



**The Data Provocateurs' Boot Camp
Abstract and Outline
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ABSTRACT:

Most companies and government agencies address data quality reactively, after errors are made and, as a direct result, suffer from bad data. To date, it has taken a special person, to challenge the status quo within his or her work team, address data quality by “getting in front” of the issues, making a huge improvement, and, in effect, showing the rest of the company what is possible. I call this person the “data provocateur.”

I’ve recently introduced the term publicly (see for example, “Data Quality should be Everyone’s Responsibility” in *HBR*) and many people have asked “how can I become a data provocateur?” This mini-boot camp provides the answer. It aims:

- To provide you the skinniest possible set of material needed to become an effective data provocateur and
- To empower and embolden you to move forward.

OUTLINE:

A. An exemplary provocateur: Bob Pautke at AT&T

(Note: I’ll go into some detail about Bob’s thinking, his first steps, how AT&T built on his efforts, and the results he and it obtained.

B. What is a “data provocateur?”

- Why data quality problems arise? (Ans: The rising middle manager)
- The hidden data factory
- Anyone can be a provocateur
- The provocateur’s “persona” (you’ll be surprised)
- Provocateur defined, with special emphasis on soft skills.
- Discussion: Can you fill the role?

C. A Four-Step Process for Becoming a Provocateur

- Overview
- Step 1: Answer “Do I (we) have a data quality problem?”
 - The Friday Afternoon Measurement
 - The Rule of Ten to calculate on aspect of the COPDQ
 - Other impacts of bad data.
 - Answering the question.
 - Discussion: Can you do these steps?
- Step 2: Clarify, document, and communicate customer needs/Connect customers and creator

- Step a: Name the most important customers (including required documentation)
- Step b: Learn how they use the data (including required documentation)
 - Conduct a customer needs workshop
 - Prep
 - Brainstorm needs
 - Organize needs
 - Prioritize results
- Step c: Determine required features and quality requirements (including required documentation)
- Step d: Prepare Customer Requirements document
- Step e: Communicate the Voice of the Customer to data creators
- Discussion: Put yourself in the customer role. What would it take to complete such an analysis for yourself and your work team and communicate your requirements to a data creator?
- Step 3: Make improvements to close the gaps
 - Quality Improvement and the Scientific Method
 - The Quality Improvement Cycle
 - Select improvement opportunity
 - Name and charter and improvement team
 - Conduct a root cause analysis
 - Identify and trial solutions
 - Implement solution
 - Put in place controls to hold the gains
 - Provocateur's Qualification: Usually it takes three or four improvement projects to produce a "real result."
 - Discussion: Can you do this work?
- Step 4: Summarize results
 - What success looks like
 - Presenting results
 - Building support to "get to the next level"
 - Discussion: Any questions about what is required

D. Wrap Up and Next Steps

- A Promise to Yourself: Make a list of the steps you propose to take in the next ten, thirty, and sixty days.
- Summary of main points.

EACH ATTENDEE RECEIVES:

- Hard copies of all slides
- A hard copy of "Data Quality Should be Everyone's Responsibility."
- A hard copy of "Assess Whether You Have a Data Quality Problem."

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