



DATA STORYTELLING

WHAT STORIES ARE WORTHWHILE AND WHAT IS JUST NOISE?

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ANALYST (COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS)

1

“Can you pull this data really quick? It's just a small request”
From Five different ERP Systems

Problem statement

2

“Can you build a dashboard”
Therefore, Analytics = Dashboarding

Progress vs. Perfection

3

“When is it needed by?”
“Yesterday”

Saying “NO” is OK

4

“The dashboard looks great!!”
“Can you download it to Excel so we can play with it?”

Translator vs. Partner

5

“I'd like to show it to Leadership, can you add (a), (b) and (c)?”
“This gets asked a day before dashboard launch”

Provide Trade-offs

6

“We cleaned the data, validated the logic, built the model”
“then the question changed”

Clarity drives Execution

START WITH A **PROBLEM STATEMENT**



DO DIFFERENT

*It's about freeing yourself
up to lead*

Visual courtesy of Pier Martin (LinkedIn) – shared with Permission

SAYING NO IS OK



Visual courtesy of Pier Martin (LinkedIn) – shared with Permission



DO DIFFERENT

We're focused on X right now because it ties directly to [ABC]. I'm happy to review this once this is completed

If this is more urgent, we can shift - but let's talk about what moves.

If directional insight is enough, I can show you how to pull something quicker

SAYING NO IS **OK** – **CONTD.**



DO DIFFERENT

*We're focused on X right now - that's our biggest lever. **Can you help me understand how this one is more important?***

*This request is interesting, but the impact is **lower** to what we're currently working/pivoting to*

*Clear, confident **No** is better than a hesitant **YES***

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PERFECTION VS. PROGRESS



DO DIFFERENT

So if you're holding back until it's "ready," ask yourself:

Would a 70% answer now drive more value than a 100% answer 3 weeks too late?

*Perfect is paralyzing.
Progress is what builds momentum.*

Visual courtesy of Pier Martin (LinkedIn) – shared with Permission

SCOPE CREEP

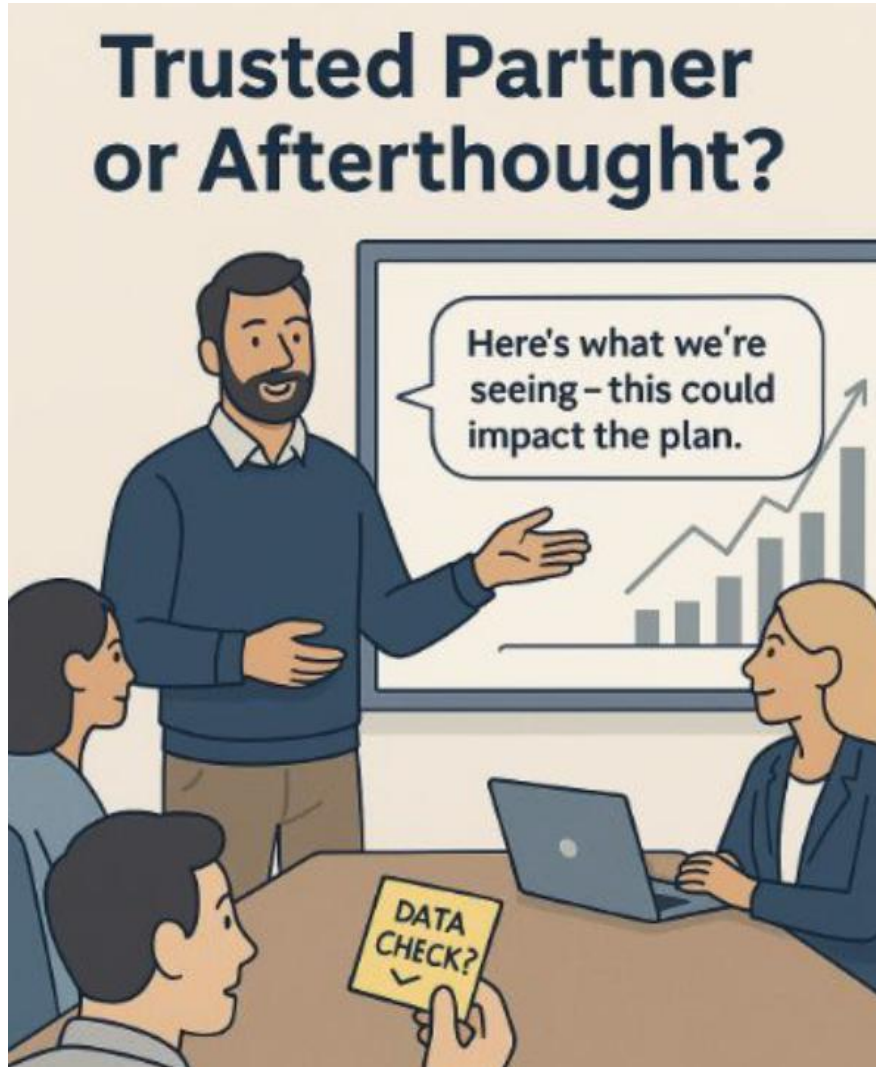


DO DIFFERENT

Provide trade offs to deliver value

Visual courtesy of Pier Martin (LinkedIn) – shared with Permission

TRANSLATOR VS. **PARTNER**



Visual courtesy of Pier Martin (LinkedIn) – shared with Permission



DO DIFFERENT

*Don't wait to be invited,
say it eitherway*

CLARITY DRIVES EXECUTION



DO DIFFERENT

If everyone agrees, you probably didn't decide anything

*We don't need agreement, we need "**Direction**"*

Who?

What?

When?

Visual courtesy of Pier Martin (LinkedIn) – shared with Permission

STORYBOARDING | (1 OF 2)

What **NOISE** looks like

Metric Overload

Too many KPIs dilute the message

1

Vanity Metrics

Data that looks good but drives no action

2

Unanchored Insights

Stories without business context or baseline

3

Data without Emotion

Not connect to human or business outcome

4

One-off Anecdotes

Correlations mistaken for causation

5

What makes a story **WORTHWHILE**

Business Relevance

Tie to revenue, cost, risk or CX

Decision Velocity

Influence a decision today or soon

Actionability

Drive next steps instead of description

Audience Impact

Speak the language of stakeholders

Outcome Orientation

Link to measurable business outcome, KPI

STORYBOARDING | (2 OF 2)

What **NOISE** looks like

Excel Dump Slides
18 charts, zero meaning

1

Correlation Comedy
Unrelated metrics forced together

2

Executive Eye Roll
Data with no decision ask

3

Dashboard Daze
12 KPIs with no narrative glue

4

Analysis Paralysis
Story delayed waiting for perfection

5

What makes a story **WORTHWHILE**

Business Influencing

Move from Reporting → Explaining → Predicting → Influencing

So 'what?'

Build a culture where analysts ask "?" before every slide

Data translators

Visuals should whisper context, not shout confusion

Decisions accelerated

Measure storytelling success by decisions accelerated, not decks created

Automate & curate

Encourage automation of the noise, and curation of the narrative

WHAT CAN WE DO DIFFERENT?

- **Headlines on the top** – **Bad news first**; Put the pain where the eyes land first, execs love to know what hurts before they scroll
- **Do not talk Tech** – Leave the SQL, ETL, and API details in the wings, your audience wants the story, not the plumbing
- Stress on **4 Cs**: **Context**: what's happening?, **Conflict**: why does it matter?, **Clarity**: what's the insight?, **Call to Action**: what should we do?
- **Less is more** – If the dashboard has more tabs than a Netflix series, you've lost the plot; **Highlight the signal, not the noise** - don't let every metric be a hero
- **Annotations > Assumptions** – Tell them why the numbers moved, don't make them guess the plot; **Test your story** – If a colleague can't explain the insights in 30 seconds, it's not a story – **it's a cliffhanger**

IN SUMMARY – THINGS WE CAN DO TOMORROW!

- **Data Validation** - [Validation is always like a warm-up](#); A quick data check **today** saves long meetings **tomorrow**; Don't just run the analysis, walk the data first, because even the best analysis can't rescue unfit data
- **Growth/Measurement Mindset** - Analytics doesn't stop after deployment, it [actually starts](#). Ask these questions – what worked? what didn't? what next? as Growth is **curious** by nature. Focus on outcome (so what) vs. output
- **Drive Accountability** - Deadline isn't a placeholder, it's a **commitment**, make it count; Random datelines lead to real delays; when **we** choose the “when”, we're committing to the “done” - [calendar doesn't forget](#)
- **OVOC* importance** - Best project teams don't just hear feedback, they **hunt** for it; Give users what they need, not what **we** like, and explain in their context; Users hand you growth hacks - [A Complaint is a free growth tip](#)
- **Responsiveness** - [Small Pings, big progress](#)! Silence creates Friction – even a “**got it**” keeps the engine running; Communication is a relay, not a solo sprint, speed sells..

**OVOC – Observational Voice of Customer*

One goal defined, one timeline set, one commitment fulfilled – Let's move the needle

**THANK
YOU**

Honeywell

BACKUP

EVERY GREAT STORY HAS ITS CAST



HERO

ETL/DATA ENG.

ETL/DATA ENG.



DIRECTOR

DASHBOARD DEV.

BIZ STAKEHOLDERS



PRODUCER

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IT



BACKGROUND ARTISTS

DATA SCIENTISTS

DATA SCIENTISTS