

EPA Data Governance Council

Meeting Summary – November 15, 2021

General Updates

- Heather Barnhart welcomed the group and provided general updates.
- The Data Maturity Self-Assessment closed on October 29, 2021 and received over 100 responses. Gartner will provide a report out on the assessment results next month.
- Ongoing DGC project updates are available in the 11/15/2021 DGC Project Updates wiki.

Data Skills Assessment

- Janet Kremer presented an overview of the data skills assessment including objectives, analysis approach and findings. A draft of the Data Skills Assessment Findings Report is available in Teams.
- 2,665 EPA staff took the survey, of which, 2,015 employees completed all questions.
- Three skill levels and criteria for respondents fitting into each skill level were developed. The skill levels are:
 - Level 1 Novice: Individual can complete simple, well-defined tasks with instructions and guidance.
 - Level 2 Data Savvy: Individual can complete and assist others to complete tasks/problems on their own.
 - Level 3 Advanced Data Savvy: Individual can complete or assist others to complete complex problems and tasks.
- The analysis resulted in several findings and recommendations:
 - Establish a data stewards committee to share knowledge and best practices, and coordinate data sharing efforts.
Continue DGC Data Inventory Subcommittee efforts to identify Agency data assets and draft procedures for ongoing update and maintenance.
 - Work with Data Science Community of Practice and the Office of Human Resources (OHR) to review existing training and refine a training curriculum based on skill level and job series.
 - Leverage expertise of specialized communities of practice to help identify statistical curriculum for each data skill level.
 - Work with OHR and OCAPPM to identify current courses and potential courses to add to the training portfolio.
 - Work with OMS's Quality Management Team, regional quality assurance teams, regional science teams and Data Science community of practice to design trainings for the data user community.
 - Reach out to other agencies that have matured ML/AI communities of practice to learn about successful training courses and quality vendors.
 - Reach out to communities of practice to create training for communicating data through visualizations.
- Discussion:
 - If a respondent did not meet the criteria to be included in Level 1 Novice or above, were their responses not included?
 - We defined categories of data users/skill levels, and if respondents answered specific questions a certain way, they were categorized into the group we defined.

- The data skills assessment overlaps with activities of the Data Governance subcommittee in defining roles.
- Have there been conversations with OCAPPM or OHR with how to apply training staff are receiving?
 - This is a definite need, and it will be discussed in upcoming meetings with OHR.

Data Governance and Strategy Discussion

- Heather Barnhart reviewed the SWOT analysis discussions from the past few DGC meetings.
- The next step is to use responses from the SWOT discussions to identify activities to focus on.
- Discussion:
 - The mission is the priority and staff can learn data and IT. We should hire on business understanding and then have staff learn the IT, data or other skills, if needed.
 - We should mentor new staff and pair staff with individuals who plan to retire in the upcoming years.
 - There should be a good balance of hiring for IT and data skills and hiring for business understanding. If we never hire for IT or data skills, we do not have the opportunity to learn new methods.
- Any additional thoughts can be added to the SWOT Analysis Summary Table.