DATAVERSITY: DATA GOVERNANCE CHALLENGE

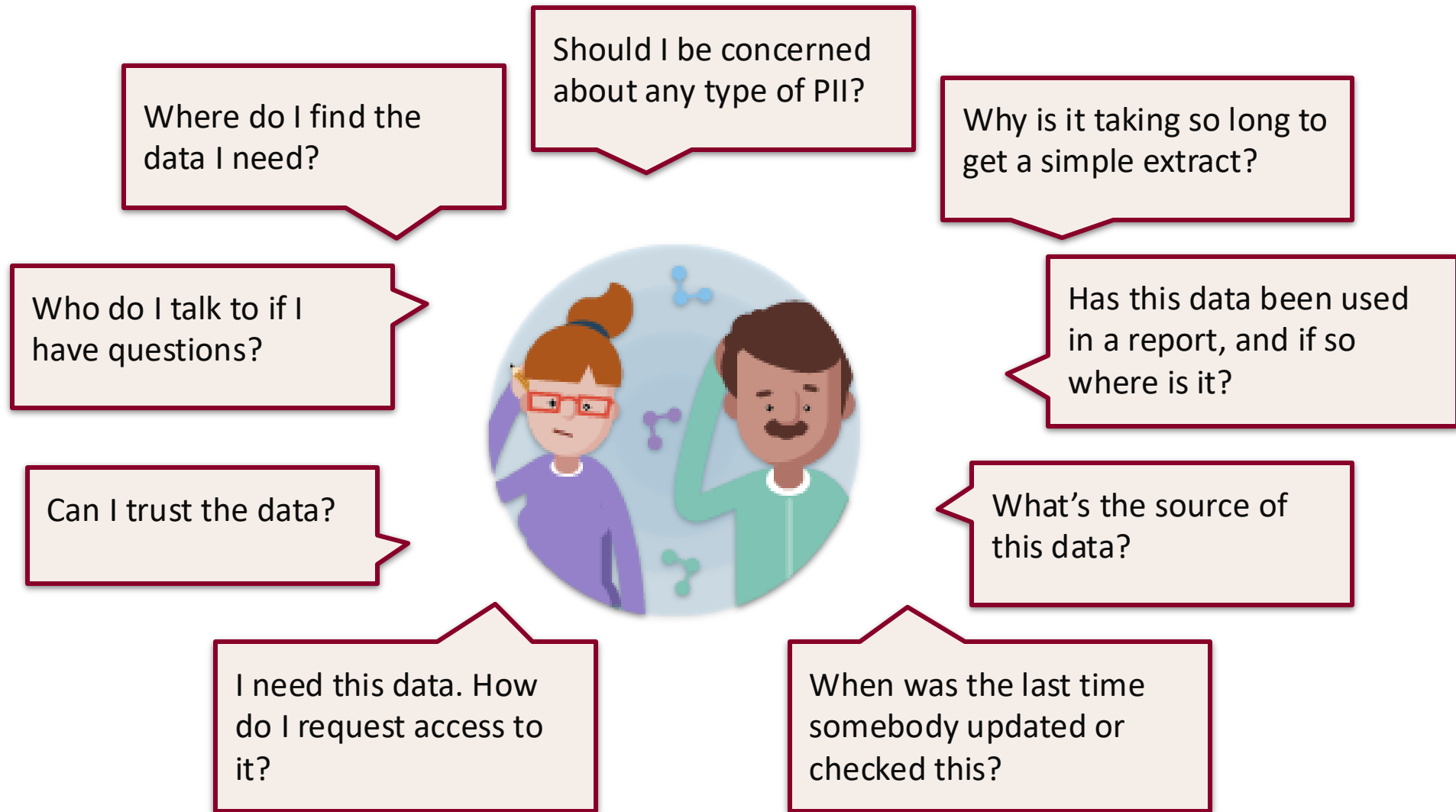# DATA GOVERNANCE AS AN AI ENABLEMENT STRATEGY

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Director of Enterprise AI

Do these questions sound familiar?

The Strategic Reality: AI Is Now

"Every earnings call. Every board meeting. Every strategic plan.
The question is always: What's our AI strategy?"

📈 *Investors demanding AI-driven transformation*

⚡ *Companies accelerating AI initiatives—ready or not*

🎯 *Executive pressure: "Move fast. Show ROI. Beat competitors."*

⚠️ *Data governance seen as invisible... or the bottleneck*

If we want a seat at the table, we speak the language of strategic priorities

Plot Twist: Governance Is Sales & Marketing

😂 Let's Be Honest

Nobody wakes up excited about "implementing DAMA-DMBOK frameworks." But everyone cares about crushing AI initiatives and beating competitors.

❌ Governance Language

- "Metadata completeness"
- "RACI matrix for stewardship"
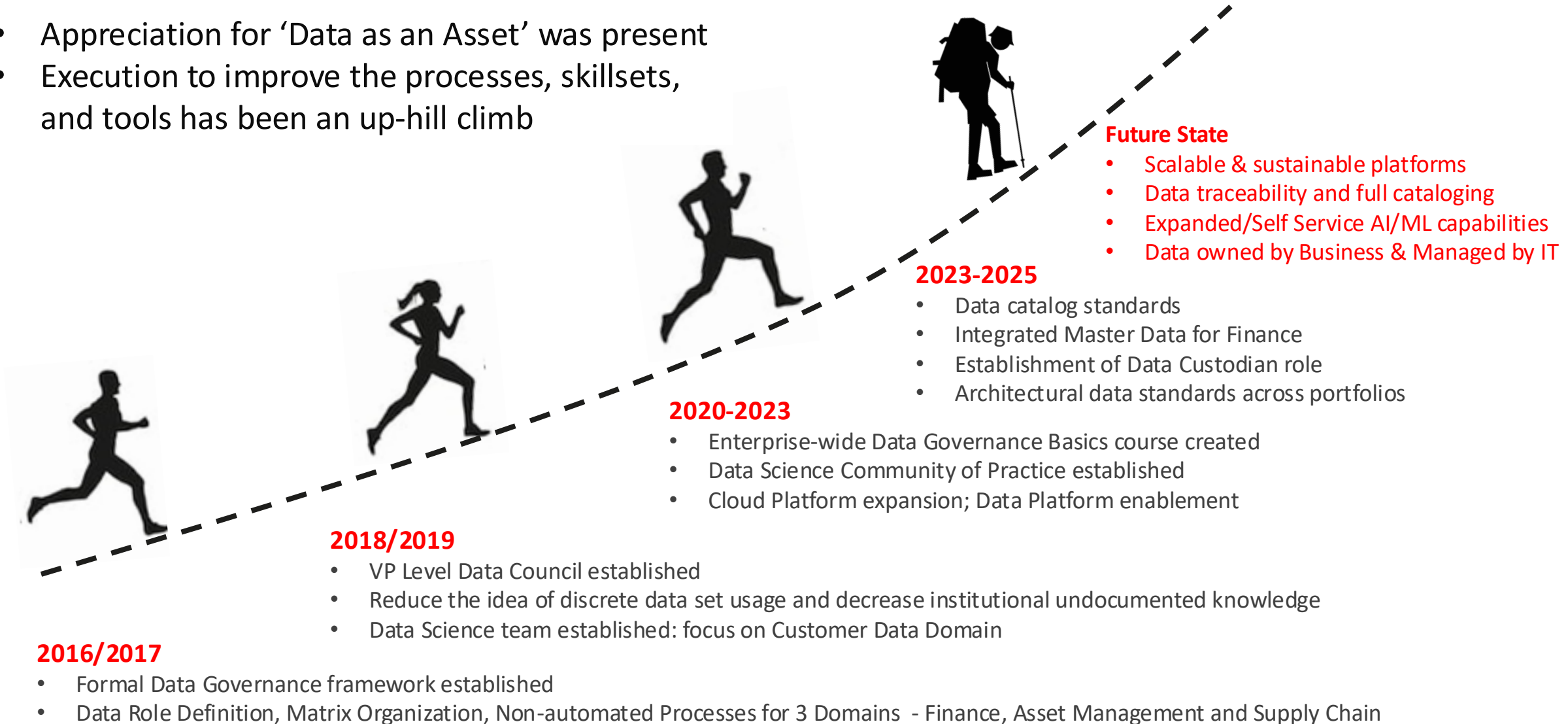- "Policy compliance"
- "Data lineage docs"

✅ Sales Language

- "60% faster insights"
- "Accelerate AI deployment"
- "70% lower compliance risk"
- "Trust your AI results"

The Skill Set

- Articulate business value
- Build exec relationships
- Navigate politics

- Tell compelling stories
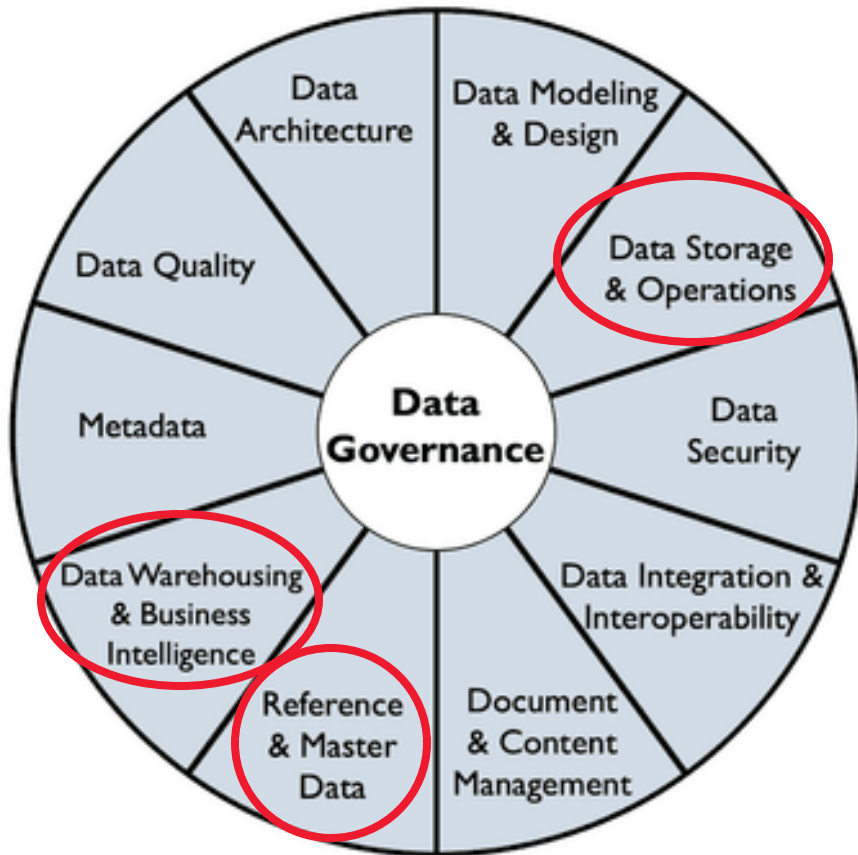- Align to priorities
- Be a mover & shaker

Data Journey

- Appreciation for 'Data as an Asset' was present
- Execution to improve the processes, skillsets, and tools has been an up-hill climb

Future State
- Scalable & sustainable platforms
- Data traceability and full cataloging
- Expanded/Self Service AI/ML capabilities
- Data owned by Business & Managed by IT

2023-2025
- Data catalog standards
- Integrated Master Data for Finance
- Establishment of Data Custodian role
- Architectural data standards across portfolios

2020-2023
- Enterprise-wide Data Governance Basics course created
- Data Science Community of Practice established
- Cloud Platform expansion; Data Platform enablement

2018/2019
- VP Level Data Council established
- Reduce the idea of discrete data set usage and decrease institutional undocumented knowledge
- Data Science team established: focus on Customer Data Domain

2016/2017
- Formal Data Governance framework established
- Data Role Definition, Matrix Organization, Non-automated Processes for 3 Domains - Finance, Asset Management and Supply Chain
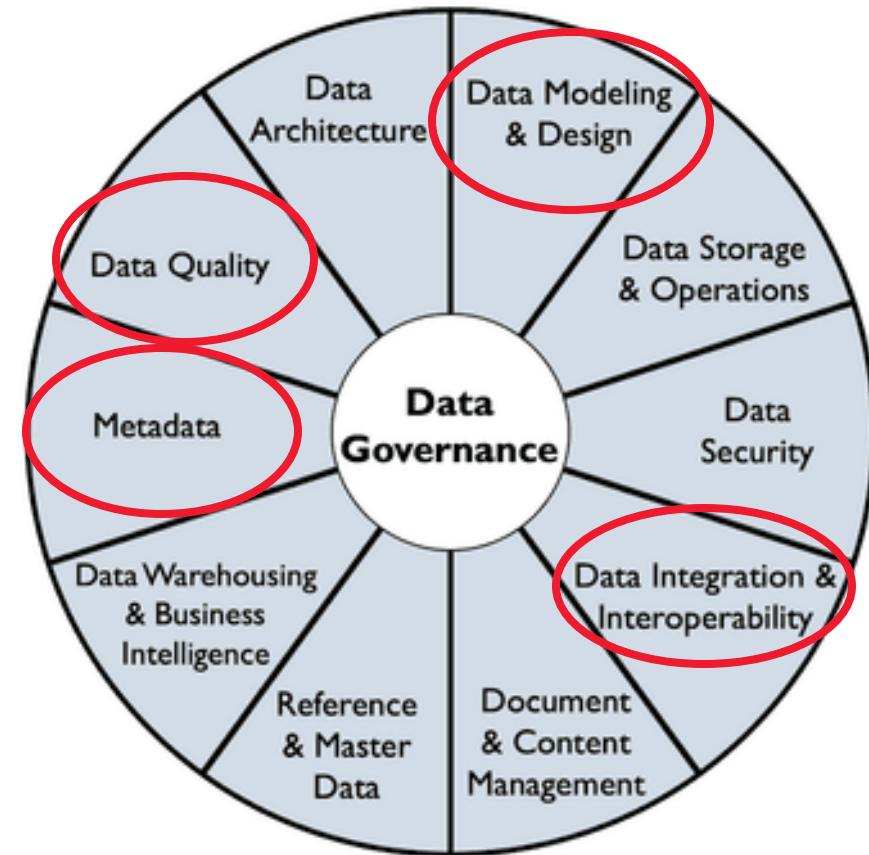
AI Forces a New Focus on DAMA Wheel Segments

Governance for Structured Data Needs

Governance for AI & Self Service

The Traditional Metadata Problem

❌ Manual Approach

- ► Hundreds of stewards tagging
- ► 6-9 months for classification
- ► Stale when published
- ► Can't scale with growth
- ► Steward burnout

✅ AI Needs

- ► Metadata at scale (50K+)
- ► Real-time or near real-time
- ► Living documentation
- ► Automated + oversight
- ► Stewards validate, not tag

**The days of hundreds of stewards doing manual tagging are over.
We must reimagine metadata creation.**

Metadata: Enabling Self-Service & AI

"AI models are only as good as their data understanding.
Self-service users need that same understanding. That's metadata."

Definitions
What does this mean?

Classification
PII? Sensitive? Public?

Certification
Is this data trusted?

Quality Metrics
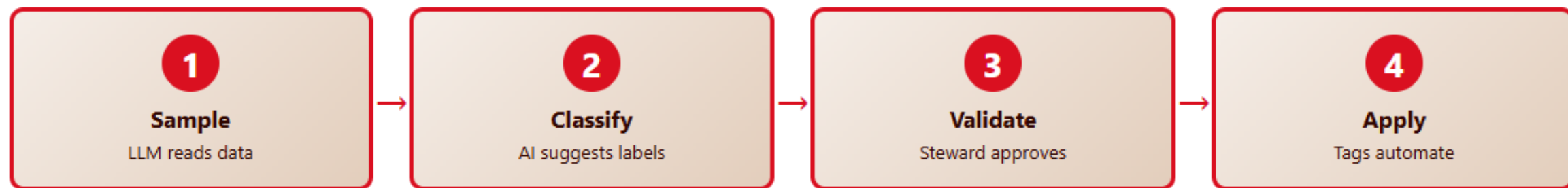How accurate is it?

Lineage
Where did it come from?

Discoverability
Can users find it?

Self-Service Risk: Users can access wrong data, misinterpret results, or violate compliance. Rich metadata + governance controls mitigate these risks.

Xcel Energy Example: The Classinator

| **1** Sample — LLM reads data | → | **2** Classify — AI suggests labels | → | **3** Validate — Steward approves | → | **4** Apply — Tags automate |

The Challenge

Classify 50,000+ columns in Databricks for ABAC. Enable self-service while protecting sensitive data.

| **90%** Time Reduction | **92%** Accuracy Rate |

From 6 months → 2 weeks. Now runs continuously.

Your Action Plan: Start Monday

1

Find Your Scorecard

Review corporate & BU scorecards. What defines success? Align governance to those metrics.

2

Interview Leaders

Talk to business leaders about data challenges and AI priorities. Find pain you can solve.

3

Engage Technical Teams

Meet with architects, data engineers, and app owners. Look for common threads.

4

Solve One Problem

Pick ONE governance issue blocking value. Fix it. Measure results. Share with leader.

The Pattern

Align to strategy → Find pain → Solve with governance → Measure impact → Share wins

This is how you become a strategic partner—not by talking governance, but by delivering business value