

# CULTIVATING DATA CULTURE: DATA MINDSETS & BEHAVIORS TO FUEL SUCCESS



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The Old West is not a certain place in a certain time, it's a state of mind.  
It's whatever you want it to be. *Tom Mix*





rapid reports ready right quick

git all the data yer need here

COUNTS  
& FACTS

**ATTENTION:**  
DATA MAY BE  
WEAPONIZED IN  
BROAD DAYLIGHT

ENTERING  
Data Dawn

**WARNING**  
NO Sheriff  
NO Jail  
NO Laws  
NO Rules

**BEWARE**  
OF CORRELATION  
NOT BEING  
CAUSATION





Power, today, comes from sharing information,  
not withholding it.. *Keith Ferrazi*



A scenic landscape featuring a large stone castle with several towers and conical roofs, situated on a grassy hill. The foreground is dominated by tall, golden-brown grasses. In the background, there are rolling green hills and distant mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. Three yellow, wavy-edged labels with black borders are overlaid on the image, each containing text. The labels are positioned as follows: 'Finance Data' on the left, 'HR Data' in the center, and 'Student Data' on the right. Each label is supported by a black vertical bar on its left side.

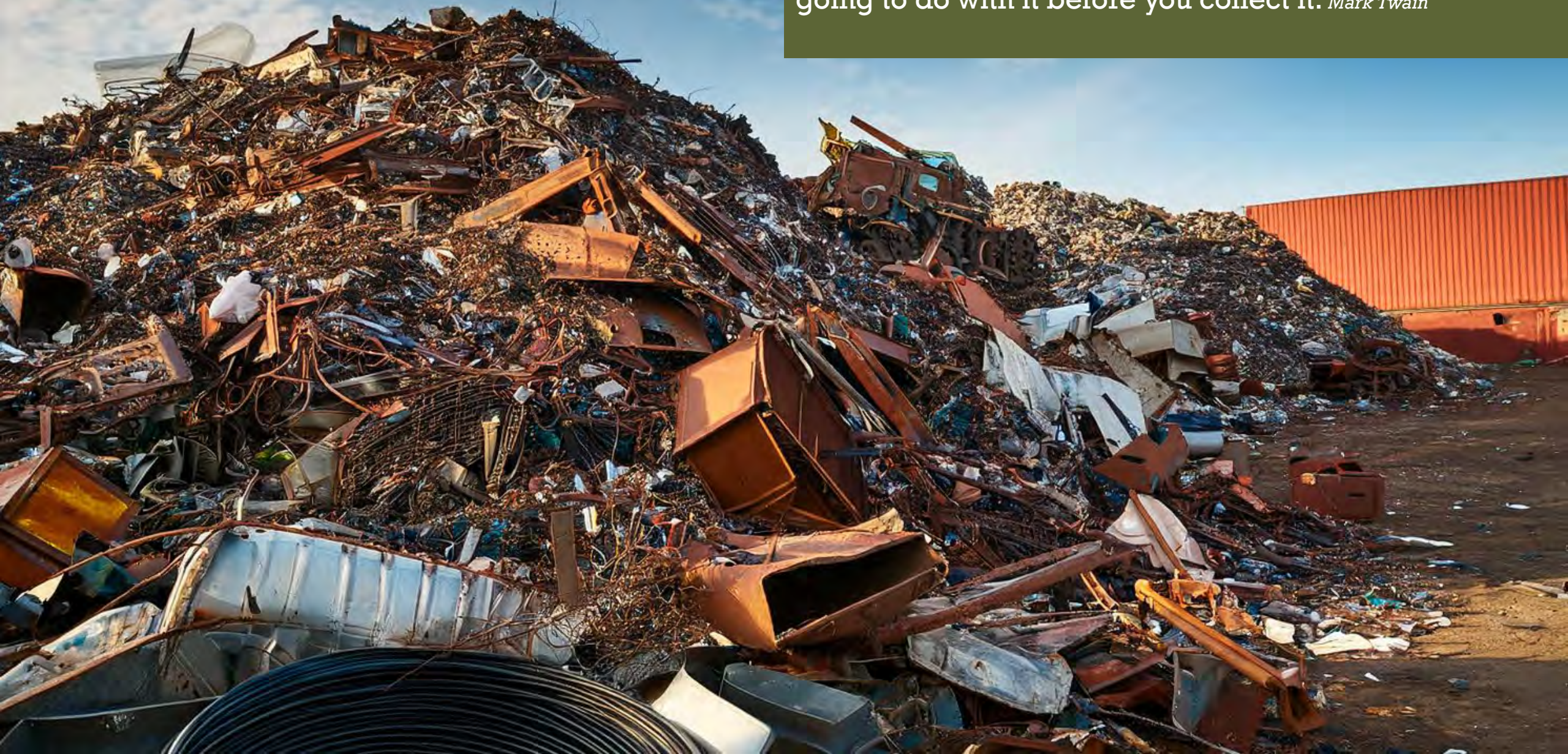
**Finance Data**

**HR Data**

**Student Data**



Data is like garbage. You'd better know what you're going to do with it before you collect it. *Mark Twain*







FINANCIAL  
AID INFO

REVENUE  
PER SCH

GRADES

STUDENT TO  
FAC RATIO

FTSE

DEGREES

CAREER AND  
OUTCOMES

LEADERSHIP  
ACTIVITY

RETENTION

GRADUATION RATE  
ATTRIBUTES

FIRST-GEN  
STATUS



Data, data everywhere, but not a thought to think. *John Allen Paulos*





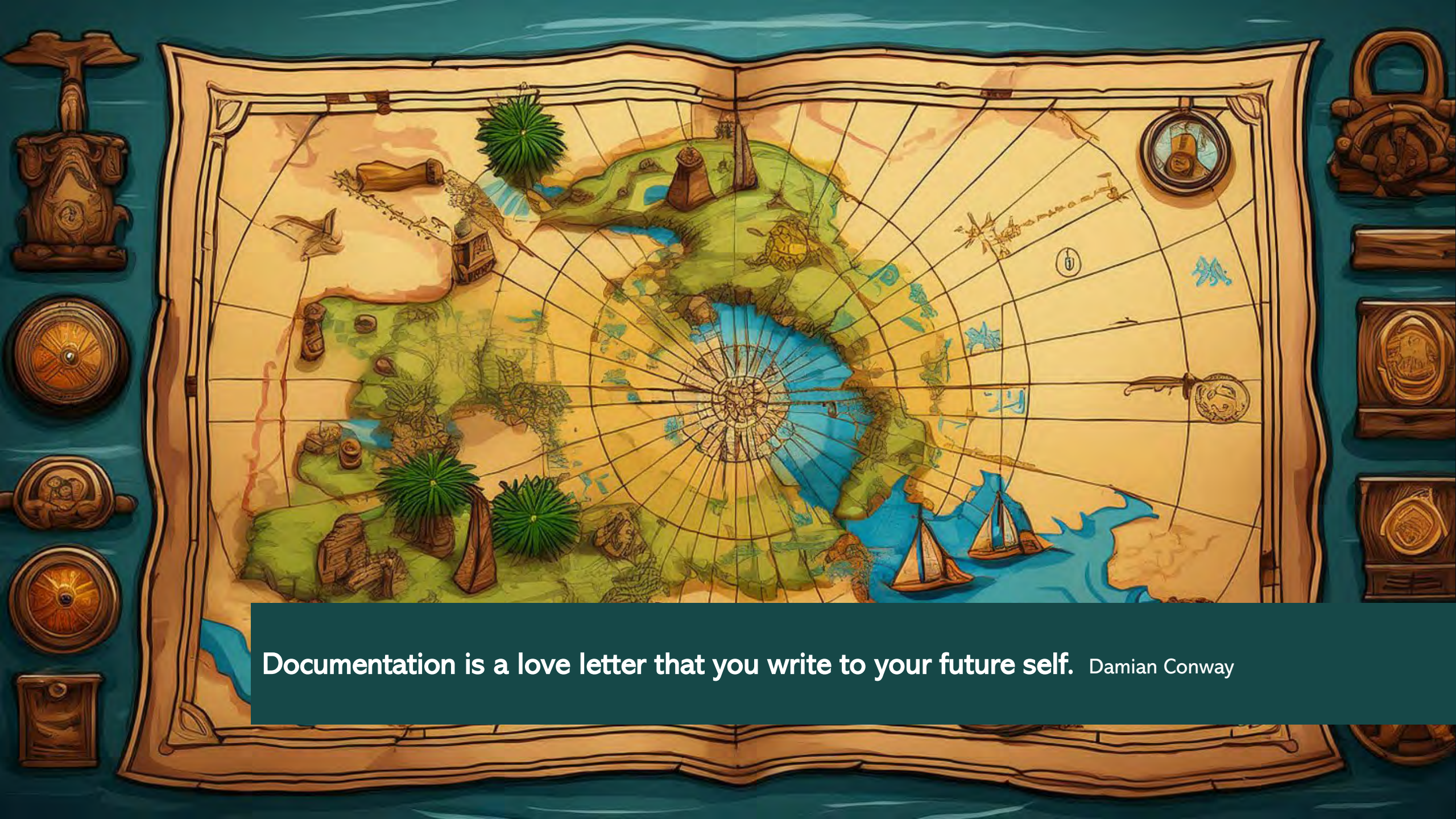


NAVIGATE

INSIGHTS

SELF SERVICE & FUTURE FOCUSED ANALYTICS





**Documentation is a love letter that you write to your future self.** Damian Conway





DATA  
ROI





Information is just bits of data. Knowledge is putting them together.  
Wisdom is transcending them. *Ram Dass*





Red Squirrels  
Drive slowly



SLOW DOWN  
DRIVE AROUND





PIONEERTOWN  
BANK

WAGON WHEEL  
SALOON

HOTEL

Bath House

NO ENTRY















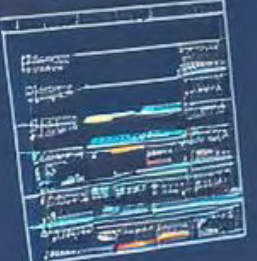
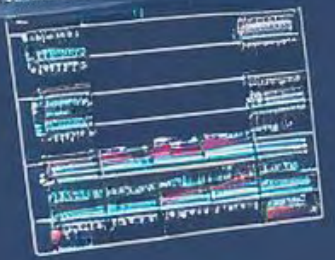


WELCOME TO  
PINE LIVING &  
LEARNING HALL



# GRADUATION ON TRACK

- 1. 2023-2024
- 2. 2024-2025
- 3. 2025-2026
- 4. 2026-2027
- 5. 2027-2028
- 6. 2028-2029
- 7. 2029-2030



Amiko Mooko id:98743321



# External Competitive Forces

Increased demand for students at a time of declining birth rates

Lack of public confidence in the ROI of our degrees

Employer outcome concerns (lack of desired job skills from grads)

Tremendous growth in the need for mental health support, ADA accommodations, etc.

Increased reporting burdens to “prove” standards being met

Consumer demand for non-traditional pedagogies, teaching practices, and emerging technologies

Consumers desire certificates, micro-credentials, degree stacking, etc.

Ongoing family concerns about cost, debt, and paying for higher education

Skill gap and need for re-tooling non-traditional adult learners

Availability of a technology talent pipeline.



## Internal Challenges & Forces

**Proliferation of  
“silver bullet”  
vendor solutions**

**Data quality  
initiatives delayed to  
address immediate  
fires**

**Pace of change in  
technical skills  
required to compete  
... and keep up**

**Disconnect between  
data entry errors and  
downstream cleanup  
efforts**

**Role clarity issues  
between technical,  
functional, and  
subject matter  
experts**

**Integration  
challenges to  
intentionally link  
disparate data  
systems**

**Lack of clear data  
management and  
governance practices**

**Fear of using data and  
being “wrong” or not  
feeling “confident”**

**Gaps in  
comprehensive data  
awareness and  
data literacy across  
Division**

**Lack of clarity about  
who is Responsible,  
Accountable,  
Consulted, and  
Informed about our  
Data**



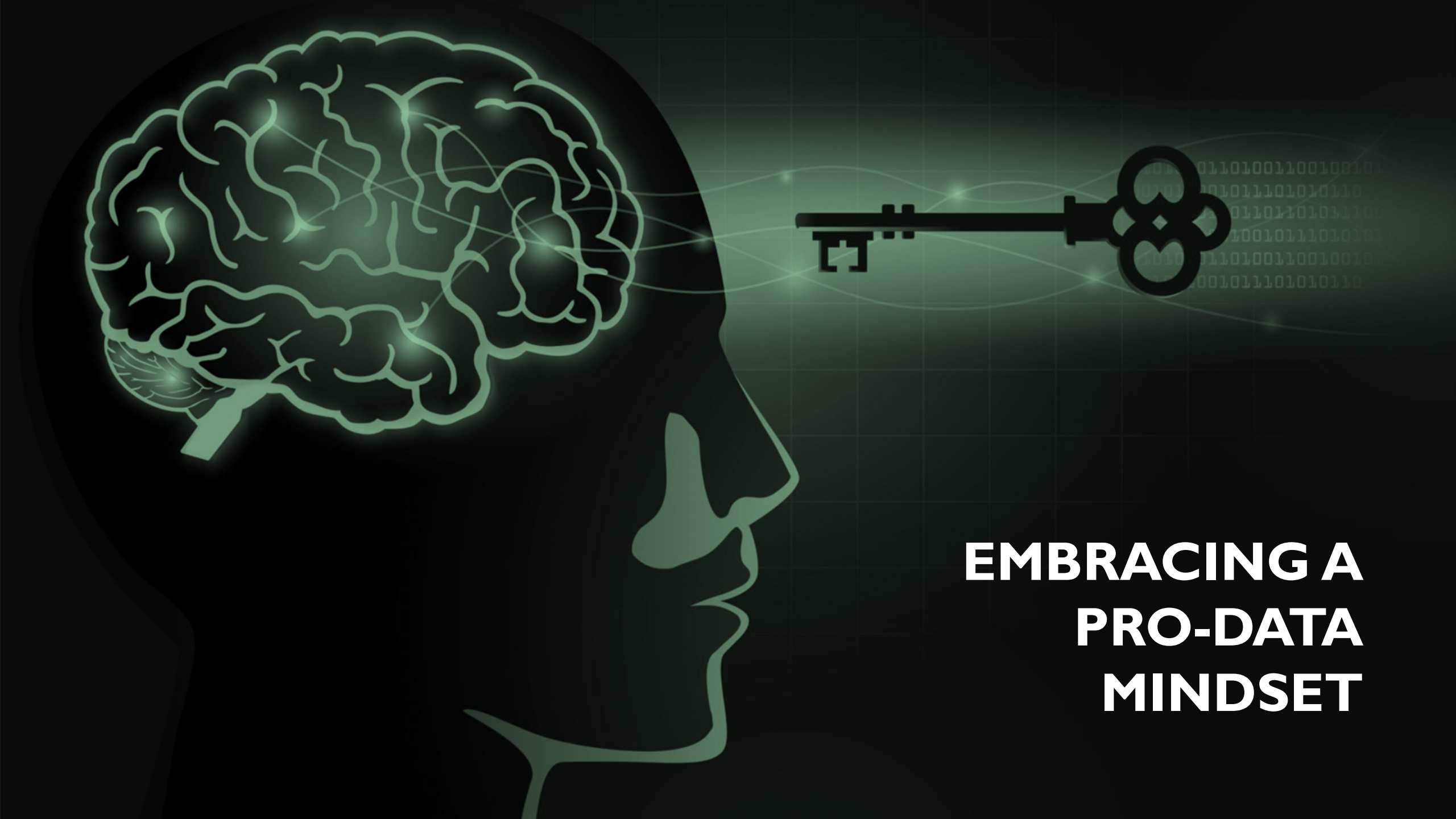
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graph LR; A[EMBRACING A PRO-DATA MINDSET] --> B[CONNECTING TO CAMPUS CULTURE]; B --> C[ADOPTING DATA FORWARD BEHAVIORS];
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**EMBRACING A  
PRO-DATA  
MINDSET**

**CONNECTING  
TO CAMPUS  
CULTURE**

**ADOPTING DATA  
FORWARD  
BEHAVIORS**





**EMBRACING A  
PRO-DATA  
MINDSET**



# **MINDSET** (NOUN)

- 1. A fixed mental attitude or disposition that predetermines a person's responses to and interpretations of situations.**
- 2. An inclination or a habit.**
- 3. A way of thinking; an attitude or opinion, especially a habitual one.**



# **PRO-DATA MINDSET** (NOUN)

- 1. A willingness to be open to change, learn new things, and commit to self-improvement even when it is uncomfortable.**
- 2. A set of attitudes and behaviors that enable ourselves and others to see how data, machine learning, algorithms, and AI methods opens new possibilities.**
- 3. A recognition that our work is increasingly dominated by data-intensive and automated technologies.**
- 4. A balanced view of the promise and potential perils of these methods and approaches.**





**POSSIBLE PRO-DATA  
MINDSET HACKS**





**Document your assumptions,  
beliefs, thoughts, and fears  
about your use of data in your  
role in our Division.**

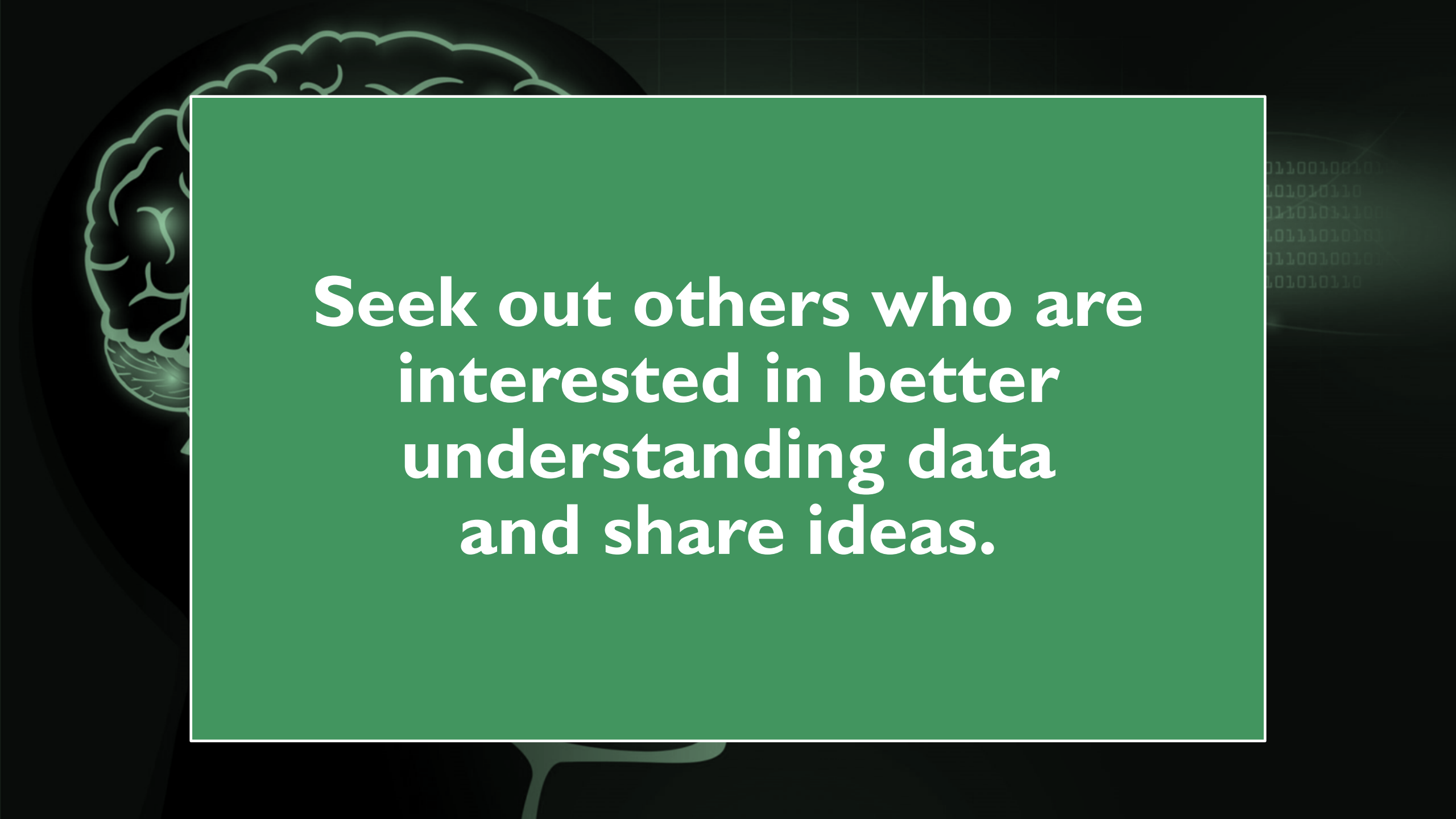






**Carve out 15 minutes each week to explore data use cases and/or data issues in higher education.**





**Seek out others who are  
interested in better  
understanding data  
and share ideas.**





**Find resources online that help explain advanced approaches to data analysis.**





**Introduce a  
“data structure of the week”  
topic on your  
staff agendas.**





**Follow the headlines  
on data applications or  
data developments  
in other fields.**

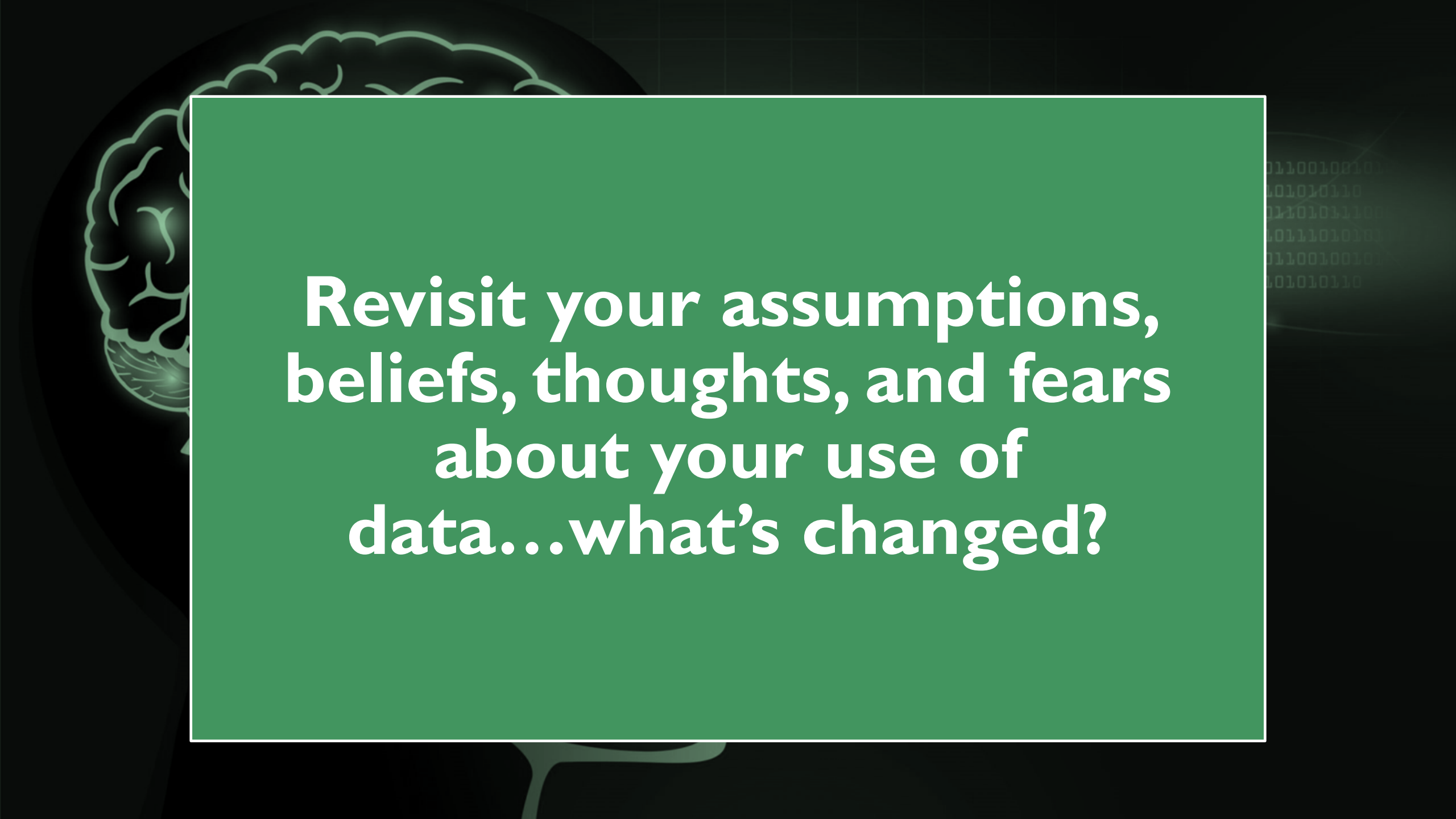






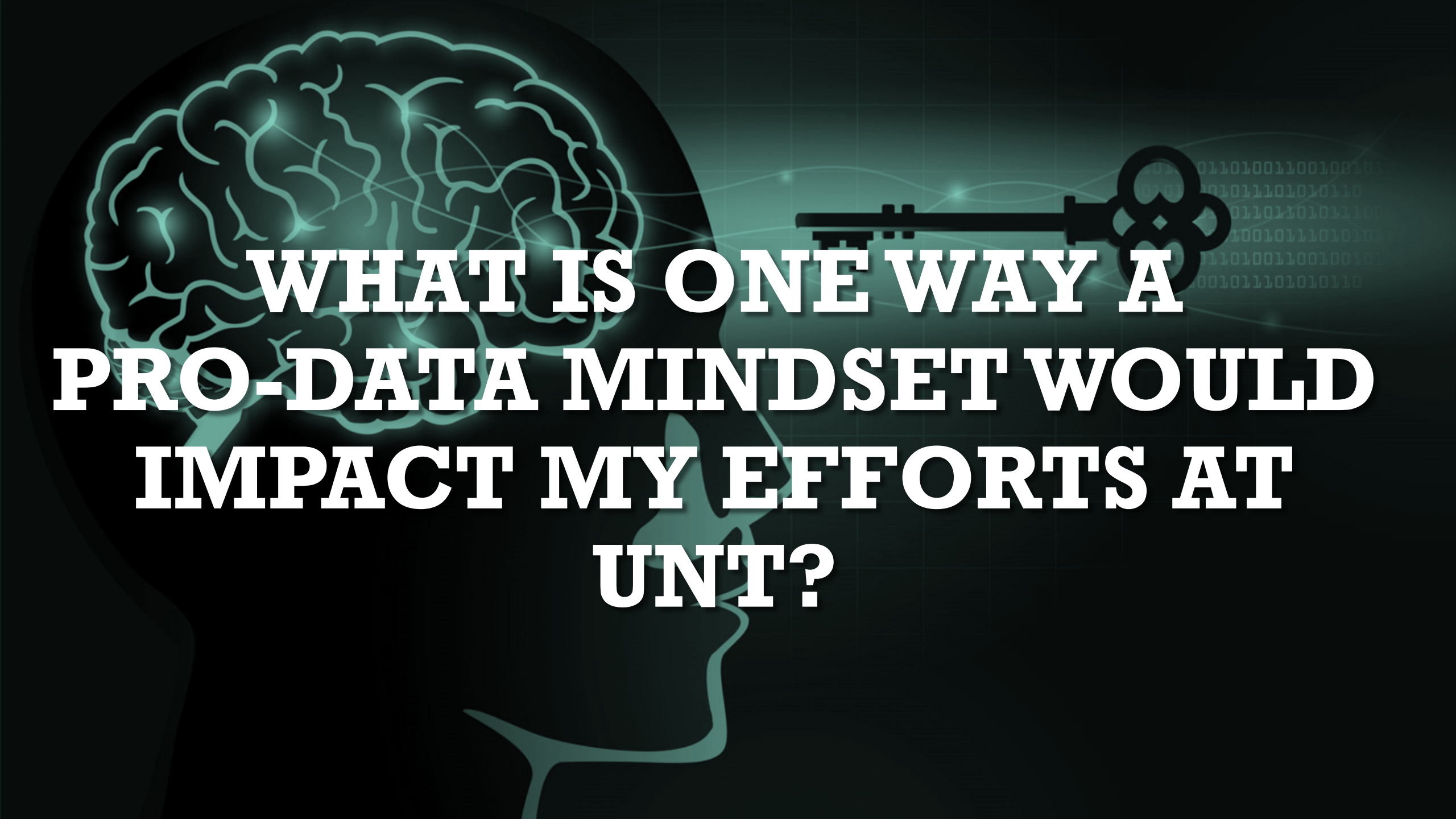
**Consider ways to integrate  
open-ended inquiry into your  
decision-making process  
when applying data.**





**Revisit your assumptions,  
beliefs, thoughts, and fears  
about your use of  
data...what's changed?**





**WHAT IS ONE WAY A  
PRO-DATA MINDSET WOULD  
IMPACT MY EFFORTS AT  
UNT?**



The image is a complex, abstract composition. At the center is a figure with two large, circular eyes, each composed of multiple concentric rings in shades of blue, green, and red. Above the figure's head is a large, solid pink circle. The background is a deep teal color, populated with numerous smaller circles, some with concentric rings, and some with solid colors. There are also larger, more intricate shapes, including a large, multi-colored shape on the right that resembles a stylized face or mask. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-century modern or psychedelic art, with a rich, saturated color palette.

**CONNECTING TO CAMPUS CULTURE**





**Common  
Language**

**Rituals**

**History**

**Values**

**Artifacts**

**Shared  
Beliefs**

**Symbols**

**Norms**

**UNPACKING CULTURE**



# WHY EFFECTIVE LEADERS CONNECT DATA EFFORTS TO CULTURE



**We know that “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”**



**We know we face challenges in establishing effective data practices that are bigger than tools or technologies.**



**We know we often overlook culture, but it is crucial for successful data informed decisions.**



**We know we cannot enhance a data ecosystem in generic fashion, rather we must get specific about the unique cultural landscape at your institution that has helped or hindered efforts in the past.**



**We know we need a holistic perspective on culture to norm our efforts across campus to succeed with data maturation, literacy, and governance initiatives.**



# CULTURE IN ACTION

Listening Between the Lines



Deciphering Leaders' Words and Actions

Recognizing Power & Praxis



Spotting Explicit and Implicit Cues



Making Sense of Your Culture



Responding to Change





# LISTENING BETWEEN THE LINES



**Remain vigilant in spotting direct versus indirect communication patterns around data and tools.**



**Recognize whether and how level and authority impact data initiatives in communications.**



# MAKING SENSE OF YOUR INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE



**Study your campus culture with intention. What data related artifacts, symbols, or rituals exist?**



**Identify ways culture impacts institutional priorities and the role (or lack of a role) data plays.**



# SPOTTING IMPLICIT & EXPLICIT CUES



**Embrace active listening and hone your understanding of how (and what) words/data are used in regular communications.**



**Recognize the significance of how (and what) data are used in strategic plans, celebrations, and community interactions.**



# DECIPHERING LEADERS' WORDS & ACTIONS



**Stay up-to-date on your institution's most important topics and the community's reactions and expressions. How do data tie in?**



**Identify primary themes that you observe in messages from leaders to shape your communications around data initiatives.**



# RECOGNIZING POWER & PRAXIS



**Join forces with a network of colleagues who support data initiatives and have had previous successes.**



**Locate the person/people who get things done and consider cooperating.**



# RESPONDING TO CHANGE



**Consider your institution's typical approach to change. Are we quick to take on a new idea or not? Why?**



**Determine if resistance to change is due to a lack of resources (e.g., time, labor, funding) or an unwillingness to change.**



**Curate reports and communications on prior data initiatives and efforts at your institution.**



The background is a vibrant green with a complex, abstract pattern. It features various shades of green, from light to dark, creating a sense of depth. The pattern includes numerous overlapping circles, some with concentric rings, and other geometric shapes like triangles and squares. The overall effect is a dynamic, textured surface that resembles a digital or scientific theme.

**WHAT IS ONE WAY I COULD  
LEVERAGE CULTURE AT MY  
INSTITUTION TO ENHANCE  
OUR APPROACHES TO DATA?**



A person wearing AR glasses is shown from the chest up, looking down at their hands. They are surrounded by a complex, glowing blue digital interface with various lines, circles, and data points. The background is dark with some blurred lights, suggesting a futuristic or high-tech environment.

# **ADOPTING NINE DATA-FORWARD BEHAVIORS**



A person's hands are visible at the bottom, holding a smartphone. The background is a dark blue, futuristic digital interface with glowing lines, circles, and data points, suggesting a high-tech or data-driven environment.

**Behave with Confidence.  
Make Data a Non-Negotiable  
in Decision-Making.**

*If our data could speak for itself, what would it say about this decision or course of action?*





**Behave as a Skeptic.  
Question Data Sourcing,  
Timing, and Quality.**

*Build trust in a data-informed decision by not being afraid to dig deeper  
and share what you discover.*





**Behave as a Visionary.  
Train Yourself to See the  
Forest Through the Trees.**

*Cry “foul” when  $n$  of one cases are used as a proxy  
for robust data analysis in meetings and decision points.*



The background of the slide features a person's hands holding a smartphone, with a futuristic digital interface overlaid. The interface consists of glowing blue lines, circular patterns, and data-like elements, creating a high-tech, data-driven atmosphere. The overall color palette is dark blue and black, with bright blue highlights from the digital elements.

# **Behave as a Champion. Promote Data Literacy Across all Roles.**

*Partner across all data typologies to offer the community training and resources to deepen skill and comfort in utilizing data.*





**Behave as a Student.  
Prioritize Your Own Learning  
with Data and Data Skills.**

*It's a rapidly changing tech landscape.  
Embrace ways to improve your data/analytic maturity*



A person's hands are visible at the bottom, holding a smartphone. The background is a dark blue, futuristic digital interface with glowing lines, circles, and data points, suggesting a network or data flow.

# **Behave as a Connector. Break Down Data Silos Wherever Possible.**

*Actively work to integrate data from various departments.  
Facilitate conversations and collaborations across units to  
ensure data is shared and leveraged institution-wide.*



A person's hands are visible at the bottom, holding a smartphone. The background is a dark blue, futuristic digital interface with glowing lines and circular patterns, suggesting data analysis or technology. The text is overlaid on this background.

# **Behave as an Author. Look for Ways to Evangelize Your Story.**

*Simplify data communication so that everyone can understand key insights.  
Use storytelling techniques to ensure your findings are actionable.*





**Behave as an Ethicist.  
Call out Bias, Spurious Correlations,  
or Potential Misuses of Data.**

*Be vigilant and engage in active questioning about the data,  
the conclusions being derived from it and the approaches that lead to its creation.*



A person is shown from the chest up, holding a smartphone in both hands. The background is a dark blue, futuristic digital interface with glowing lines, circles, and data points, suggesting a high-tech or data-driven environment. The text is overlaid on this background.

# **Behave as an Auditor. Track and Measure the Impact of Data-Informed Decisions.**

*After making decisions, consistently follow up to assess outcomes. Use performance metrics to evaluate success or failure and make adjustments as needed..*



A person is shown in profile, looking at a glowing digital interface. The interface features circular patterns and data lines, suggesting a data ecosystem or a futuristic user interface. The overall scene is dark with blue and green highlights from the digital elements.

**WHAT IS ONE BEHAVIOR I  
CAN EMBRACE TO IMPROVE  
OUR DATA ECOSYSTEM AT MY  
INSTITUTION?**



# To Fuel a Successful Data Culture

**REFLECT,  
OBSERVE,  
& THEN ACT WITH DATA  
FORWARD APPROACHES**





# Q&A

THANK YOU

Jason F. Simon, Ph.D.

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Institutional Research - University of North Texas