NON-TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF DATA WORK

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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A data analyst or a data scientist (in the **singular**) is unlikely to get meaningful results – there are simply too many moving parts to any data project.

Successful projects require **teams** of highly-skilled individuals who understand the **data**, the **context**, and the **challenges**.

Team *size* could vary from a few to several dozens; typically easier to manage small-ish teams (with 1-4 members, say, with **role overlaps**).

Domain Experts / SMEs

- are authorities in a particular area or topic
- guide team through unexpected complications and knowledge gaps

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Project Managers / Team Leads

- understand the process enough to recognize whether what is being done makes sense

- provide realistic estimates of the time and effort required to complete tasks

- act as intermediary between team and clients/stakeholders

- responsible for project deliverables.

Data Translators

- have a good grasp on the data and the data dictionary

- help SMEs transmit the underlying context to the data science team

Data Engineers / Database Specialists

- work with clients and stakeholders to acquire useable data sources

- may participate in the analyses, but are not necessarily specialists

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Data Analysts

- clean and process data

- prepare initial visualizations

- have a decent understanding of quantitative methods (at most 1 area of expertise)

- conduct preliminary analyses

Data Scientists

- work with processed data to build sophisticated models

- focus on actionable insights

- have a sound understanding of algorithms/quantitative methods (2 or 3 areas of expertise)

- can apply them to a variety of data scenarios

- can be counted on to catch up on new material quickly

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Computer Engineers

- design and build computer systems and pipelines

- are involved in software development and deployment of data science solutions

AI/ML Quality Assurance/Quality Control Specialists

- design testing plans for solutions that implement AI/ML models

- help the team determine whether the models are able to learn

Communication Specialists

- communicate actionable insights to managers, policy analysts, decision-makers, stake holders

- may participate in the analyses, but are not necessarily specialists (often data translators)

- keep abreast of popular accounts of quantitative results and developments

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