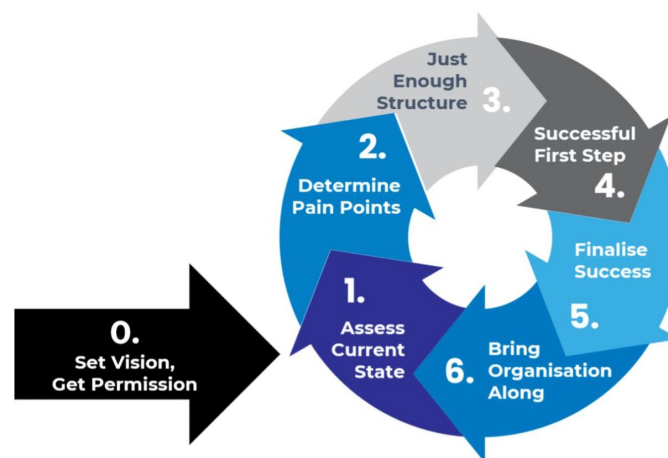


Why Data Governance projects fail and what to do instead (Part 2)

In my previous post, I discussed the most common causes for Data Governance programs to be seen as unsuccessful. My view, in summary, is that Data Governance fails when it is Big Bang over Incremental, Formality over Delivery, and Ivory Tower over Engaged. The Fujitsu Data & AI ResultsNow® Data Governance approach takes these issues into account to deliver more successful long term Data Governance programs.

The overall approach is demonstrated in the diagram here and described below:



Step 0: Set vision, get permission:

Before commencing any Data Governance initiative, the organisation needs to set a clear vision for what a successful Data Governance program will look like. Questions such as "Why are we investing in Data Governance", "Who at the C-Suite level is responsible", "What is the purpose of our data assets" and "What's the most effective operating structure (de-centralised? federated? centralised?) for Data Governance" all need to be answered. In regard to the driving reason for Data Governance, I recommend the Defensive/Offensive continuum put forward by Thomas Davenport and Leandro Dallemulle in the Harvard Business Review in June 2017 as a great starting assessment. The answers don't need to be detailed at this stage, but a clear set of "Rules of Engagement" is required to ensure clarity of focus and to remove organisational friction during the implementation stages. Once these are clear and endorsed by the relevant authorities, a small initial seed funding business case may be required to move into the iterative cycle of Data Governance uplift activities.

Step 1: Assess current state:

As Watts Humphrey (creator of the Capability Maturity Model for software development) said "If you don't know where you are, a map won't help". You need to understand where the organisation is strong and where it is weak in Data Governance capabilities. An independent assessment (such as Fujitsu Data & AI's Online Data Governance Maturity Assessment) is vital in understanding the current status quo, so that effective actions can be taken to bring those capabilities to where the organisation needs them to be.

Step 2: Determine pain points

Using the refreshed understanding of the current capabilities of the organisation, work with the business leadership to find one of the most critical Data Governance issues that are impacting business performance today. This could be strategic projects (such as Digital Transformation or Cloud Migration), moving to customer centric thinking, implementing Advanced Analytics projects or system upgrade or consolidation projects. It could also be additional sources of revenue that require excellent data. Find a critical business initiative that is going to under-perform without Data Governance capabilities and work with that project to plan a method of making it successful.

Step 3: Just enough structure

Whilst structure over action is a cause of failure, it is necessary to have just enough structure to make the planned Data Governance project sustainable and supportable. Some amount of policy, operating model, resourcing, tools, IT architecture statements and related content will be necessary to enable the proposed Data Governance project to function. The challenge here is working out what is needed and what is low value overhead. If this is the first iteration of the Data Governance uplift cycle, you will have to build some foundational elements. If this is the second or later iterations, the effect is more incremental.

Step 4: Successful first step

With the chosen problem space and sufficient structure in place, measure the current situation and test alternative solutions at the small scale to measure which solution delivers the best overall outcome for the organisation. Work with the project team that you are supporting and demonstrate that Data Governance thinking, tools and people have provided an effective solution.

Step 5: Finalise success

Once the optimum solution approach has been identified, implement it for the entire scope of the issue, and do it in an automated, low ongoing cost manner that is sustainable and supportable. Measure the uplift and confirm it matches against the small-scale project.

Step 6: Bring organisation along

Work with your Organisational Change Management and Employee Engagement functions to develop a roll-out plan for the solution. However, also work with your Internal Communications teams to sell the benefits delivered by Data Governance to the broader enterprise, especially management. Case studies, roadshows, webinars and similar functions may seem frivolous but are critical to the ongoing success of the Data Governance team. If you want to be able to run another cycle of the Uplift cycle, then you need to convince everyone that the first iteration delivered business value.

Fujitsu Data & AI's ResultsNow® Data Governance methodology is structured to avoid the common causes of Data Governance failure, and to deliver a more business-value-focussed approach to building out Data Governance capabilities for your organisation.

To find out more, please contact a Fujitsu Data & AI specialist now.

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