



How to become a data governance expert





The time for data governance is **now**



We live in a digital age. By 2025, people around the world will create 463 exabytes of data every day.* Because data is foundational to our society, it is organizational currency — and successful organizations are leveraging data so decision-makers can drive better outcomes.

We also live in a privacy-first age where massive digitalization has also introduced massive risk. In response, governments around the world have passed regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA). To increase transparency and earn public trust, states like Texas are mandating the appointment of Data Management Officers (DMOs). To avoid costly fines, organizations must be aware and comply with applicable laws to ensure the proper handling, management and protection of sensitive data.

But you can't manage what you can't govern. It's why data governance is critical and is driving demand for organizations to appoint, designate, and recruit data governance experts. And that's probably why you're reading this.



So what is data governance? Data governance is the application of rules and processes that make your data accurate, applicable, compliant, and accessible, ensuring the right users can get to and use data they trust.

* Source: [World Economic Forum](#)



Three steps to becoming a data governance expert

In our data-driven age — with all its related opportunities and risks for the business — your organization needs a data governance expert. Someone who can guide the organization on defining and automating data access, who can help data producers and data consumers do their jobs better, and who can be your organization's go-to person when it comes to data governance. Someone who can help build a reliable foundation for data governance and create a culture that empowers data citizens to leverage data for its maximum value. Maybe that someone is you?



To become a data governance expert, follow these three steps:

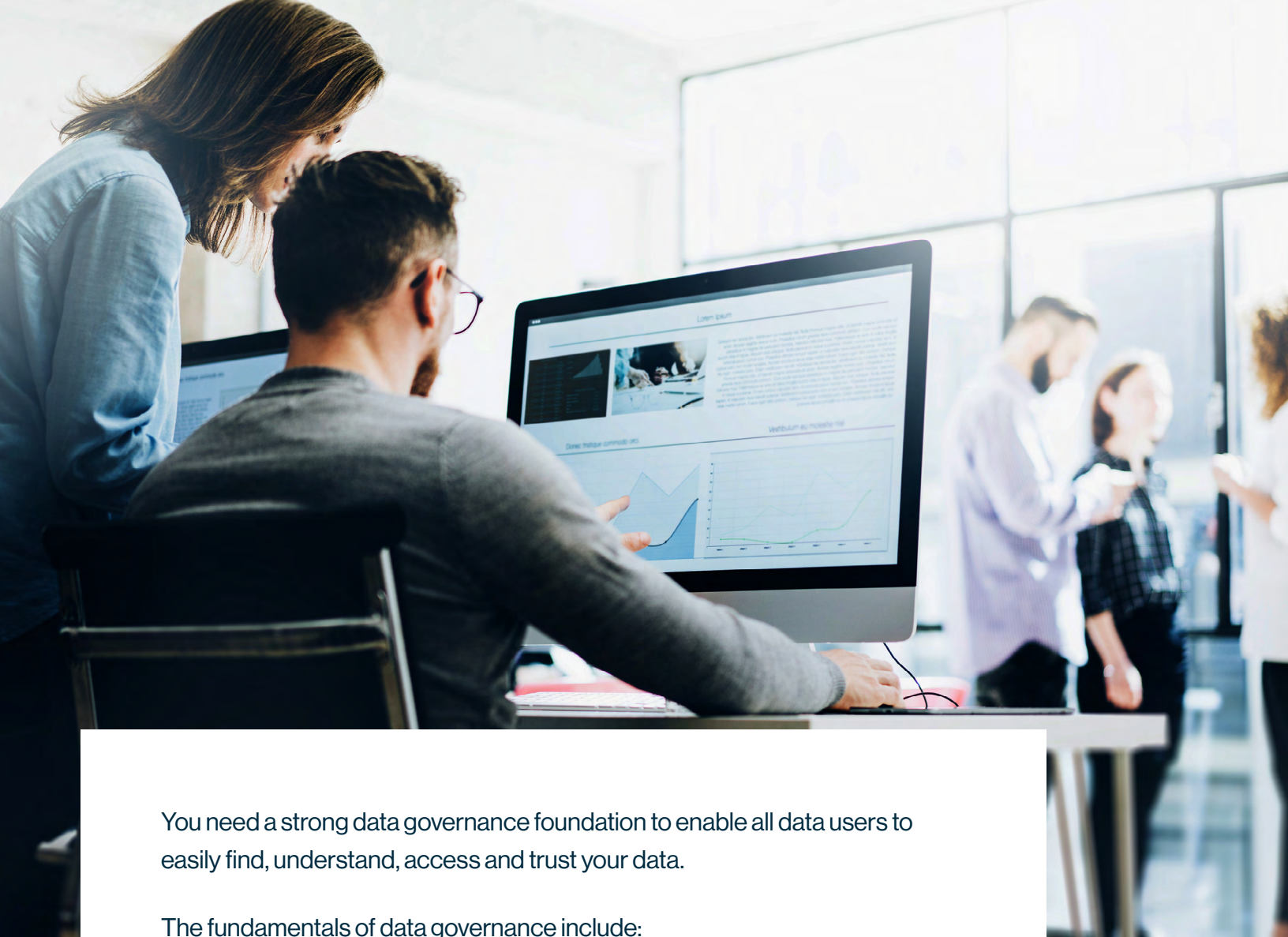
1. Familiarize yourself with the essentials of data governance
2. Start gathering information about your organization's data
3. Help create a community and culture of data citizenship



Step 1:

Familiarize yourself
with the essentials
of data governance





You need a strong data governance foundation to enable all data users to easily find, understand, access and trust your data.

The fundamentals of data governance include:

- **Developing and implementing data governance policies:** Creating guidelines and best practices for data management, ensuring data is collected, stored, and used in a consistent and compliant manner across the organization.
- **Data stewardship:** Identifying and supporting data stewards or owners for specific data domains or elements, ensuring accountability for data quality and compliance.
- **Data lineage and metadata management:** Ensuring data citizens can understand where the data originated, what transformations it has undergone, and what dependencies it may have by tracking and documenting the flow of data. Data governance experts also support management of metadata, which includes the descriptions and context of data elements.
- **Data privacy and security:** Ensuring compliance with data protection regulations and implementing data security measures to prevent unauthorized access, data breaches, and data leaks.

The fundamentals of data governance include (continued):

- **Data quality management:** Working with data stewards and owners to maintain and improve the accuracy, completeness, and consistency of data by implementing data quality controls and validation processes.
- **Regulatory compliance:** Ensuring that the organization adheres to relevant industry regulations and standards, such as GDPR, HIPAA, or CCPA.
- **Training and communication:** Educating employees about data governance best practices, policies, and guidelines to foster a data-driven culture within the organization.
- **Cross-functional collaboration:** Working closely with other teams, such as IT, legal, and business departments, to align data governance initiatives with organizational objectives.
- **Monitoring and reporting:** Regularly monitoring the effectiveness of data governance initiatives and providing reports to stakeholders on the status of data quality, compliance, and other key metrics.
- **Continuous improvement:** Identifying areas for improvement and recommending changes to processes, policies, and technology to enhance governance capabilities



Collibra University — Foundation of data governance

Learn the fundamental concepts of data governance and how to effectively plan your data governance initiatives:

- Understand the rationale for data governance and its overarching effect on data value
- Understand the various roles and responsibilities
- Understand how to prepare your organization to achieve maximum success in your data governance initiatives


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Step 2:

Start gathering
information about your
organization's data



With a clear goal and an understanding of what data governance can do for your organization, it's time to get started understanding the current state of affairs.

To become a data governance expert, start by gathering information about your organization's data processes and requirements.

The first step is to determine how your organization is using data today and how you want to use it in the future. Once you know your key use cases — and that means taking a look across the organization from HR to finance to marketing — determine the top use case you want to start with. Don't choose more than one. Start small. Show success, and then expand. Once you have your top use case, you're ready to start asking questions about the data, including:

- Who is using the data?
- How is it being used?
- Where did it come from?
- Are there quality checks in place?
- What policies need to be adhered to?
- Who is managing the data?


Armed with this information, you can start to map out the data ecosystem for this use case.

Effective data governance begins with a comprehensive understanding of the data landscape related to your use case. By identifying the top use case, asking the right questions, and collecting pertinent information, you lay the groundwork for a robust data governance strategy — a strategy that will ensure data quality, compliance, and security, ultimately enhancing decision-making and driving your organizational success.



Step 3:

Help create a community of data citizens by building reliable data governance



You've familiarized yourself with the fundamentals of data governance. You're asking the right questions to lay the foundations for data governance. The next step is creating community.

Building a community of data citizens requires more than just access to data. As a data governance expert, you'll help ensure data is trustworthy, secure, and used effectively — and address the specific needs of your organization, including data literacy, collaboration, and compliance.

Follow these steps to build a community of data citizens:

1 Identify stakeholders and their needs

Start by identifying stakeholders for your use case who will be impacted by your data governance program. This includes data producers, consumers, and owners. Determine their specific needs, including what data they need, how they use it, and how it should be managed.

2 Work with stakeholders on use cases and sources

Now that you've established the use case and you understand how the data is to be used and prioritized, you can more easily determine which data sources should be the authoritative sources for that data. Work with the data stewards/owners to identify and assess these sources against the controls you've established and create a roadmap for promoting adoption of these data sources for your use case.

3 Build out a Data Governance Council

To operationalize data governance policies and standards at your organization, you'll want to create a Data Governance Council, which is a group of individuals responsible for overseeing data governance. It should consist of representatives from all relevant stakeholder groups. Once you're up and running, you'll want to ensure the data governance policies and standards the council develops support your organization's broader data management strategies, including setting strategic direction, resolving disputes, and align with your organization's overall strategy.

By following these steps, you can create a strong data governance program that supports a community of data citizens who feel empowered to make critical decisions based on trustworthy data.

Get started with data governance

You can be your organization's data governance expert by following the recommendations in these pages. Now, you have the information and insights to:

- Understand the essentials of data governance expertise
- Start collecting information about data in your organization
- Begin building a community of data citizens focused on data governance

Ready to learn more? [Collibra Data Governance](#) offers a solution that is already helping thousands of organizations successfully implement and manage data governance programs.



If you are interested in learning more,
please visit collibra.com