10

Ways to Know Dashboards Aren't Working

An assessment tool to identify dashboard bottlenecks within your organization and build a better data culture.

narrative science

Dashboards are hindering your ability to build a data-driven culture.

Building a data-driven culture can mean many different things – but tend to fall into one or more of the following strategic initiatives:

- ○ Re-imagining how you engage with prospects and customers in the digital world.
- ○ Investments to move your data to the cloud for economic and performance reasons.
- ○ Commitment to data science to uncover deeper insights into your business.
- ○ Empowering your front-line workers with the insights to make better business decisions.

No matter the initiative, we have yet to meet a company that claims dashboards aren't a bottleneck for putting data insights into their employees' hands.

Those we meet tend to fall into two segments:

1. I'm ready for a better way and want to change now.
2. I know I have a problem, but I'm still figuring out how big a problem.

So, we created 10 ways to systematically evaluate if your dashboards aren't working for you.

We encourage you to read through the following scenarios, check the statements that resonate with you, and determine if it's time to move to a better way.
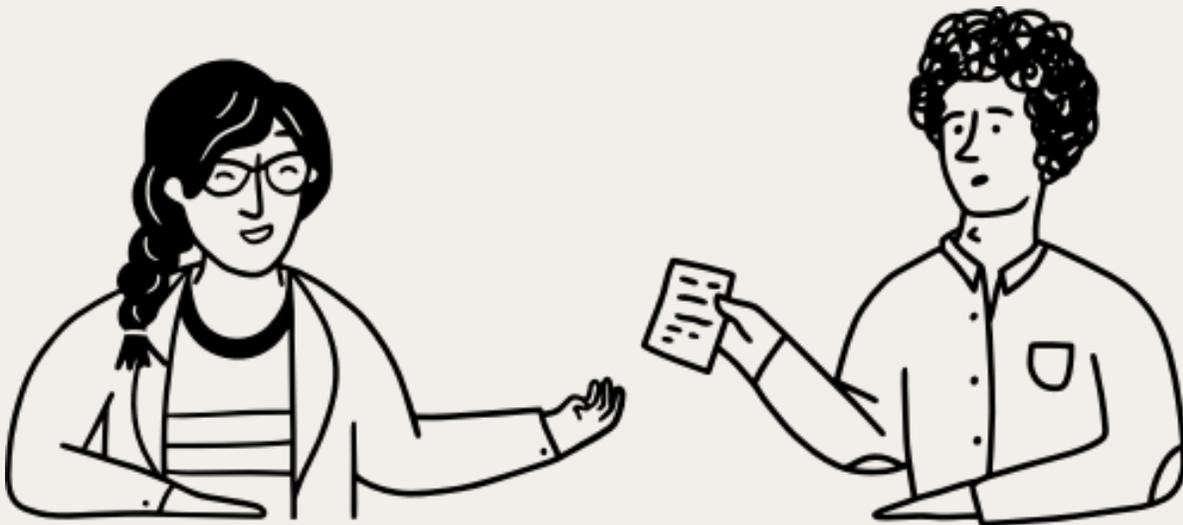
☐ **Senior leaders aren't logging into your current dashboards.**

This is the biggest problem we hear in the market. Senior executives don't look at dashboards. Ironic, because Modern BI was built on the idea of empowering business analysts to build dashboards for executives. This issue is a severe problem because cultural change starts at the top, and if your executives aren't using data to drive actions, no one else in your company will either.

☐ **Analytics teams are spending too much time reporting and not enough time analyzing.**

Maggie Remynse summed this up perfectly on a Leading with Data Podcast – "most analytics is just reporting." This is a big problem. Instead of analysts doing data analysis, most are spending their time building dashboards that report the past. Further, they build the dashboard and explain to the user or, worse, write a report about it. None of which is empowering for the resources you hired to find critical insights in your business.

☐ **Senior leaders have better access to insights than those on the front lines doing the work.**

This is the way it's always been. However, your future success depends on flipping this perspective. Your teams closest to the front lines working with customers, prospects, suppliers need to have better and deeper insights into data so that they are empowered to make decisions.

☐ **You have managers struggling to manage large distributed teams efficiently.**

Middle management is one of the most challenging responsibilities in a company. In many cases, these managers need to engage in leadership and manage those on the front lines. Managers may manage multiple functions across distributed teams and must be able to assess performance systematically. Yet, most managers don't have access to analysts or dashboards tailored to their needs.

☐ **Your main dashboard use case is a weekly or monthly meeting to explain "the numbers."**

If you are making decisions based on data by sitting around a 'table' once a month, you are going to lose. This might have worked 5 or 10 years ago, but today and in the future, it's too slow. This is the crux of change you need to make in your culture.

☐ You need to put dashboards in a PowerPoint slide, so the information is consumed.

If there's one thing employees like less than Dashboards, it's PowerPoint. If you are taking dashboards and putting them into PowerPoint slides to explain what is happening in your business, you aren't operating a modern business – and arguably worse- you are crushing your employees' souls.

☐ You provide a written narrative with your dashboard explaining the dashboard.

If this is your company, unfortunately, you aren't alone. However, it begs the question of why you are having analysts spend time building dashboards that aren't consumed or understood and then asking the same analysts to write a narrative to either supplement the dashboard or replace it.

☐ You have three different BI tools, yet no one looks at your dashboards.

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☐ Your data quality is poor.

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☐ You are convinced it's a data literacy issue.

While data literacy is a real issue in businesses, it's also being used as an excuse. It's being used as an excuse by the Modern BI vendors who sell you tools to build dashboards. The story being told is that your dashboards aren't working because you have a data literacy problem. However, we as humans have never been more data literate – so ask yourself, "Why is this an issue now?" Make sure your data literacy plans aren't just another way of teaching employees how to use dashboards.

The final reveal...

○ **If you checked more than 5 – you need to feel the urgency to drive change now.**

○ **The checks you made next to 1-4 are where you need to start.**

○ **The checks you made next to 5-10 will identify symptoms of poor process and commitment. Make sure you cover off on these as you go.**

We believe that democratizing data throughout your company is the way to empower your employees, maximize your business success, and build a data-driven culture.

Technology can help you do this and there are three product requirements in order to do this correctly:

○ **Proactive** – insights need to come to your users vs. users needing to go find insights.

○ **Simple** – a modern, consumer experience where insights are explained to you as a story.

○ **Personal** – insights specific to each person, automatically delivered where they work.

Proactive, Simple, Personal – Three words that would never be used to describe a dashboard.

It's the reason we built Lexio.
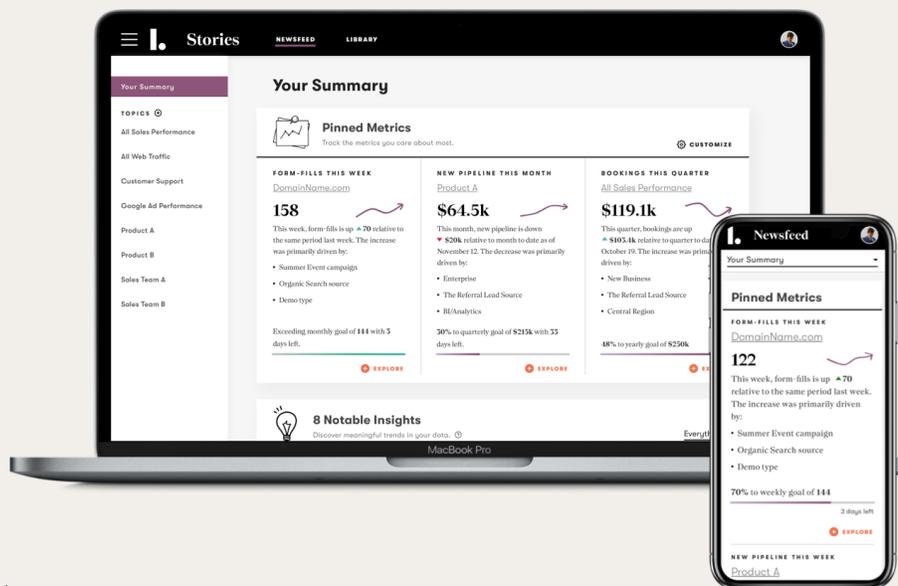
Take the assessment.
Determine when you are ready to change.
We would love to help.

Learn more at
narrativescience.com/lexio