



# Conquering the Last Mile and Extra Mile of Implementing Optimization Projects

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# Successful Implementations

Conquer the Last Mile and go the Extra Mile

- Conquering the last mile problem
  - Readily deploy/operationalize models for end users
  - Deploy in weeks/months instead of months/years
  - Solved with a combination of technology and lean thinking
  - Focused on improving decision quality
- Going the extra mile after deployment
  - Adoption requires change, and change is never easy
  - Learn to navigate the “Politics of Analytics”

## The Politics of Analytics



“In God we trust. All others must bring data.”

– The Deming Management Method  
by Mary Walton (1986)

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”

– Attributed to Peter Drucker  
by Mark Fields, Past President, Ford Motor Company (2006)

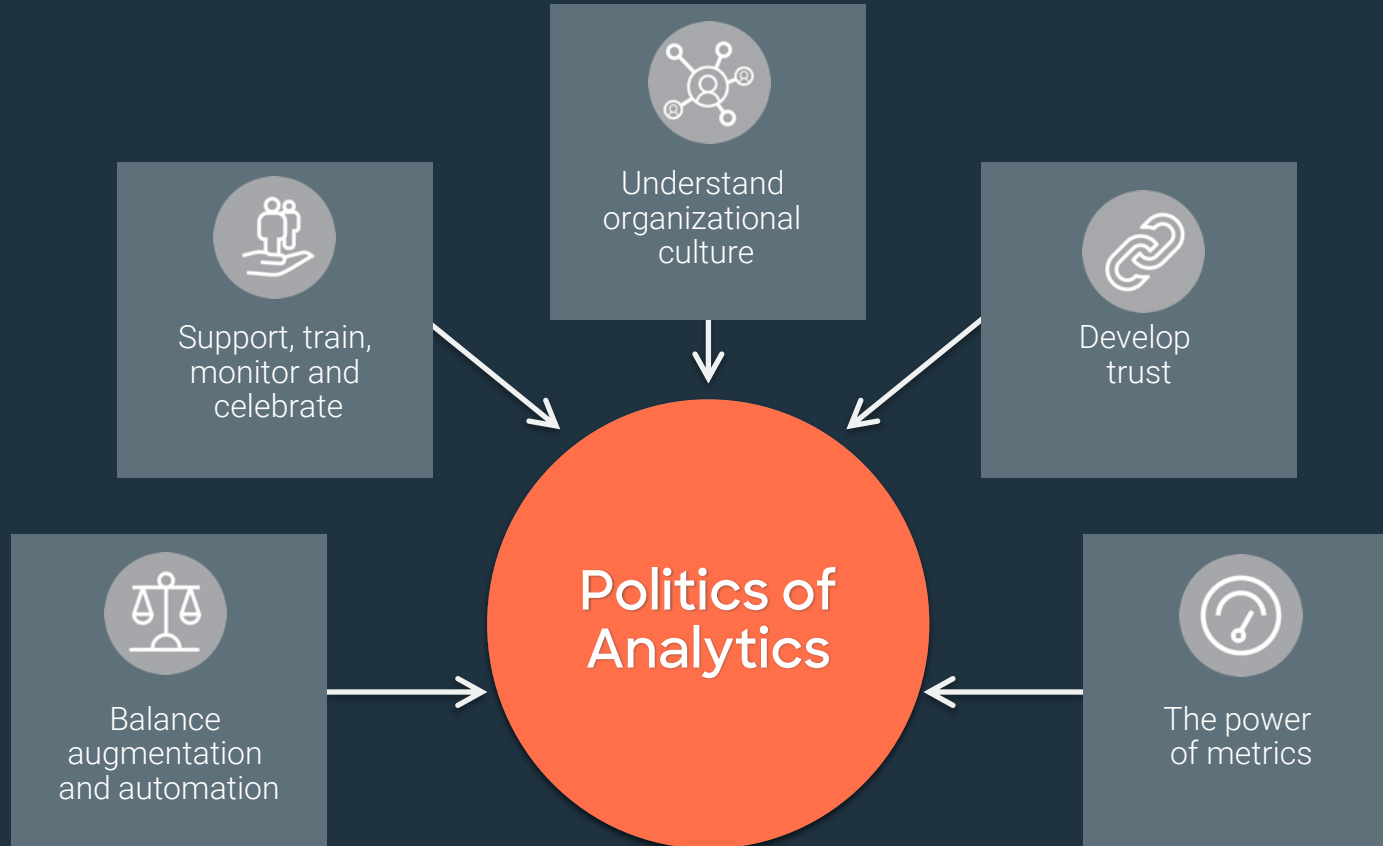
“[McKinsey] data shows that only 8% of firms are engaging in core practices that support widespread adoption.”

– Building the AI Powered Organization  
The main challenge isn't technology. It's culture.

Fountaine, McCarthy, & Saleh  
HBR July-Aug 2019



# Strategies for Conquering the Politics of Analytics



# Managing the Politics of Analytics for Implementation Success

Understand Organizational Culture	Culture is an invisible force ... respect it.
	Unlearn the old before learning the new.
	Structure drives behavior.
Develop Trust	"They don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." – Theodore Roosevelt
	Solve a problem ... any problem – doing earns trust faster than talking about doing.
	Adoption is driven by trust.
Support, Train, Monitor, Celebrate	The path from complexity to simplicity is paved with understanding.
	The "what" is important. The "why" is critical. Creates motivation for change and adoption.
	Celebrate and recognize – supporters and constructive challengers.
Power of Metrics	"Tell me how you will measure me, and I will tell you how I will behave." – E. M. Goldratt
	Old metrics are usually misaligned with new approaches. When metrics collide, adoption erodes.
	Understand existing metrics and design processes to support them, or design new metrics.
Automation & Augmentation	Automation isn't automatically better. Bad automation = good ammunition for your opponents.
	Automate the reliable as much as possible. Unreliable automation hurts adoption.
	Augmentation is better in many cases as it improves adoption.



Questions?

Thank You!

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# Appendix

# Strategies for Managing The Politics of Analytics



## Understand Organizational Culture

### Edgar Schein's Organizational Culture Model (Highly Summarized)

- Artifacts and Symbols – Visible
- Espoused Values – Findable
- Basic Underlying Assumptions – Unavoidable

Analytics often conflicts with basic underlying assumptions

### Strategies

- Respect the “invisible force” – very risky to ignore gravity
- Change requires unlearning the old before learning the new – plan for it
- Useful is better than mathematically optimal – go for positive impact
- Structure drives behavior – new approaches may require new structures

# Strategies for Managing The Politics of Analytics



## Develop Trust

“They don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.”

– Theodore Roosevelt

## Focus Is Often Placed on the Technology and Its Capabilities

- Speed, complexity, quantity of data, etc.
- Those attributes might help sell an idea, but they don’t automatically lead to greater trust

## Strategies

- Get as close to the frontline execution as possible – walk in the user’s shoes.
- Solve a problem ... any problem – doing earns trust faster than talking about doing.
- Care about the people and the problem facing them – how does it affect them.
- Knowing is not the same as doing – get out and do it.

# Strategies for Managing The Politics of Analytics



Support, Train, Monitor and Celebrate

## The Path from Complexity to Simplicity Is Paved with Understanding

- If you can't explain it in business terms, it is too complex
- It's hard to change behavior if there is no motivation to change
- The “what” is important, the “why” is critical

## Strategies

- Adults are experiential learners – serious games can help
- Celebrate and recognize – supporters & constructive challengers
- Social leadership – tap into informal leaders who are strong influencers
- Trust but verify – learn from non-conformance and retrain as needed

# Strategies for Managing The Politics of Analytics



## The Power of Metrics

“Tell me how you measure me, and I will tell you how I will behave.”

– “The Haystack Syndrome”, E. M. Goldratt

### Old Metrics Aren't Always Aligned with New Analytical Models

- Metrics have often been derived based on good local heuristics
- New analytics-based decision models often support higher order metrics
- When metrics conflict, model adoption erodes

### Strategies

- Understand existing metrics & design models to support them, or design new metrics.
- Create training and support to help users understand the bigger picture.
- Use the model as a bridge, or as a forcing function so people work across processes to support higher order metrics.

# Strategies for Managing The Politics of Analytics



## Balance automation and augmentation

### Automation Doesn't Mean “Auto-Better”

- Analytics depend on high quality data
- “Garbage In = Garbage Out” is still true
- Data quality requirements are often missed
- Recognize that people have information that isn't in any database
- Bad automation = good ammunition for your opponent



### Strategies

- Automate the reliable as much as possible
- Analytics to augment human decisions can have a dual benefit
- Can be lower cost for model development and data integration
- Useful tool for change management leading to higher adoption rates
- Collect data on the “human touch” for training and model improvement
- Scenario capability instead of black box answer