated, understated, or even completely ignored.

I built the KHYANA5D model based on my experience with data and analytics initiatives over the last two decades. The successful programs with enormous support, large-scale adoption, and sustained benefits ensured that the following five areas worked interconnectedly. Outstanding talent is what brings these five together.

While these five areas closely align with the five value chain views discussed earlier, that approach must be conducted sequentially for planning and prioritization. The contents focus on solution and execution as an interconnected set of work across these segments.

THE TWO SIDES OF LITERACY

Data literacy has been the recent focus on driving results from data and analytics programs. However, one of the most ignored and flawed aspects of this is that while the data community is making immense efforts to engage with the business users to spread data literacy, companies do not do enough to assist the data people in learning about the business aspects.

The business half of the literacy equation is not getting enough attention. And I don't think it is even about a desire to meet in the middle. It's more about Data people meeting their Business users, about 65-75% of the way. On the other side, if we can bring the business users about 35-45% of the way, we can make this work. This way, your most tech-savvy business users and the most business-savvy data/tech users will have a good overlap across the two areas.

The lack of this healthy overlap has been the consistent pain for many companies that cannot generate results from data initiatives. It is time that data people learn more about their business and improve this equation.



TALENT MANAGEMENT

The success of your data enablement initiatives largely depends on who is involved in planning and executing your programs. A group of A-level players will deliver exceptional results even on a tight budget and even shorter timelines. Such a team will face any complexity and come out strong to deliver results. Covid-19 did not start the talent war but has undoubtedly made permanent changes in how companies look at their talent strategy.

Outdated policies on where and when teams must work, rigid performance appraisal processes, and heavy hierarchical dependencies drive out the best of your people. It's time to reassess how you attract, grow and retain your most cherished asset – your people who make it happen. After all, it's all about making employees more productive and improving business performance.

LOW-INVESTMENT-HIGH-RETURN-OPPORTUNITIES (LIHRO)

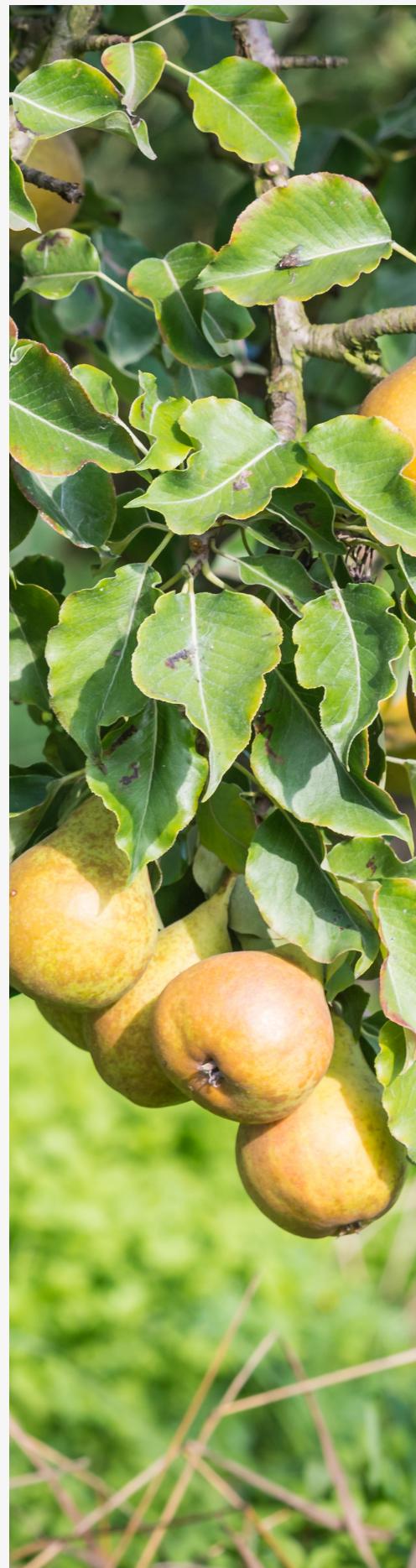
Data initiatives have a bad reputation that it is an expensive effort. As a result, many CFO's take a skeptical stand on data-related business cases, monitor the returns closely, or even make it harder to pitch and procure funding. Even worse, when there is a need for clawback from the budget, as it sometimes happens during 4Q of the year, the data budget is reduced.

The reality is that data initiatives are not projects but programs. And the data and analytics functions are an integral part of doing business, just like operations, risk management, finance, and accounting. So we are at a point where continued investments in data and analytics are critical if a company wants to grow or even stay where they are now.

However, not all data work needs to be expensive. A company can generate high returns with low investments. I coined the word "LIHRO" to denote these collectively. You don't need costly platforms, the latest toolsets, cutting-edge talent to do all of your data and analytics work. The problem arises from a fear-of-missing-out (FOMO) mindset.

Pareto was right then and is still correct. 80% of your challenges and 80% of opportunities can be overcome or maximized with widely available inexpensive platform options, opensource or standard toolsets, and sourcing or retraining your existing talent.

And you certainly do not need lengthy presentations to create a strategy or complicated processes that require you to hire a team of consultants. Or do you need to invest in products that help you identify your data lineage to the last element created when your company was established?



BUSINESS DIAGNOSTICS

Like the LIHRO approach above, using business diagnostics as a driver for expanded data and analytics usage ensures better utilization and adoption. **There are always more problems and opportunities than we have people to solve for them.**

A barrier to initiating change this way is the need to break the catch-22 situation that most businesses & teams face. They don't know what is possible with the data and the available toolsets. And their technology and data teams are not aware of what can be solved with the extent of data coverage they have.

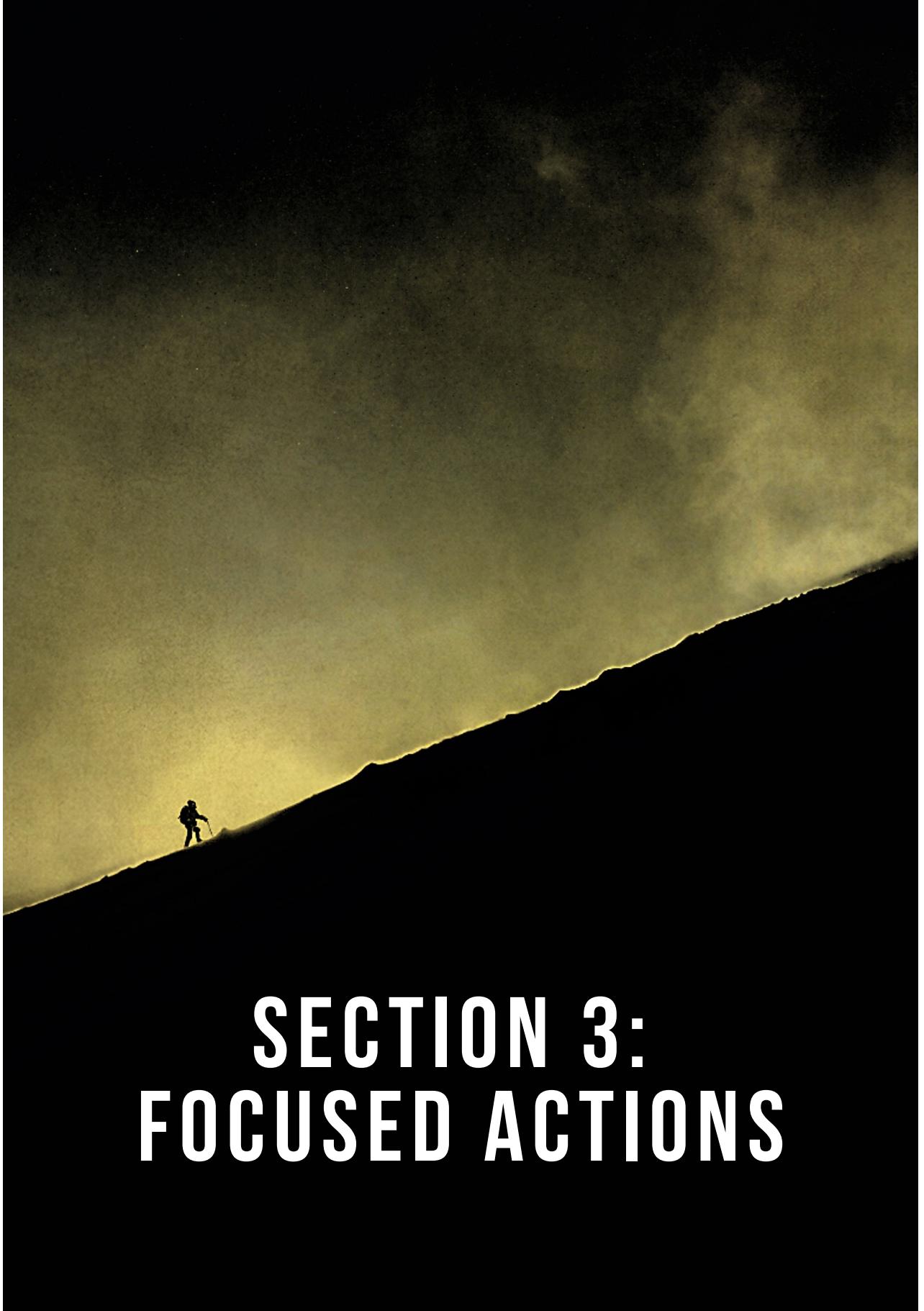
An approach that has worked for me is to bring the data teams closer to the business operations by shadowing a peer on the business team for one to two days a month.

Another approach is gaining access to the monthly management committee reports, which have the numbers, narration, and story behind the trends, key issues facing the business unit, and upcoming opportunities.



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SECTION 3: FOCUSSED ACTIONS

This section has several things that must be done right to ensure effective data enablement across the company. Most of these points are widely discussed elsewhere, so the "what" is self-explanatory. This is a small list and not a complete listing.

- Data Strategy
- Data Architecture
- Data Governance & Quality
- Data Engineering
- Information Lifecycle Management
- Data Risk Management
- Data Program & Change Management

If you have read through this point in the article, you know there is no simple "one article" on Data Enablement. The process is long and hard, and many things can go wrong. However, a long-term commitment, unwavering support from senior leadership, adequate funding, a determined and talented team, along a strong business/data/technology partnership will make the journey easier and worth pursuing.

How do we organize this in an easily consumable manner?

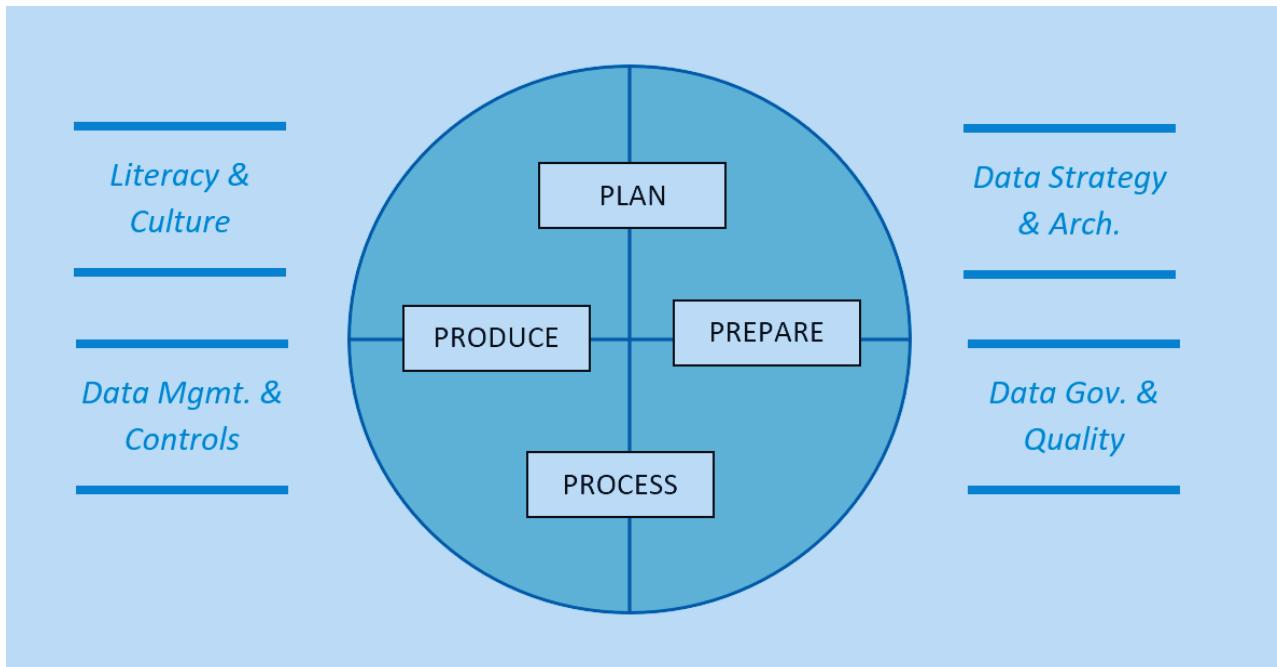
This is a dilemma for many who write and speak on data-related topics. You can look at this in several ways. First, it becomes too complicated to get everything around data enablement listed in a framework. Still, if it's trimmed a lot, we risk under-addressing the critical aspects, resulting in sub-optimal or unsustainable results.

There is no scarcity of ideas, strategies, or planning processes. However, most programs fail in creating realistic solutions and enabling pragmatic execution - from a lack of a unified approach that considers the ground reality of the company, talent, and situations.

An approach that considers all the opportunities and challenges and does not blindly follow a templated pattern to delivering data work. This connected approach will help avoid strategy suicide and enable execution excellence.



The picture is still evolving, but I use the Data Enablement Wheel of Excellence (DEWE) below for our consulting work. Though initially, it may look like another framework, I want to purposefully stay away from calling it a framework, as I view it as an Execution Model.



KHYANAFI'S DATA ENABLEMENT WHEEL OF EXCELLENCE (DEWE)

The individual components are still being built. Maturity assessments that go along with this will be business-user-centered, with the complexities removed and isolated for technology and data teams.

See how we got this far without discussing anything about AI/ML/Data Science?
The fundamentals discussed must be addressed first before you start investing in all those shiny new things. We still build the foundation and the walls before the roof, right?

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Wishing you most and more...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Prakash Baskar is an Intrapreneur-turned-Entrepreneur with over twenty-five years of experience working and rising to various senior leadership positions in global corporations across Strategy, Data, and Analytics roles. He is currently the Founder and President of Khyanafi, where he helps companies and leaders rapidly transition and accelerate the success of Data, Analytics, and Digital initiatives.

Through his Datapreneur coaching/mentoring practice, Prakash works with several leading and rising data leaders globally to accelerate their career growth and professional success.

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