

10 Tips For Analytics Teams

To be the Agency Your Boss Wants to Hire

Opportunity

To help our companies adopt and transform into an analytics driven culture from the inside-out.

As with any consultant, we seek to leverage our experience and area of expertise to help our business partners mature.

As *internal* consultants however, we are naturally married to their success!

Challenge

A perceived willingness (if not desire!) of leadership to listen to external consultants more than internal experts.

Often our perception is that our executives are hanging on every word external consultants are saying, yet they ignored us when we said the same thing!

Solution

BE THE AGENCY YOUR BOSS WANTS TO HIRE!

Tip #1 – Take a Top Down Approach

An external agency would be dealing directly with your executives - why aren't you?

External agencies are coming in under a statement of work; usually sponsored by an executive and almost always outlining the need for access to executives to successfully execute on their deliverables.

They understand the need for executive support to achieve success, and so should all internal consultant organizations!

Find a way to get time on your executives calendar and use your time wisely!

Tip #2 – See the Executive Perspective

“I’ve spent a lot of money and hired a lot of people, and I still don’t have the data I need. I’m not where I thought we would be”

Agencies hear this point all the time from executives and come into meetings with them laser focused on this point, and so should we.

Appealing to this perspective and not getting caught up “in the weeds” is the key to being relatable and building up your executive’s confidence in you and your solutions.

P.S. – **Be solution oriented!** External agencies don’t waste time talking about how we got here, neither should we.

Tip #3 – Have a Vision of Success

Be able to articulate what success looks like and have a plan/approach for getting there

This is the bread and butter of the external agencies: being able to inspire leaders to believe in what is possible and the thoughtful, logical approach to getting the organization there.

Be passionate, and use case studies to inspire and motivate your executives – Make them relevant, real, and achievable!

Tip #4 – Build Credibility via Success

Have examples of where you have achieved success and use them to build credibility.

Every Agency has a “NASCAR” slide of the companies they’ve successfully helped, where’s yours?

Even if the wins are small in scale or achieved through Proof of Concept work, talk about the impact the work had, and how much larger the impact could be if scaled up through greater support for your plan.

Tip #5 – Rebrand

Rebrand your team, effort, program, initiative, etc..

Every Agency has a cool inspirational brand that inspires customers and connects employees to the mission, what's yours?

Think about the journey your team is on, the goal of your work, the solution you seek, and unite it to **your brand**.

Tip #6 – Consult on Goals and Applications

Spend time up front to consult with your executive team on what their goals and applications for analytics are.

Agencies conduct “Reference Interviews” at the start of an engagement to guide executives on what decisions data and analytics could (and should) be informing for them and what will be needed to achieve that aspirational goal.

Establishing these goals **from the beginning** will ensure that your program is set up for successful outcomes and aligned for support from the start.

Tip #7 – Perform Maturity Assessments

Create an Analytics Maturity Model and be prepared to perform a diagnostic Maturity Assessment of the organization

Let's acknowledge that there is going to be a lot of areas of opportunities in your plan for the executives to consume.

External Agencies use Maturity Assessments to create a framework for executives to wrap their mind's around the problem and create areas of focus and establish a baseline for measuring progress... and we should too.

Tip #8 – Manage Your Portfolio of Work

Consider a process for prioritization, execution, and even billing of your work.

Ok, so you're not really an agency, but reviewing this quarterly with your executive and comparing with the plan to mature, can/will reveal where tactical requests are at odds with strategic progress and help you partner to address the issues. It is now after all, THEIR goals these requests are preventing from being achieved!

Tip #9 – Education and Roadshows

Use education sessions and roadshows to help transformation and build organizational awareness of your team's brand.

View them as the internal equivalent of digital marketing conferences: an opportunity to sell your vision and brand as an internal agency and build support.

Tip #10 – Sell your Successes

When you achieve wins, make time to tell the story to your sponsors, stakeholders, business and IT partners, and anyone involved.

Nothing sells future agency engagements like success!

Final Thoughts

Some additional conversation spawned around “next time”:

If you interview for a new role, why not treat it as an Agency Statement of Work?

Interview the company/hiring manager for its willingness to support and adhere to the plan that you’ve laid out to achieve their desired goals/outcomes for the role.

If they love it and you’re hired, hold them to their end of the bargain like a contract.

If they hate it, were they a good fit to begin with? So maybe it’s better to get that out of the way up front