Overview of data team roles

You've learned that data analytics teams are not limited to just the data analyst role. While you may join an organization as the only data professional, chances are you will join a team of data professionals. Other common data roles include data engineer, data scientist, and data architect. In this reading, you'll learn more about the specific role each data professional plays on a data team, and explore an example of the tasks each type of data professional may be responsible for.

The data team

The size of your data team will both depend on the size of your organization, and the amount of data that is regularly processed. Depending on the structure of your organization, a single data team may work on all data projects, or a single person may play multiple data team roles. It's also possible that there may be multiple teams that work on specific projects. Large organizations may have a data manager, a Chief Data Officer, or a Chief Technical Officer. This person will manage data projects and define the business questions that the data team addresses.

Data roles and their work

There are four primary roles on a data team. This table provides an overview of each role, along with information about what each role is responsible for.

Role	Definition	Duties
Data analyst	A professional who collects, transforms, and organizes data in order to draw conclusions, make predictions, and drive informed decision-making	- Analyze and review databases - Use scripting languages - Create visualizations - Present findings
Data engineer	A professional who transforms data into a useful format for analysis, and gives it a reliable infrastructure	- Build data pipelines - Ensure data pipelines run consistently - Ensure data is accessible to appropriate team members - Collaborate with team members and stakeholders

Data scientist	A professional who works primarily in data research, identifies business questions, collects data from multiple sources, organizes it, and finds answers	• Understand business application of data models • Analyze data for trends
Data architect	A professional who collaborates with data analysts, data scientists, and data architects to design the infrastructure of the database	• Plan the overall data lifecycle of a solution • Produce a data or solution architecture diagram

Key takeaways

If you enjoy working with data, there are many roles that you could fill in an organization. Data analysis can be a fulfilling career. Options for contributing to effective use of data in any organization are numerous, and range from coding-based roles, to architecture to analysis.

Resources for more information

These links provide more information about data teams and potential roles in data. They also provide some examples of how a data team works in an organization.
- Harvard Business School online provides information about how to structure a data team: https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/analytics-team-structure
- GitLab's Data Team Handbook provides insight into the way their data team runs and works across the entire organization: https://about.gitlab.com/handbook/business-technology/data-team/