

The DGI Data Governance Framework

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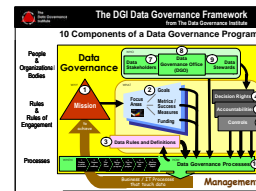
Abstract

Data Governance can mean different things to different people. Adding to this ambiguity, governance and stewardship can be perceived as complicated endeavors.

Frameworks help us organize how we think and communicate about complicated or ambiguous concepts. If your organization employs a framework, your people can more easily achieve clarity of thought and purpose. A framework can also help you succeed in realizing value from your program and efforts and data.

The DGI Data Governance Framework was designed to help you:

- *Achieve clarity*
- *Ensure value from your efforts*
- *Create a clear mission*
- *Maintain scope and focus*
- *Establish accountabilities*
- *Define measurable successes*



This paper describes core concepts, the components of the DGI Data Governance Framework, and typical steps in implementing a program.

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The DGI Data Governance Framework

What is Data Governance?

Here's a short definition of Data Governance:

- ◆ Data Governance is the exercise of decision-making and authority for data-related matters.

Here's a bit longer definition:

- ◆ Data Governance is a system of decision rights and accountabilities for information-related processes, executed according to agreed-upon models which describe who can take what actions with what information, and when, under what circumstances, using what methods.

What will Data Governance look like in your organization? Obviously, a program that focuses on Privacy / Compliance / Security may look different from one that exists to support Data Warehouses and Business Intelligence. And, a program concentrating on Architecture / Integration may involve different participants than one whose goals involve Data Quality. (We'll discuss typical focus areas for Data Governance later.)

Whatever you focus your efforts on, you'll need to define for your participants exactly what you mean by Data Governance. Choose your words carefully; they must resonate in your culture and environment if your program is to be accepted.

- ◆ Does your organization have strict hierarchical, command-and-controls protocols? Are you operating in a compliance-driven, "black-and-white" environment? Do you know what you want, but the challenge is getting people to obey existing rules? If so, your definition may emphasize "exercise of authority."
- ◆ What if you're still trying to create collections of policies, rules, and data definitions? What if your issues fall more into a "shades-of-gray" area, where the challenge is getting the right participants to collaboratively agree on the right set of rules, and to work together to monitor and enforce them? In that case, your definition may emphasize "decision rights."

It's important to present a definition that implies what you are trying to accomplish with your program. You don't want to send the wrong message to those who are helping to govern your data, or to those who are being governed.

Definition

Data Governance is the exercise of decision-making and authority for data-related matters.

Alternate Definition

"Management is the decisions you make. Governance is the structure for making them."

- CIO Magazine



Here are some other definitions and soundbites that may be useful:

- ◆ Data Governance refers to the organizational bodies, rules, decision rights, and accountabilities of people and information systems as they perform information-related processes.
- ◆ Data Governance is how we “decide how to decide.”

Have you heard people at your organization claim they have “no governance?” That would be impossible. After all, anarchy is a form of governance! So is a dictatorship. Chances are, your organization wants a form of governance that falls somewhere between these two extremes. You probably want to move from an informal, unrecognized form of governance to a more formal, recognized, and accepted form of governance.

Of course, Data Governance never replaces management. It complements it. Governance comes into play when individual managers find that they cannot – or should not – make independent decisions. Governance brings together cross-functional teams to make interdependent rules or to resolve issues or to provide services to data stakeholders.

These cross-functional teams – Data Stewards and/or Data Governors – generally come from the Business side of operations. They set policy that IT and Data groups will follow as they establish their architectures, implement their own best practices, and address requirements. Governance can be considered the overall process of making this work.

Data Governance and IT Governance

What’s the difference between Data Governance and IT Governance? Let’s start with another question: What’s the difference between data/information and information technology (IT)? Consider a plumbing analogy: IT is like the pipes and pumps and storage tanks in a plumbing system. Data is like the water flowing through those pipes.

Suppose you were afraid that the water flowing through your pipes was poisoned. What type of plumber would you call? None, of course! Plumbers are specialists in the pipes and pumps and storage tanks – not in what’s flowing through them. You’d call in specialists who know how to test for water quality – specialists who could tell the difference between clean water and other types of clear liquids.

Large organizations have to make many decisions about their IT systems and the data that flows through them. Many of these

Soundbite

Governance comes into play when individual managers find that they cannot – or should not – make independent decisions.

Soundbite

IT is like the pipes and pumps and storage tanks in a plumbing system.

Data is like the water flowing through those pipes.

If you suspected your water was poisoned, would you call a plumber?



decisions are made by IT Governance groups focusing on IT Portfolio Management issues, such as deciding when it's time to put in a new application, with all its new pipes and pumps and storage tanks. Some concerns will never find their way to such a group, however. Issues specific to what's "flowing through the pipes" require a cross-functional group that brings the expertise needed to make data-related decisions.

This is not to say that your existing IT Governance Board can't address issues that escalate up to them. But along the way, as issues are analyzed and recommendations are formed, Data Governance will require input from Subject Matter Experts and management representatives that understand data. Effective Data Governance will require ongoing contributions from Data Stewards. It will probably warrant its own organizational bodies, its own focused attention, and its own conceptual framework.

Why Use a Data Governance Framework?

Everything a company does should tie to one of three universal executive drivers

- ◆ Increase revenue and value
- ◆ Manage cost and complexity
- ◆ Ensure survival through attention to risk and vulnerabilities: compliance, security, privacy, etc.

This is certainly true of Data Governance; all efforts should tie back to one or more of these universal value mandates. Maintaining a focus on value can be difficult, though, if participants are uncertain about goals and strategies.

Frameworks help us organize how we think and communicate about complicated or ambiguous concepts. If your organization settles on a framework, your people can more easily achieve clarity of thought and purpose.

The DGI Data Governance Framework was designed to help

- ◆ Achieve clarity
- ◆ Ensure value from your efforts
- ◆ Create a clear mission
- ◆ Maintain scope and focus
- ◆ Establish accountabilities
- ◆ Define measurable successes

Goals

The DGI Data Governance Framework was designed to help

- Achieve clarity
- Ensure value from your efforts
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- Establish accountabilities
- Define measurable successes



What Do You Want Data Governance to Accomplish?

Regardless of the focus of your program, chances are you hope to accomplish the following universal goals for Data Governance programs:

1. Enable better decision-making
2. Reduce operational friction
3. Protect the needs of data stakeholders
4. Train management and staff to adopt common approaches to data issues
5. Build standard, repeatable processes
6. Reduce costs and increase effectiveness through coordination of efforts
7. Ensure transparency of processes

What else are you trying to accomplish? The most common objective of Data Governance programs is to standardize data definitions across an enterprise or initiative. Other goals and objectives depend on the focus of a particular Data Governance program.

Typical Data Governance Focus Areas

It's important to note that most programs don't limit themselves to a single focus area. Some efforts – such as Compliance and Data Quality – naturally fit together. While many programs will address goals in two or three areas, then, most newly-formalized programs don't try to address every focus area.

Following are descriptions of Data Governance programs in six common focus areas. A single framework can help organize efforts for all of these focus areas because of what all Data Governance programs have in common:

- ◆ They all have activities that address a three-part governance mission: to create rules, resolve conflicts, and provide ongoing services.
- ◆ They all employ most or all of the universal components of a Data Governance program.
- ◆ They all address universal governance processes and services, such as Issue Resolution and Stakeholder Care.

Benchmark

The most common objective of Data Governance programs is to standardize data definitions across an enterprise.

Perspective

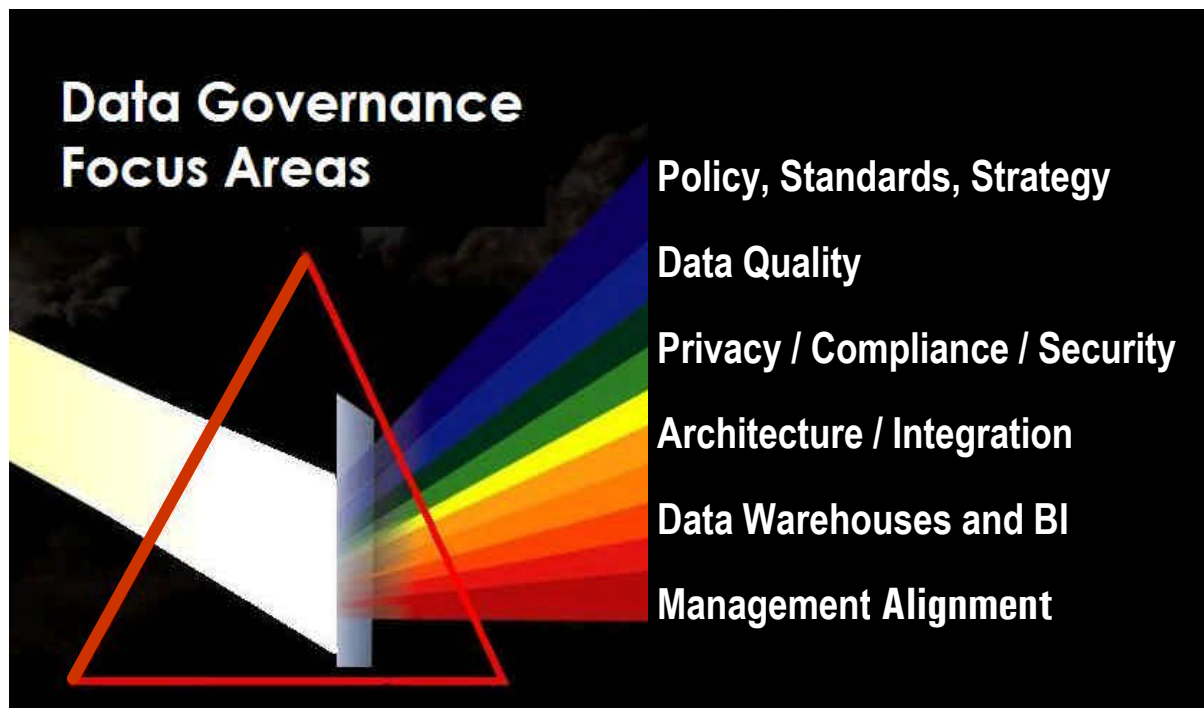
The type of policies you address and the level of involvement required of data stakeholder groups will depend on the focus of your Data Governance Program.



Data Governance programs with different focus areas will, however, differ in the type of rules and issues they'll address.

They'll differ in the emphasis they give to certain data-related decisions and actions.

And, they'll differ in the level of involvement required of types of data stakeholders.



Data Governance With a Focus on Policy, Standards, Strategy

This type of program typically comes into existence because some group within the organization needs support from a cross-functional leadership body. For example, companies moving from silo development to enterprise systems may find their application development teams resisting the guidance of Data Architects and Modelers. Formal Data Governance policies, backed by cross-functional Stewards, can give needed weight to architectural positions.

Enterprise initiatives such as Enterprise Data Management (EDM), Business Process Reengineering (BPR), standardization on platforms, and acquisition of data sets and systems can also benefit from such a program focus. Often these types of programs start by concentrating on sets of Master Data and/or Metadata.

Soundbite

Formal Data Governance policies, backed by cross-functional Stewards, can give needed weight to architectural positions.



A charter for this type of program may hold Data Governance and Stewardship participants accountable to:

- Review, approve, monitor policy
- Collect, choose, review, approve, monitor standards
- Align sets of policies and standards
- Contribute to Business Rules
- Contribute to Data Strategies
- Identify stakeholders and establish decision rights

Data Governance With a Focus on Data Quality

This type of program typically comes into existence because of issues around the quality, integrity, or usability of data. It may be sponsored by a Data Quality group or a business team that needs better quality data. (For example: Data Acquisition or Mergers & Acquisitions.) Often, quality efforts are initially applied to Master Data. These types of programs almost always involve Data Quality software. They may begin with an enterprise focus, or efforts may be local to a department or a project.

A charter for this type of program may hold Data Governance and Stewardship participants accountable to:

- Set direction for Data Quality
- Monitor Data Quality
- Report status for quality-focused initiatives
- Identify stakeholders, establish decision rights, clarify accountabilities

Data Governance With a Focus on Privacy / Compliance / Security

This type of program typically comes into existence because of concerns about Data Privacy, Access Management / Permissions, Information Security controls, or compliance with regulatory, contractual, or internal requirements. The program may be sponsored by Business or IT or be an outgrowth of a Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) program. Often, it results from a senior management mandate.

These programs generally begin with an enterprise scope, but often efforts are limited to specific types of data. They almost always include technologies to locate sensitive data, to protect data, and/or to manage policies or controls.

A charter for this type of program may hold Data Governance and Stewardship participants accountable to:

Soundbite

Data Governance often sets direction for Data Quality and then monitors the success of Data Quality efforts.

Soundbite

Programs that focus on Privacy / Compliance / Security often stem from a management mandate.



- Help protect sensitive data through support for Access Management and Security requirements
- Align frameworks and initiatives
- Help assess risk and define controls to manage risk
- Help enforce regulatory, contractual, architectural compliance requirements
- Identify stakeholders, establish decision rights, clarify accountabilities

Data Governance With a Focus on Architecture / Integration

This type of program typically comes into existence in conjunction with a major system acquisition, development effort, or update that requires new levels of cross-functional decision-making and accountabilities.

Another driver for such a program would be a move to Service Oriented Architecture (SOA), with its need for well-governed data or a new focus on Metadata, Master Data Management (MDM), or Enterprise Data Management (EDM)

A charter for this type of program may hold Data Governance and Stewardship participants accountable to:

- Ensure consistent data definitions
- Support architectural policies and standards
- Support Metadata Programs, SOA, Master Data Management, Enterprise Data Management (EDM)
- Bring cross-functional attention to integration challenges
- Identify stakeholders, establish decision rights, clarify accountabilities

Data Governance With a Focus on Data Warehouses and Business Intelligence (BI)

This type of program typically comes into existence in conjunction with a specific data warehouse, data mart, or BI tool. These types of efforts require tough data-related decisions, and organizations often implement governance to help make initial decisions, to support follow-on decisions, and to enforce standards and rules after the new system becomes operational.

The scope may be initially limited to rules, roles, and responsibilities for the new system, but sometimes this type of program serves as a prototype for an enterprise Data Governance / Stewardship program.

Soundbite

A move to Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA), with its need for well-governed data, could be a driver for a program with a focus on Architecture / Integration.

Soundbite

Data Governance programs with a focus on Data Warehouses / BI often start small, but may scale to other efforts

The idea is to "act locally but think globally."



A charter for this type of program may hold Data Governance and Stewardship participants accountable to:

- Establish rules for data usage and data definitions.
- Identify stakeholders, establish decision rights, clarify accountabilities
- Identify SDLC embedded governance steps and loop-outs for projects
- Clarify the value of data assets and data-related projects.

Data Governance With a Focus on Management Alignment

This type of program typically comes into existence when managers find it difficult to make “routine” data-related management decisions because of their potential effect on operations or compliance efforts. Managers realize they need to come together to make collaborative decisions but either don’t know all the stakeholders to involve or have an obstacle to assembling them. In such cases, a formal Data Governance program can help managers make decisions with confidence.

Sometimes such programs consist primarily of councils that come together to analyze interdependencies, make decisions, and issue policies. Other times, the Data Governance program will have multiple focuses, such as supporting management and also addressing Compliance.

A charter for this type of program may hold Data Governance and Stewardship participants accountable to:

- Measure the value of data and data-related efforts.
- Align frameworks and initiatives
- Identify stakeholders, establish decision rights, clarify accountabilities
- Identify SDLC embedded governance steps and loop-outs for projects
- Monitor and report on data-related projects
- Promote data-related messages and positions

Soundbite

Data Governance programs with a focus on Management Alignment typically come into existence when managers find it difficult to make “routine” data-related management decisions because of their potential effect on operations or compliance efforts.

Your Focus and Your Stakeholders

What will your Data Governance program focus on? This decision will determine which type of rules and concerns your participants will address. It will influence the mix of data stakeholders involved in your data-related decisions and actions, as well as the amount of effort required of your stakeholders.



Who is a data stakeholder? Any individual or group that could affect or be affected by the data under discussion. Some stakeholders are obvious – business groups, IT teams, Data Architects, and DBAs. Other stakeholders may not be so obvious for a given decision or situation. Knowing which stakeholder to bring to the table – and when – is the responsibility of the Data Governance team.

Working Toward Your Goals With a Data Governance Life Cycle Methodology

All programs have lifecycles.

Here are the 7 Phases in the Data Governance Life Cycle.



Note that Data Governance does not begin with the design of the program!

- ◆ Before you start deciding who goes on what committee, you should be clear about your program’s value statement.
- ◆ You should have developed a roadmap to share with stakeholders.
- ◆ Those stakeholders will want to know the WHO / WHAT / WHEN / WHERE / WHY / HOW of your program before they decide to support it, so you need to anticipate their questions. You’ll need preliminary answers, even if they’re only assumptions until you do your actual program design.

Best Practice

Consider receiving input from other organizations that have successfully launched Data Governance programs.

These first three phases of your Data Governance Life Cycle are difficult. We’ve all heard the saying that it’s hard to see the forest for the trees. What if you ARE one of the trees?

If you’re just getting started, consider asking for assistance from another group within your organization that has successfully launched a new program. What lessons did they learn about value statements and funding?

Also, consider receiving input from other organizations that have successfully launched Data Governance programs. What metrics did their executives want to see? What value statements resonated with their stakeholders? What funding models did they use, and were they successful?



As you perform the activities needed to gain support and funding, remember that your program may plan to address multiple focus areas. Each new effort should be introduced using the seven steps of the life cycle. Even specific governance-led projects, such as creating a set of data standards, will want to follow the Data Governance Life Cycle steps:

1. Develop a value statement
2. Prepare a roadmap
3. Plan and fund
4. Design
5. Deploy
6. Govern
7. Monitor, measure, report.

A note about the final phase in the Data Governance Life Cycle: Each time you consider a new set of activities, you'll want to anticipate stakeholders' expectations for monitoring efforts, measuring success, and reporting status. Your ability to deliver industry-standard metrics that satisfy stakeholders can be the difference between program activities that are chronically painful and those that become routine.

Framework Components in Detail

Following are descriptions of each of the 10 universal components of a Data Governance program.

Rules and Rules of Engagement

1. Mission and Vision
2. Goals, Governance Metrics and Success Measures, and Funding Strategies
3. Data Rules and Definitions
4. Decision Rights
5. Accountabilities
6. Controls

People and Organizational Bodies

7. Data Stakeholders
8. A Data Governance Office
9. Data Stewards

Processes

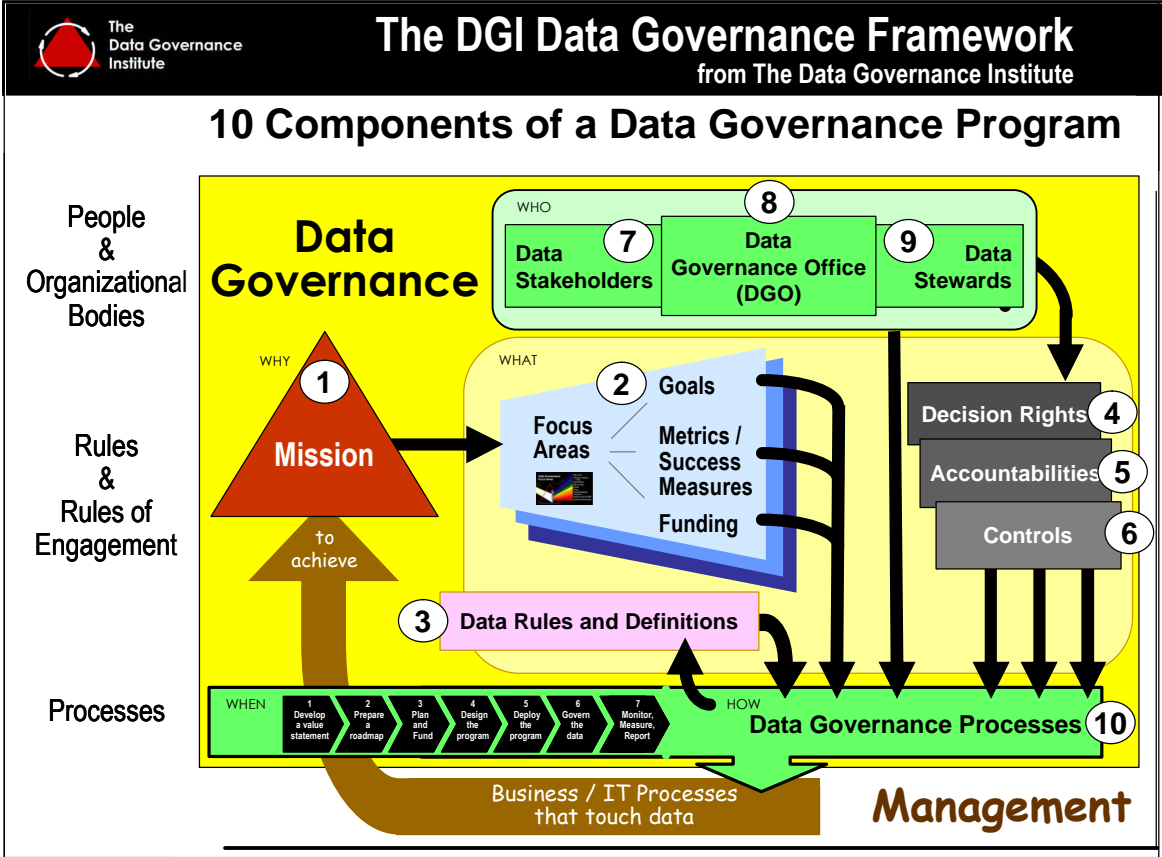
10. Proactive, Reactive, and Ongoing Data Governance Processes

Benchmark

Each time you consider a new set of activities, you'll want to anticipate stakeholders' expectations for monitoring efforts, measuring success, and reporting status.

Your ability to deliver industry-standard metrics that satisfy stakeholders can be the difference between program activities that are chronically painful and those that become routine.





Data Governance Components that Deal With Rules and “Rules of Engagement”

Component #1: Mission and Vision

At its highest level, Data Governance typically has a three-part mission:

- 1) Proactively define/align rules.
- 2) Provide ongoing, boundary-spanning protection and services to data stakeholders.
- 3) React to and resolve issues arising from non-compliance with rules.



This is similar to the functions provided by the three branches of many representative forms of political governance. One branch of a government – the legislative branch – establishes rules in the form of laws. Another branch – the executive branch – executes those rules, while providing ongoing services to constituents. A third branch – the judicial branch – deals with rule-breakers and, when necessary, interprets laws and resolves inconsistencies between different sets of rules and regulations.

This is not to suggest your Data Governance program needs three “branches.” After all, your Business and IT management structures are already functioning in the “executive branch” role. And often, the same group of Data Stewards that establishes rules will also resolve conflicts.

However, as you build your Data Governance bodies, roles, and responsibilities, it’s useful to remember that Senators and Judges require support staff. To be successful in establishing and enforcing policies, standards, and other types of rules, your Data Governance program will need to provide the type of support that’s built into the DGI Data Governance Framework.

Along with your mission, be sure to develop a clear vision. What could your organization look like with a mature Data Governance program? How about without one?

A note: Mission statements can be dry. On the other hand, the language you use to paint your vision should be rich, evocative, compelling. Your vision should be able to inspire stakeholders, to help them envision possibilities, to encourage them to set data-related goals.

Best Practice

To be successful in establishing and enforcing policies, standards, and other types of rules, your Data Governance program will need to provide the type of support that's built into the DGI Data Governance Framework.

Component #2: Goals, Governance Metrics / Success Measures, Funding Strategies

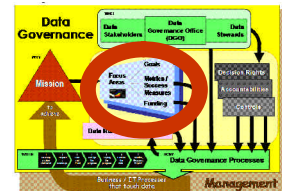
Some of your program’s goals may result in “soft” results that are anecdotal, or hard to measure. Others should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, and Timely.

How do you decide which goals you should pursue? Start by anticipating the effect of governance efforts on the “4 Ps”: Programs, Projects, Professional Disciplines, and People as individuals. Ask how you efforts could help enterprise programs (or high-profile projects)

- ◆ Increase revenue and value
- ◆ Manage cost and complexity
- ◆ Ensure survival through attention to risk and vulnerabilities: compliance, security, privacy, etc.

Ask how the program could support the efforts of Architecture, Quality, Application Development, or other professional disciplines. Ask yourself what pains or wished-for gains of key individuals could be addressed by a strong Data Governance program.

And, don’t forget to look at the data itself. How can you affect the amount of or quality of or protection of data and metadata? Ask how you can measure that effect.



Metrics – just like goals – should be SMART. Everyone involved in Data Governance should know what success looks like, and how it’s being measured. Consider creating value statements with the following formula:

If we do A, then we should expect B, with a result of C; otherwise, we should expect D, with a result of E.

Such clarity around value helps as you consider funding options available for your program. With your key stakeholders, you’ll want to explore

- ◆ How you could fund your Data Governance Office (or its equivalent)
- ◆ How you could fund Data Analyst/Architecture time needed to help define rules, define data, and research issues that must be resolved
- ◆ How you could fund Stewardship activities
- ◆ What protocols need to be established for Business and IT staff who
 - Help define data
 - Analyze data issues
 - Help resolve data issues

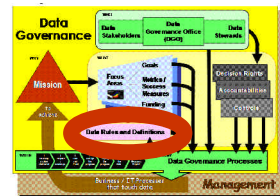
Best Practice

Bring discipline to your program by translating goals to formal value statements.

Component #3: Data Rules and Definitions

This component refers to data-related policies, standards, compliance requirements, business rules, and data definitions. Depending on your focus areas, your program may work to

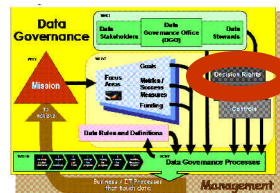
- Create new rules/definitions
- Gather existing rules/definitions
- Address gaps and overlaps
- Align and prioritize conflicting rules/definitions
- Establish or formalize rules for when certain definitions apply.



Component #4: Decision Rights

Before any rule is created or any data-related decision is made, a prior decision must be addressed: who gets to make the decision, and when, and using what process? It is the responsibility of the Data Governance program to facilitate (and to sometimes document and store) the collection of decision rights that are the “metadata” of data-related decisions.

Decision rights for compliance-based programs are often simple to define. For example, should the decision about whether to comply with a federal law be left to a vote of those

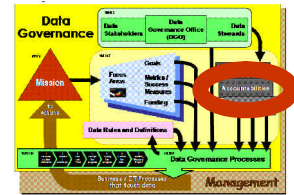


who will have to live with the decision? Of course not – that decision needs to be made by the organization’s Board of Directors, with input from the Legal department.

For other types of programs, decision rights may require more negotiation. For example, who should decide the length of a data field in a new system? Hmm... maybe the decision should be made by Data Architecture. But maybe it requires input from many stakeholders. Maybe one of them has a constraint that needs to drive the decision.

Component #5: Accountabilities

Once a rule is created or a data-related decision is made, the organization will be ready to act on it. Who should do what, and when? For activities that do not neatly map to departmental responsibilities, the Data Governance program may be expected to define accountabilities that can be baked into everyday processes and the organization’s software development life cycle (SDLC).



This is especially true of programs with a focus on compliance. Organizations sometimes struggle with assigning responsibilities for compliance activities. Why? First, because compliance – like governance – is generally a boundary-spanning initiative that requires cross-functional alignment. Second, many managers who are adept at planning for the management of their specific areas have less experience with the requirements that come with the Post-Compliance Paradigm.

This new paradigm says that, for efforts with a compliance requirement, the work is not finished until you 1) Do it, 2) Control it, 3) Document it, and 4) Prove compliance.

Individual managers are often not prepared to identify all the tasks and integration points for designing and implementing controls, documentation, and auditable proof of compliance. Indeed, in a compliance environment, individual managers may not be allowed to interpret requirements independently. Instead, companies often move to a model where a centralized group develops these requirements and then disseminates them to stakeholders. Sometimes, Data Governance is asked to assist with developing requirements and accountabilities for such data-related efforts.

A note: Whether you’re in a compliance environment or not, most governance efforts involve cross-functional teams. Your governance coordinators will need to understand and follow your organization’s protocols for engaging staff, assigning tasks, and providing status to management.

The Post-Compliance Paradigm

This new paradigm says that, for efforts with a compliance requirement, work is not finished until you

- 1) Do it,
- 2) Control it,
- 3) Document it, and
- 4) Prove compliance.



Component #6: Controls

It's well established that data is constantly at risk. With the proliferation of sensitive data breaches – and the consequences for those who were entrusted with the data – it is becoming clear that data can also represent risk.

How do we deal with risk? We manage it, preferably by preventing the events that we don't want to occur. Those we can't be sure of preventing, we at least detect, so we can then correct the problem. Organization's risk management strategies are made operational through controls.

Often the Data Governance program is asked to recommend data-related controls that could be applied at multiple levels of the controls stack (network / operating system; database; application; user processes) to support governance goals.

Data Governance may also be asked to recommend ways that existing general controls (Change Management, policies, training, SDLCs and Project Management, etc.) could be modified to support governance goals or enterprise goals.

Data Governance Components that Deal With People and Organizational Bodies

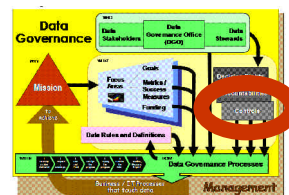
Data Governance programs generally include several organizational bodies. At the least, Data Governance involves Data Stakeholders, Data Stewards, and a Data Governance Office (or its equivalent). Some programs also include Data Quality Stewards with specific responsibilities for monitoring and addressing certain quality characteristics.

Component #7: Data Stakeholders

Data Stakeholders come from across the organization. They include groups who create data, those who use data, and those who set rules and requirements for data. Because Data Stakeholders affect and are affected by data-related decisions, they will have expectations that must be addressed by the Data Governance program.

Some will expect to be included in some kinds of data-related decisions. Some will be expected to be consulted before decisions are formalized, and others will be satisfied to be informed of decisions after they are made.

Often, a subset of executive stakeholders will form a Data Governance Board to provide oversight to the program, issue policies, and resolve issues. Other times, governance oversight is provided by an existing organizational body, such as an IT Steering Committee or an Executive team.



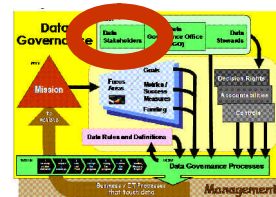
Background

Controls can be:

- Preventative
- Detective
- Corrective.

They can manual, technology-aided, or completely automated.

Data Governance tools bake controls into processes.



Best Practice

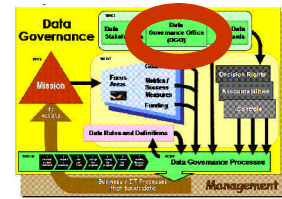
Consider implementing a Data Governance Board made up of executive-level stakeholders.



Component #8: A Data Governance Office (DGO)

Earlier, we remarked that in federal governments, Senators and Judges need support staff. So do the people in your organization who are making data-related decisions, defining data, monitoring compliance to rules, and resolving issues.

The Data Governance Office (DGO) facilitates and supports these governance activities. It collects metrics and success measures and reports on them to data stakeholders. It provides ongoing Stakeholder Care in the form of communication, access to information, record-keeping, and education/support.

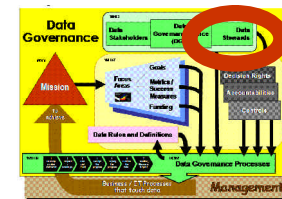


Component #9: Data Stewards

The Data Stewardship (or Governance) Council consists of a set of Data Stakeholders who come together to make data-related decisions. They may set policy and specify standards, or they may craft recommendations that are acted on by a higher-level governance board.

Sometimes – especially for large organizations – a single level of stewards is inadequate. In this case, a hierarchy of stewards may exist. With large or small organizations, the Data Stewardship Council may break out into teams or working groups that address specific data issues or decisions.

Data Governance programs with a focus on Data Quality may also include Data Quality Stewards. These roles typically report to a business function or Data Quality team, with dotted-line accountabilities to Data Governance. These stewards examine sets of data against criteria for completeness, correctness, and integrity. Other types of stewards may have other, specific data-related responsibilities.



Definition

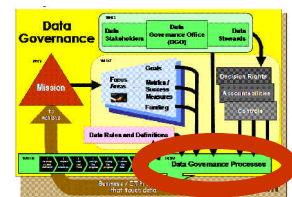
Data Stewardship: the set of activities that ensure data-related work is performed according to policies and practices as established through governance.

The Process of Governing Data

Component #10: Proactive, Reactive, and Ongoing Data Governance Processes

Components 1-6 of the DGI Data Governance Framework deal with rules. They also describe the “rules of engagement” employed by components 7-9 (People and Organizational Bodies) during governance. This last component – Processes – describes the methods used to govern data.

Ideally, these processes should be standardized, documented, and repeatable. They should be crafted in such a way to support regulatory and compliance requirements for Data Management, Privacy, Security, and Access Management.



Every organization will decide how much structure and formality to bring to the process of governing data. The Data Governance Institute recommends (and routinely implements) formal, documented, repeatable procedures for:

1. Aligning Policies, Requirements, and Controls
2. Establishing Decision Rights
3. Establishing Accountability
4. Performing Stewardship
5. Managing Change
6. Defining Data
7. Resolving Issues
8. Specifying Data Quality Requirements
9. Building Governance Into Technology
10. Stakeholder Care
11. Communications
12. Measuring and Reporting Value

Challenges

At the industry's first Data Governance Conference, in Orlando, Florida USA in December of 2006, leaders of successful Data Governance programs declared that, in their experience, Data Governance is between 80% and 95% communications! They uniformly expressed surprise at the amount of written and verbal communication required to successfully bring together stakeholders to achieve their goals.

Is communication not your forté? That's OK. Communication plans and supporting tools can be developed by those with expertise and then administered by your program staff.

For example, most DGOs employ customer segmentation to understand stakeholders' information needs, preferred terminology, and special interests. They develop layers of communication pieces – elevator speeches, value statements, impact statements, presentations, and other documentation – so they can deliver the right versions of governance messages to the right people with the right level of detail. They employ stakeholder participation matrices to make sure stakeholders aren't overlooked and that the right people get their part of the message in the right sequence. And, they employ email templates and templates for presentations and reports.

Benchmark

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Getting Started

What type of Data Governance is right for your organization? How should you begin your efforts?

It's tempting to start right in designing your Data Governance and Data Stewardship organizational bodies, assigning roles and responsibilities, and developing policy. And it's true: this is important work.

But remember that such program design work is actually your fourth step of seven in implementing a Data Governance program. Establishing your focus and value proposition should be your first priority. Be sure you understand how your efforts can contribute to your stakeholders' need to increase revenue and value, manage cost and complexity, and ensure survival through attention to risk, compliance, and vulnerabilities.

Not sure? That's understandable – as we said before, it's hard to see the forest when you're one of the trees! Consider asking someone else from within your organization (or from without) to help you understand your value statement and to develop a plan to clearly and unambiguously communicate that value.

When you can clearly describe your organization's data-related problems, how you're going to address them, and how success can be measured, then you'll be ready to reap the benefits of a value-based Data Governance program.



About the Data Governance Institute

The Data Governance Institute is the premier provider of in-depth, vendor-neutral information about – and assistance with – tools, techniques, models, and best practices for the governance of data and information.

The Institute provides a wealth of resources: the free DGI Data Governance Framework, information on data laws, regulations, and standards, whitepapers, case studies, best practices, data humor, and more. These are available from the Institute's website at www.DataGovernance.com.

The Institute also provides assistance for clients through training, issue analysis, and program assistance as they roadmap, design, and implement governance programs.

The membership arm of the Data Governance Institute is the Data Governance and Stewardship Community of Practice. Information is available at www.DataStewardship.com.

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