

8. Leadership

8.1 What is it?

Strong and sustained leadership, advocacy and funding from senior executive leaders are important success factors for any data governance program. The leadership is responsible for setting direction, motivating employees, investing in and developing the necessary people skills required to manage and extract value from the data. Senior leadership should provide the high-level support needed to drive the data agenda of the agency and play a key role in facilitating collaboration across business functions to ensure data-related decisions are aligned with the agency's strategic objectives.

8.2 Why is it important?

Without strong leadership support and engaged executive sponsors, obtaining the funding, resources and alignment necessary for data governance may be challenging. Leaders are in a unique position to communicate the degree to which the agency values data as a strategic asset. Embedding data governance also generally requires some level of transformation within the organisation. Engaging the buy-in of individuals that are sufficiently senior and that can champion the data governance program across the organisation will help facilitate change management.

8.3 What good looks like

- **Sponsorship:** Senior leadership display strong, explicit and ongoing commitment for data governance
- **Investment:** Senior leadership recognise and address data resource needs and infrastructure requirements to support data governance
- **Participation:** Senior leadership participate in decision-making on important opportunities and risk mitigation issues relating to organisational data assets
- **Collaboration:** Senior leadership collaborate across different areas of the organisation to break down information silos, including risk and compliance, cyber security, data analytics and privacy

8.4 How to achieve good practice

- **Develop and deliver training in data for executives**, enabling them to make informed decisions and have a data and evidence-first mindset
- **Set up a data governance decision-making body** that comprises cross-functional leaders from across the organisation
- **Incorporate data metrics and goals into corporate plans and public reporting** and monitor and regularly report on progress
- **Build data use and analytics into organisational strategies and plans**
- **Appoint a member of the senior executive to lead and champion the organisation's data governance agenda**