Creating a Data Champions Program

Across your organization, there are people who believe in the transformational impact of data. They want to put data at the center of every conversation and business decision, and are motivated to develop their skills and support others by sharing their knowledge.

A Data Champions program identifies and elevates these users, helping them realize their greatest potential while also enlisting them as leaders, teachers, and advocates of data culture in your organization's community. **You'll invest in identifying and developing these champions, and as a result, you'll have an extended network of Tableau enthusiasts.** This is vital for your adoption process because as your deployment expands to new departments and teams, new champions will need to be developed to scale your analytics practice. Champions reduce the dependency on a centralized support team, as well as:

- Model data-driven decision making to their colleagues;

- Make connections between users and create opportunities for cross-functional collaboration;

- Support users by sharing their expertise;

- Evangelize and participating in community activities;

- Inform community and proficiency efforts with experiences from the front-line;

- Capture use cases and identify examples of excellence.

No two Data Champions programs will look the same, just as no two communities will look the same. Just as with other efforts in Tableau Blueprint, you'll have to assess this program in the context of the scope, size, maturity of your organization and its analytics community. Use this guide to help structure your decision-making, designing a Data Champions program that is custom fit for your organization.

Foundations needed for a Data Champions program

Before you get started, you'll need to decide if you're prepared to run a formalized Data Champions program. Ensure you have the following:

- **A Strategic Plan for Community:** A Data Champions program is not a replacement for your organization's user onboarding or other community efforts. Champions are one piece of your community strategy and should be focused on accelerating and amplifying your communications, your engagement activities, and your processes for supporting users.

  Learn more about planning your community.

- **A Dedicated Program Leader:** Make sure you have a program leader who can own the program from start to finish. Your program leader will likely be your Community Leader or another member of your core project team.

Learn more *about the Community Leader and other common roles in a Tableau Project Team.*

- **An Established Communications Platform:** You'll need a consistent and centralized platform to communicate with your champions and to facilitate conversations between them.

  Learn more *about discussion forums or chat spaces.*

You'll also need to spend time identifying the purpose your Data Champions program for your organization. There are many business needs a Data Champions program can address, but most are captured in one of two overarching goals: Engagement and Enablement. Once you have identified business needs and the overarching goal for your program, tie it back to a measurable success metric. This will help show value of your program, and help your champions see their impact.

Example Business Need	Example Goal	Example Success Metric
We have some great dashboards, but they aren't being used.	Engagement	Improve active users by 10%
We host User Groups and other community activities, but they aren't well attended.		Increase attendance at User Groups by 10%
We offer product training, but this doesn't help users get to know how we use data at our organization.	Enablement	Reduce support tickets by 10%
We have an internal forum, but we cannot keep up with the volume of posts.		Reduce unanswered posts by 10%

Designing a Data Champions program fit for your organization

You have the foundation in place for running a Data Champions program and have identified its purpose. Next, you'll need to design a program that will help you meet your goals. Use the following template to help you **define**, **develop**, and **reward** your champions:

1. To help us meet our goal, we want our champions to _____.
2. We will help our champions meet these expectations by _____.
3. We will reward their efforts with _____.

Defining Champions

What does it mean to be a champion at your organization? Do they help you plan and execute engagement activities? Should champions be actively supporting their colleagues, whether in person or through an internal

forum? Think about the characteristics of a champion as well as what you want your champions to do. Ensure you are clear on the scope and responsibilities needed to fulfill the role, obtain management approval for the time champions are committing, and ensure that your expectations for Champions are well-documented.

Developing Champions

You've set expectations for your Data Champions. How will you ensure they can meet those expectations? For example, a centralized team that is struggling to keep up with an influx of support requests may want to prioritize training their champions as Tableau experts who can help reduce dependency on their team. Similarly, if your champions are expected to be evangelists, you should plan champions-specific activities and communications that help them stay energized and informed of the latest in data and analytics efforts within your organization.

Most Data Champions programs will invest in champions-specific training and regular champions-specific community activities. Learn more about each in the following:

- o Data Champion Education and Training Resources
- o Data Champion Engagement Activities

These trainings and engagement activities will need to be planned in advance. You'll want to consider the cadence and other logistics when planning. For best practices on logistics and staffing, you can refer to this guide.

Rewarding Champions

It is critical to build incentives into your program. Without the right rewards, your champions will have little motivation to meet expectations. Consider what champions will receive in return for their participation in the program, such as certifications and skill badges or special recognition that is communicated to leadership.

Below are two examples of how you can use the template to design your program. You can also explore example use cases, inspired by real customer Data Champions programs.

Example 1: Tableau Community Champions

1. To help us address our *engagement goal*, we want our champions to:

   - Champions are across our user community and are identified according to the value they add to our community.

   - Understand and be invested in our data and analytics strategy, as well as our community efforts.

   - Help us populate our internal newsletter and intranet with content.

   - Attend or speak at least 3 of our internal user groups.

2. We will help our champions meet these expectations by:

   - Hosting quarterly meetings and monthly calls.

   - Continuing to host regular internal user groups.

Example 2: Department / Team Champions

1. To help us address our *engagement goal*, we want our champions to:

   - Champions are across our user community and are identified according to the value they add to our community.

   - Understand and be invested in our data and analytics strategy, as well as our community efforts.

   - Help us populate our internal newsletter and intranet with content.

   - Attend or speak at least 3 of our internal user groups.

2. We will help our champions meet these expectations by:

   - Requiring champions to complete a specialized learning path for that equips them with Tableau product expertise.

   - Host monthly meetings to identify most common questions and new training opportunities.

- Requiring champions to complete a specialized learning path that teaches them best practices for community leaders.

3. We will reward their efforts with:

    - Certifications upon the completion of a learning path. These certifications are celebrated in our user groups.

    - One-on-one help with the speaker application to Tableau Conference.

3. We will reward their efforts with:

    - Certifications upon the completion of a learning path.

    - Identify a Champion of the Month who is reported to leadership.

Running your Data Champions program

You have the right foundations and have designed your program. Now, you'll need to consider how you'll brand and promote your program, identify your champions, and start running your program.

Branding your program

Choosing a brand means more than picking a fun name or designing swag. A brand helps you communicate the purpose of your Data Champions program to the rest of your organization, and ultimately helps your program more cohesive and credible. You can get started using our Data Champions logo and brand guidelines.

Identifying your Champions

Finding users to participate in your Data Champions program can be challenging. And in some cases, you may not be able to identify champions that fit all your expectations. Remember that, above all, your Data Champions program is meant to invest in those who are passionate and enthusiastic about data and analytics. Here are a few different ways you can identify champions:

- Present the program at an existing engagement activity, such as a Tableau User Group or a Tableau Day. Use this PPT template to get started.

- Ask leaders to nominate champions.

- Analyze your Tableau Server Repository data to identify your most active users.

- Announce the program on your intranet, in your newsletter, or in your organization's other communication channels.

- Send a survey to all of your users.

Running Your Program

You've designed your program and identified the champions who will participate. Now, you'll need to plug your champions into the framework you've created, having them fulfill their duties while developing their skills and rewarding their participation. Here are additional best practices to consider when executing your program:

- Create a "Data Champions Directory" or another centralized resource that helps your organization connect to your champions.

- Keep track of your champion's activities, keeping them accountable to the expectations you originally set.

- Routinely survey your champions to better understand their experience and find ways to improve the program.

- Revisit your original business needs, goals, and metrics for success.

Resource Appendix

The list below includes all documents referenced in this guide.

Examples of Data Champions Programs

Logistics and Staffing Best Practices

Promotion and Branding Best Practices

       Logo Version 1

       Logo Version 2

Education and Training Resources

Engagement Activities

Template for Introducing Your Data Champions Program