



E-BOOK

Mastering Data Literacy

4 steps to strategically build data skills



Companies are collecting more data than ever before.

Still, most companies struggle to make sense of all this data. For this reason, data skills have become a sought-after skill.

To stay competitive, companies need to find a way to teach data skills to their employees. This includes understanding why data skills are important, what data literacy looks like for each individual employee, and how to establish a data-driven company culture.

In this e-book, you'll find all the answers and learn how to strategically build data skills in your organization in 4 steps.

Happy reading!



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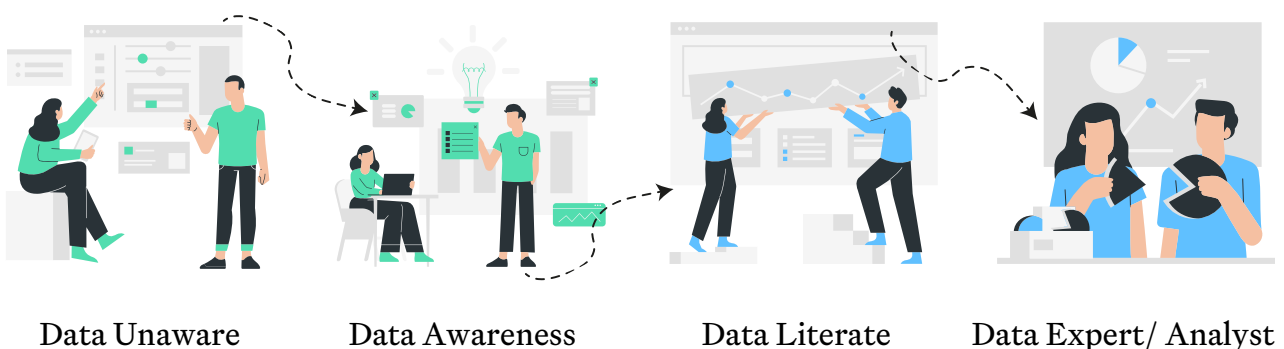
More data equals more knowledge - or does it?

Across all industries, companies are collecting more data than ever before, due to the availability of cost-effective, cloud-based and easy-to-implement systems. Many companies have a data warehouse or data lake to process and store this data. It's proven that intelligent data enables companies to make better decisions, gain visibility, streamline processes, increase productivity and drive higher profits.

A Gartner study provided confirmation that building a data-driven culture will increase a company's economic growth threefold.

But there's a caveat to this optimistic news.

Companies shouldn't assume that employees are able to understand and use the vast range of data that is suddenly available. Most organizations are still struggling to equip their workforces to use the data in a meaningful way. According to a study by Harvard Business Review, 90% of executives believe area-wide data skills are critical to the success of their business, but only 25% of employees are confident in their own abilities. So, companies are recognizing this urgent need to build data and analytics skills across the board.





But what exactly are data skills?

Until a few years ago, data skills building was usually only relevant to roles where core tasks required proficiency in data or technology. Recently, fundamental data skills have also become a general requirement for many other roles. In marketing, sales, human resources and project management, interaction with data is constantly increasing and the potential for data to eventually impact all areas of a business is immense.

Modern tools, especially business intelligence software, make it possible to collect large amounts of data. It can then be integrated into everyday work by those lacking significant expertise. This has enhanced the popularity of data skills, so companies now cultivate data skills across departments in addition to their data and IT teams. As a result, the desire to improve data literacy today is less about an individual's expert knowledge and more about the general ability to understand data, share knowledge, and have meaningful conversations.

Now, all employees aim to:

- Ask the right questions,
- Check data for validity,
- Understand data and decide which data is relevant,
- Interpret data correctly,
- Prepare data for visual presentation,
- Communicate purposefully with and about data,
- Derive the right recommendations for action from data,
- Measure and verify the effects of measures implemented using data as evidence.



Why should a broad transformation take place?

It's sometimes hard to justify data transformation on a broad scale. If the business needs to become data-driven, wouldn't it just be easier to hire data experts? This could form part of the solution, but the real transformation needs to happen elsewhere. Many relevant tasks and big levers at the data level don't reside in complex solutions, but at the intersection of technical expertise and confident use of data in the general workforce. In short, a large number of data use cases do not call for complex solutions but for targeted analyses by content experts, since they can recognize and implement the necessary business measures.

It is also imperative that regular, critical handling of data encourages and challenges how employees use employees data and how they make data-driven decisions:

- The understanding and appreciation and ultimately also acceptance of data-driven decisions increases.
- Analysis can be reproduced, and is subject to regular scrutiny, meaning that problems and inconsistencies are identified faster.
- Communication with and about data is secure, smooth and requirements for data and analyses are more clearly articulated between business departments and data experts.
- Data quality improves when it is handled attentively.

Large-scale transformation creates a mutualistic symbiosis between business departments and data experts: day-to-day analyses can be performed by business departments, while experts devote resources to more complex projects.

However, companies should not succumb to any illusions: employees without the appropriate skills won't be able to substitute for an expert on short notice. Although not impossible, this process is naturally long-term and requires time, extensive training and, above all, experience. The real leverage is rather the points mentioned above, and the effect is enormous.

But how can such a transformation succeed in practice?



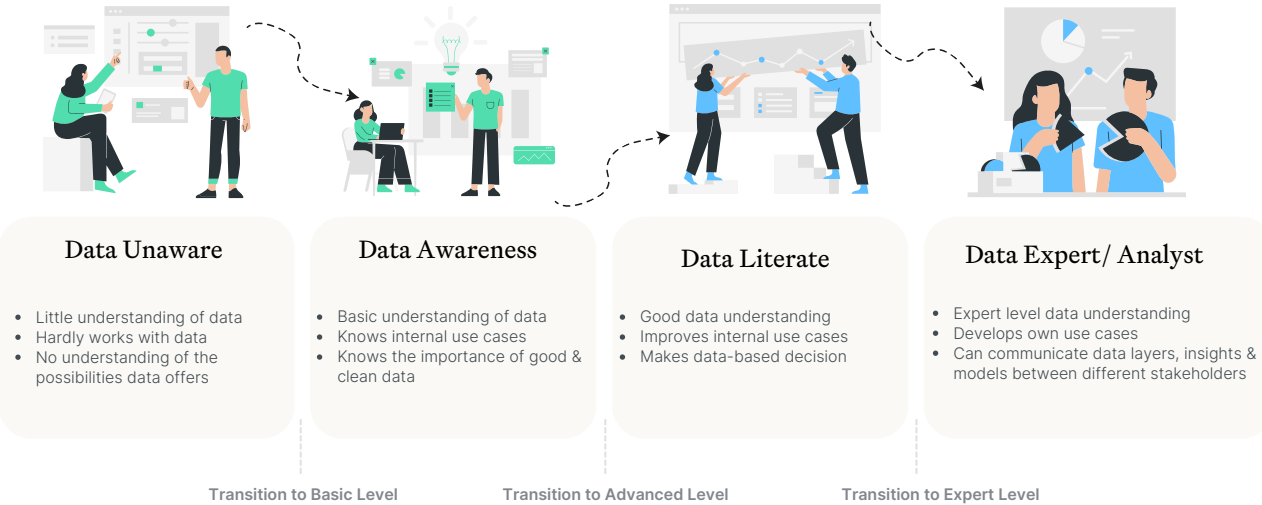
4 steps to strategically build data skills

1. Defining the target state in your company
2. Capture data skills and identify skill gaps
3. Build data skills and introduce a data-driven corporate culture
4. Measure the effectiveness of your initiatives

01

Defining the target state in your company

Before you start building data skills, you should first define the target capacity or target distribution of data skills in your company. Target skill profiles allow you to build skills strategically and measure your progress. There are four categories to define different levels of data skills: Data Unaware, Data Aware, Data Literate, and Data Expert. These personas have a continuously improving data skills set that can be used to locate employees and define targets. Not all employees will start at the same level, and not all will have the same goal. Once you know where you want to go, it will be easier to map the way to get there.





02

Capture data skills & identify skill gaps

First, you need to determine the level of data skills-building that each employee needs to perform their role effectively. Start by identifying the areas or departments where transformation is needed, and where data can be used to its fullest potential in the future. Then, review the current data skills of your employees against their desired profile.

The gap between your employees' existing skills and their corresponding skill profile provides an immediate starting point for a training program. AI-supported learning platforms can help you define skill profiles and capture an accurate snapshot of the skills of each individual employee.

03

Build data skills & introduce a data-driven corporate culture

To close the identified skill gaps, Learning & Development (L&D) professionals and data executives, should develop and implement training plans for the targeted development of data skills. It's vital to create bespoke plans that meet individual training needs and complement the strategic direction of your company. At this point, you should create an environment that supports learning and applying data skills as a key component of your corporate culture.

These are our top interventions that will help you to promote the development of data skills and build a data-driven corporate culture.



Prioritize the building of data skills

Data skills are no longer a specific technical skill; they're a broad, professional skill set for all employees. It's important for companies to strive for a definite shift to a data-driven culture. Include an element of data skills in all job descriptions across the organization, whether they are marketing experts, salespeople, or project managers.

Develop a common language when talking about data

It's important to develop a common language when talking about data, in order for all employees to understand the touch points between their work and data skills. As an organization, develop a clear manifesto summarizing the data skills which are most important to your work. Then, provide learning content that uses this language and demonstrates how these concepts are reflected in your business across every department.

Make continuing education data-driven, too

Use an AI learning platform that analyzes your employees' skills, then adapts all learning content to their current knowledge and where they need to be. Demonstrate the effectiveness of the learning content by showing your employees how it will enable them to develop, at any skill level. Encourage your employees to track and analyze their own progress toward the target skill profile, and to support each other to close any skill gaps.

Empower your employees to apply their newly acquired skills

To succeed long term, employees must recognize the value they create with their newly acquired knowledge and view it in practice in their daily work. Ensure the training includes practical ways to apply the newly acquired knowledge for each role, alongside theoretical learning. Allow employees to work on real projects in training sessions, and solve real business problems. Many useful ideas can develop in this environment, with different groups of employees providing a fresh perspective on long-term issues.



04

Measure the effectiveness of your initiatives

Employees and managers should be constantly monitoring how effective the training interventions are in daily work. Encourage feedback on the value they perceive following the training, and how it has impacted their work and that of their team, both positive and negative. Ensure that you formulate clear goals and set clear KPIs that are visible to all stakeholders.

Quantify value

Examples

Set KPIs for training activities and measure their results.

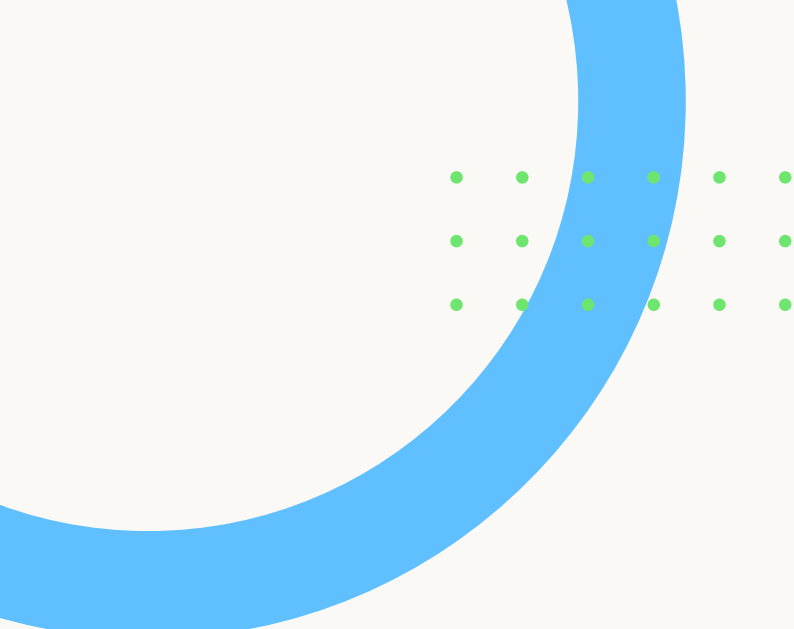
- Number of skills built up
- Number of Data Unaware, Data Aware, Data Literate, and Data Expert
- Completion rate

Make use cases and their benefits measurable.

- Cost savings
- Efficiency increases
- Profitability increases

Obtain regular, qualitative and quantitative feedback from your learners.

- Qualitative feedback
- NPS



edyoucated is an AI-powered, adaptive learning platform empowering people, teams and organizations to build the skills of the future.

How? By transforming one-size fits all into personalized, engaging and measurable learning experiences. edyoucated unlocks a multitude of benefits to teams including better guidance for managers, smarter skills assessments, highly customized learning paths, and a blended learning approach to anchor knowledge long-term. Plus, the solution is modular and integrates seamlessly with existing learning systems. Empowering teams of all sizes to provide more strategic, faster, and successful training than mainstream learning solutions.

The result? An uplift in productivity, employee happiness, and employee retention.

Are you ready to build a data-driven culture?

Get in touch!

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