



Nekst Data Literacy – White Paper

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Most Important Elements of a Data Literacy Program

As we enter the latter half of 2021, it is a clearly stated fact that companies around the world have identified lack in data literacy skills as a prohibitive factor in the successful deployment and adoption of digital transformation programs. At the end of 2019, Gartner predicted that up to 80% of organisations would embark on implementing a data literacy program during the course of 2020. That was before the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Where are you at?

With this in mind, developing an in-house data literacy program can be accomplished, but at what cost to your business? What are the skills required in-house in order to do just that? If you have the skills, what is the capacity of these resources to take on a project of this magnitude to ensure delivery in a timely fashion, required by the business to keep moving forward?

Some organisations we have been chatting to are doing just that. They are dedicating resources to some sort of internal program. One organisation in particular has done a complete review of all the BI and Data Analytics resources to understand an As-Is situation of their business and have now started to develop an in-house program. When asking more questions about their approach, it turns out that the program they are building is focused on helping their existing professional resources to increase their own skills, with a focus to achieve a Data Scientist level type qualification. There is nothing wrong with this, as this client being in financial services has a great need for Data Science related work and will certainly gain benefit from their efforts. But, what about the rest of

their businesspeople? Those earmarked to consume all that information once generated. Where are their skills sets regarding data literacy and are they being considered in the process?

The first thing to consider in your Data Literacy program is to understand where you stand to gain the most benefit from.

Element Number 1:

Understanding where your team, department or overall organisation stands in their current data literacy skill levels is the first step to make. You will need a solid scientific based framework to perform the assessments. The insights gained through this process are crucial for making decisions about how much budget should be allocated, and exactly where this budget needs to be spent, in what areas and for which people to help the individual move from their current base to a higher skill level, and in so doing increase the overall team, department or the organisations overall data literacy skill levels.



Element Number 2:

Now that you understand where your people in their respective groups stand, do you have the right content and mechanism to deliver the right training programs for each individual. What is the framework within which each individual is classified based on their assessments? And how do I select the right training content for each person individually based on their assessment results. Ensuring you have great training material and up to date content is key for the successful rollout of your program.

Element Number 3:

Do you have accredited training facilitators in place to help you deliver the training material? Any person embarking on a training program wants to ensure that on the successful completion of their training that they are officially recognised for their efforts, and they can take their new learnings directly back to the office and immediately show the benefits of the newly acquired skills.

If this is not the case, perhaps you have Senior or Principal level skills in your Data and Analytics departments that could take on this role. What would the impact be on their current workloads, do they have capacity to take on the additional workload?

Element Number 4:

Now that you have delivered the data literacy training, have you considered how to keep improving the material as the market keeps moving forward. Have you considered a framework approach to threading a data literacy data centred culture into the fabric of your current organisational culture? How will you help your organisation shift its current culture to one that is most certainly being driven by digital transformation projects and the 4th Industrial revolution?

Conclusion:

No matter where your organisation currently stands with regard to the elements required, the bottom line is that Data Literacy skills are the base core

foundational needs for an ever-increasing digital world that we all operate in. Making the investment to improve the current skills has clear return on investment outcomes that will help resolve current inefficiencies and lay a foundation for future job skill requirements that digital transformation is pushing into our everyday workplace.