



Building Trust in Data: Actionable Approaches to Sustainable Governance

Vince Geromini,
Principal, Data Strategy & Governance Consultant

sei.com | info@sei.com | (513) 459-1992

Introduction



Vince Geromini

Principal at SEI, Boston, MA
Data Strategy & Governance Consultant

SPECIALIZING IN

Data Strategy
Data Governance

Metadata Management
Data Quality Improvement

INDUSTRY EXPERTISE

Higher Education
Government

Professional Services
Healthcare



1992

YEAR FOUNDED

600+

CONSULTANTS

13

LOCAL OFFICES

35+

CONSULTANTS
BASED LOCALLY IN
WASHINGTON D.C.



Agenda for today

Introductions	3
Opening Exercise	4
What is Data Governance?	6
Sustainable & Practical Governance Approaches	9
Final Reflection	15
Questions & Answers	16



Group Exercise: How many people do you have at your institution?

⇒ Turn to the person next to you and share your answer

⇒ Raise your hand if your number includes...

- Students...?
- Faculty...?
- Staff...?
- What about part-time employees?
- Contractors or vendors?
- Unpaid staff or volunteers?

⇒ Are you thinking about this number as of today, this semester, this year?

Most organizations don't have one answer to this question – they have many. And none of them are necessarily wrong.

*They're just based on different definitions, systems, and points in time – that's where **data governance** comes in.*

Before we jump in... *what do you mean by data governance?*

The library example!

Imagine walking into a massive university library with millions of books – but no catalog system.



✗ No Dewey Decimal system.

✗ No Library of Congress Classification System.

✗ No Digital Search.

✗ No Labels on the Shelves.

The books are there. The knowledge is there. But finding anything becomes almost impossible.



The books are the data



The librarians are the data stewards



Your system of organization is the governance

Without data governance, the information exists — but it's difficult to trust, find, or use effectively.

So, what is *Data Governance*?

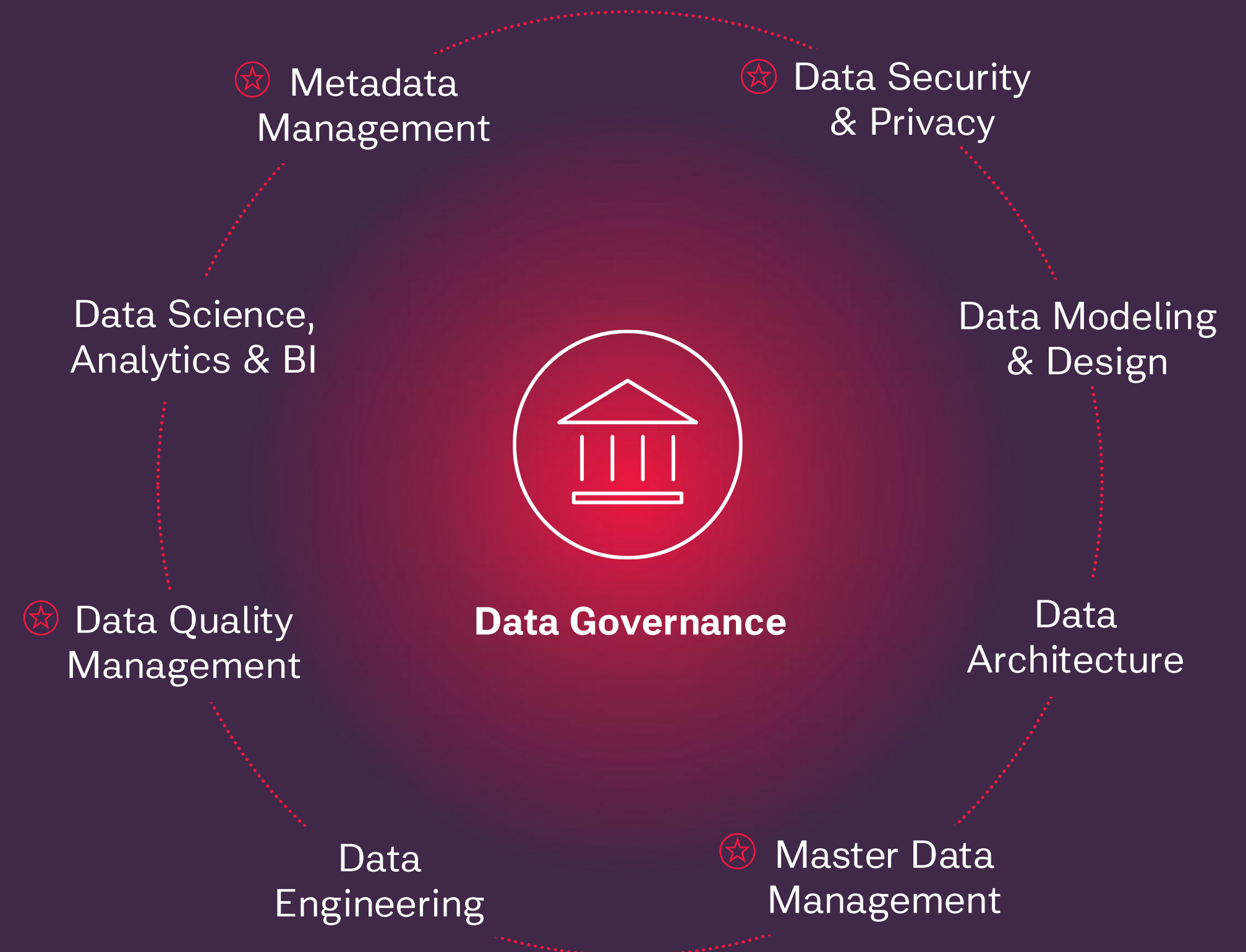
Data governance is a mechanism through which organizations can unlock value from their data and leverage this data to drive forward the **organization's vision** and strategy.

Data governance is successful when it's created in a **practical** and **intentional** fashion.

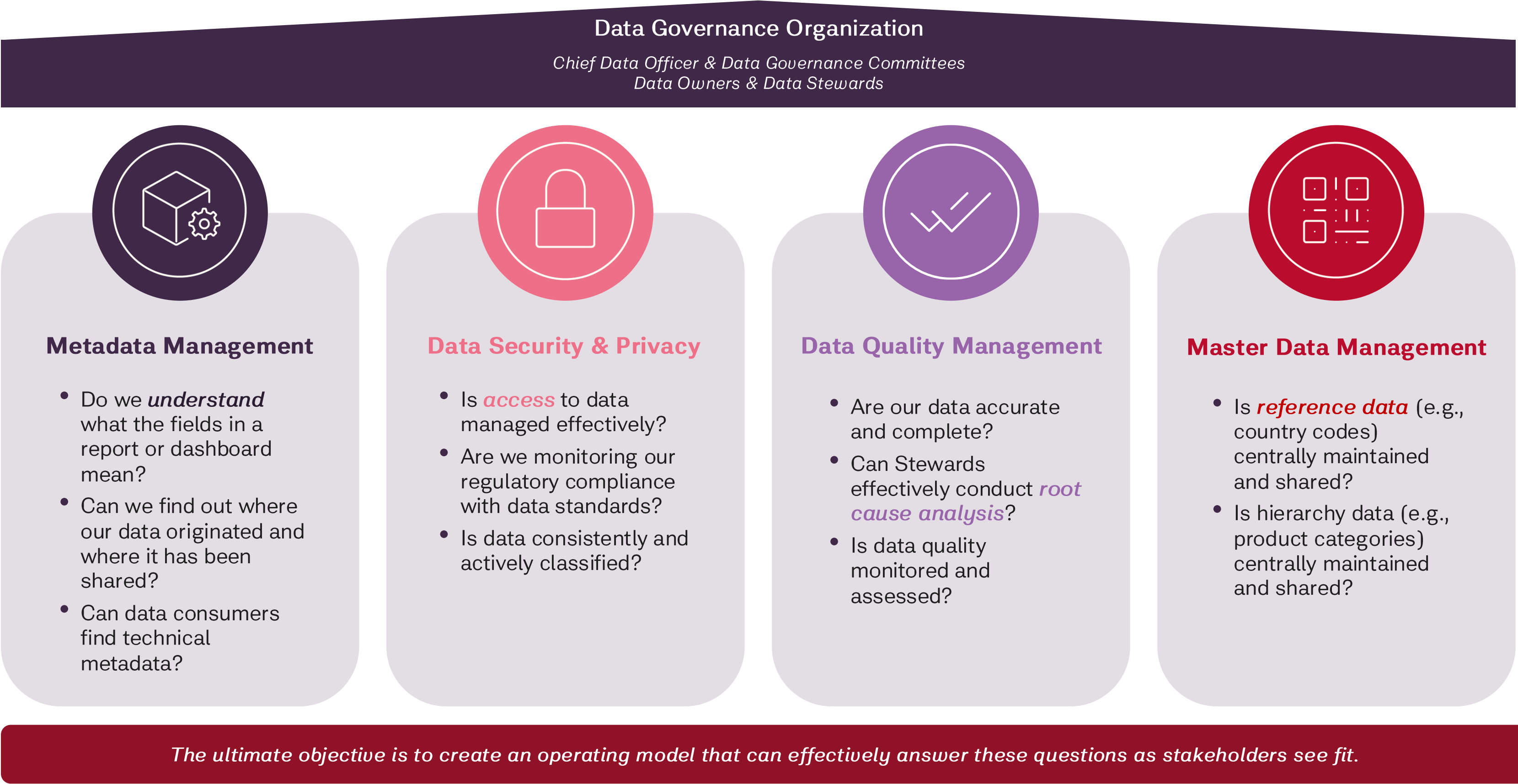
Data governance can further influence and drive all data activities across an organization, but primarily is focused on **four key pillars**:

- ⌘ Metadata Management
- ⌘ Data Security & Privacy
- ⌘ Data Quality Management
- ⌘ Master Data Management

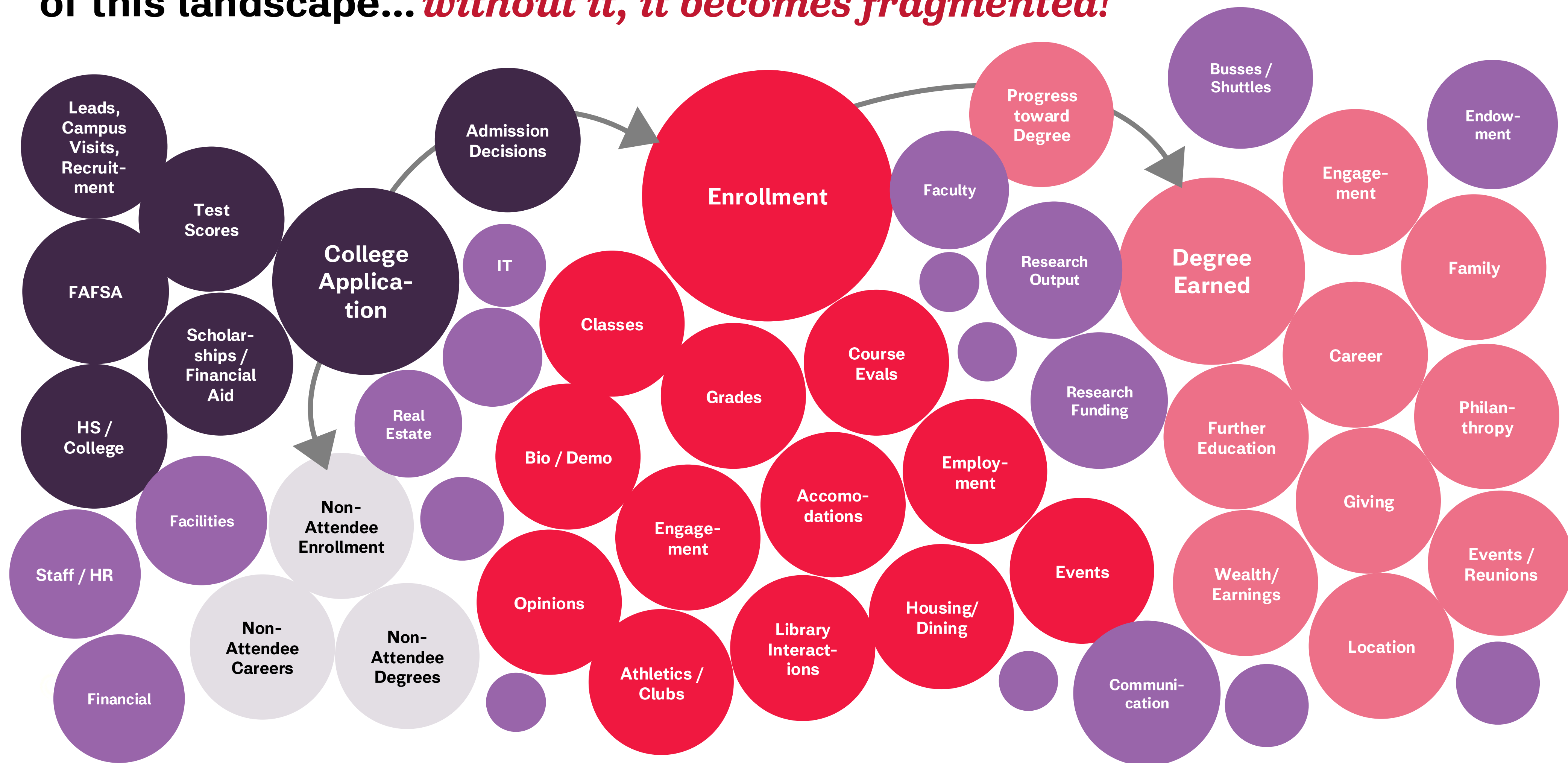
Foundational for AI



Data governance should involve these people to help answer these questions



Reminder: Data governance helps your teams make sense of this landscape... *without it, it becomes fragmented!*



What institutions should be thinking about to *tackle data governance*

SEI's model of people, process, and technology



People

- What do you need to make decisions on data within a specific business function?
- How do you make decisions on data when it crosses functional areas?
- How do you build data fluency across your institution?
- How do you build a data-fluent community amongst your teams?



Process

- What workflows do you need to make decisions on data definitions?
- How do you incorporate data governance into your existing business workflows?
- How do you create, structured and effective space for data quality remediation discussions?
- What is the process for balancing data retention with necessary use of data?



Technology

- What technology do you need to support data governance workflows?
- How do you avoid leading with a technology product and losing momentum?
- What's the best way to integrate data governance with your existing data and analytics platforms?

— Your Institution's Data —

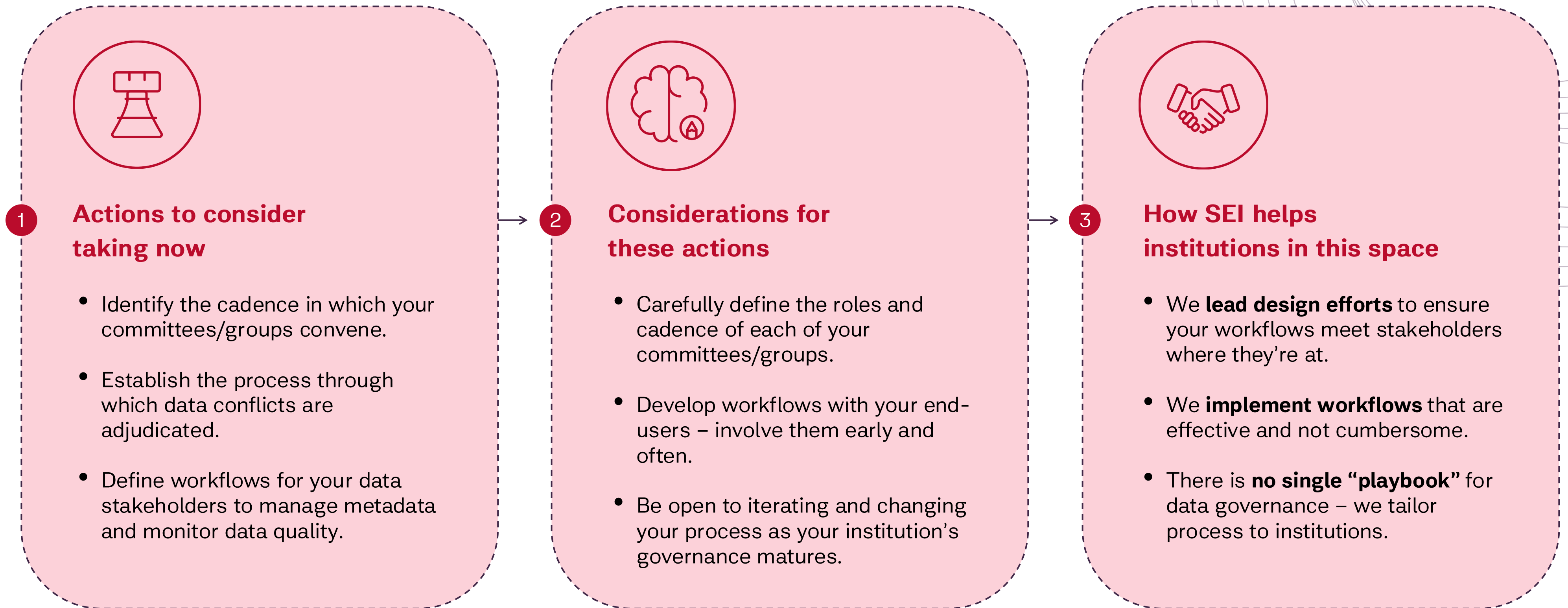
People in data governance: Empower your teams to champion it

Clear approach & considerations for institutions



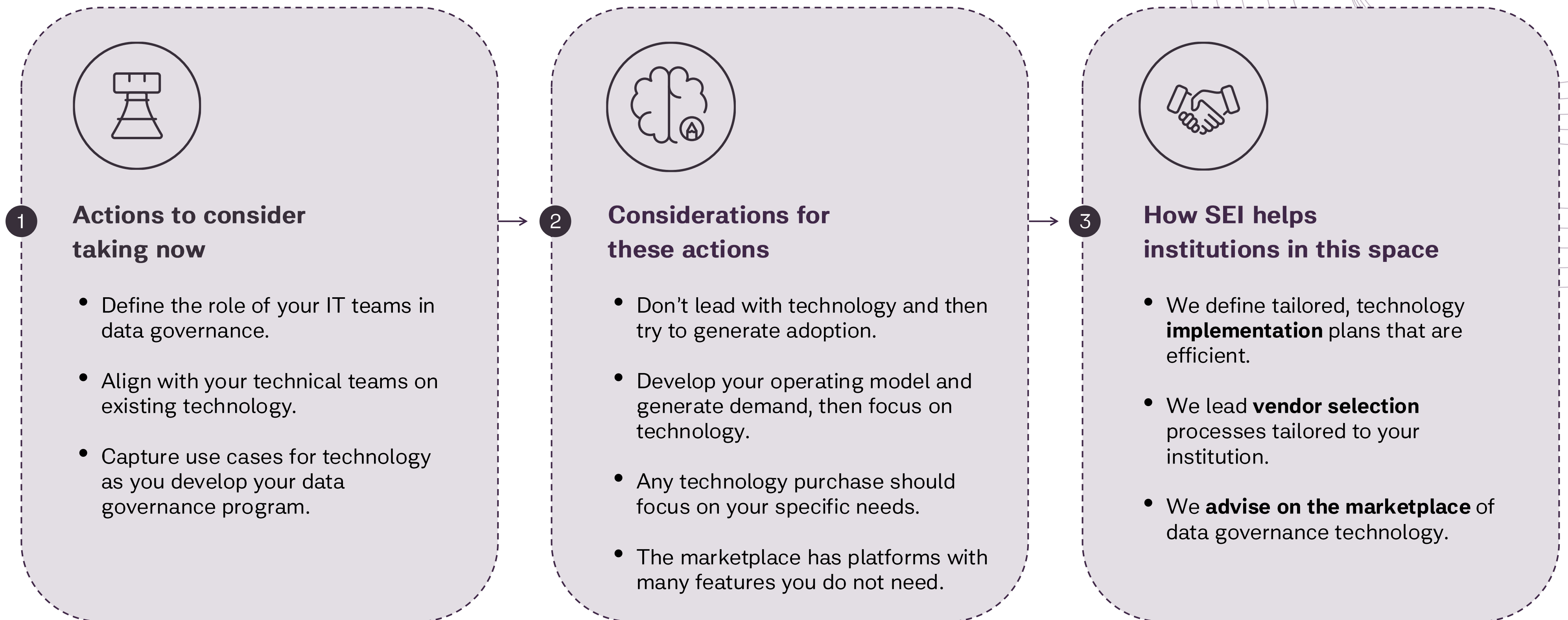
Process in data governance: Design efficient, yet collaborative workflows

Clear approach & considerations for institutions



Technology in data governance: Invest where there is demand

Clear approach & considerations for institutions



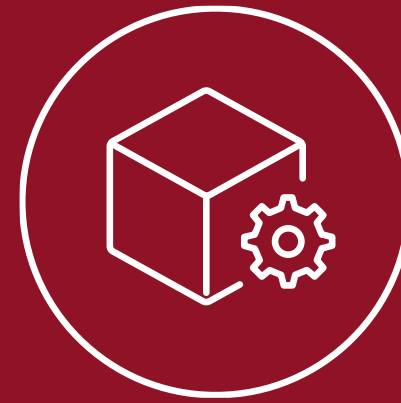
How could I forget? AI!

Data governance is the underpinning of any AI initiative



Data Quality

Without quality data, an internal AI product is only as strong as the data it's being fed. Data quality is an imperative for all institutions.



Metadata Management

For internal AI initiatives, your AI needs that “catalog” to find the data you're looking for and serve it up in the context you're asking for it.



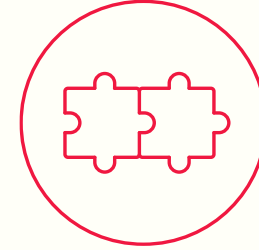
AI Governance

How is your organization considering data security and privacy in decisions around the use of GenAI or other AI platforms?

Project Spotlight

SEI delivered a holistic solution — integrating stakeholder input from across a large, complex higher education institution — to transform a challenging, decentralized data landscape into an efficient operating model to rapidly advance the University's most strategic data initiatives.

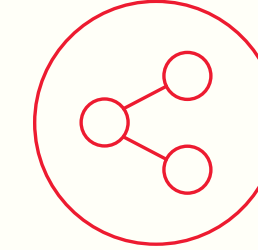
The Challenge



Limited Communication on Strategic Data Initiatives



Limited Shared Understanding of Data Definitions



Lack of Clear Pathways to Resolve Data Quality Challenges

The Impact

Data Alignment

Created a comprehensive, easy-to-understand data governance roadmap for a large, complex ivy league institution.

Consensus Built & Scaled

Created and generated consensus and alignment across a decentralized and complex data landscape. Developed a scalable data governance operating model tailored directly to the University's existing structures.

Adopted & Scalable for the Future

Implemented the operating model over a short timeframe with high levels of buy-in and comprehension of data governance concepts across executive stakeholders and data stewards.



Final Audience Reflection

“What’s one data question your leadership asks that is surprisingly difficult to answer?”



Questions?

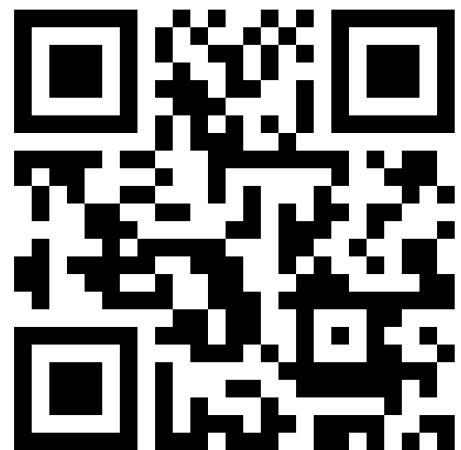
We Are SEI.

Local partner. National leader.

SEI is a management consulting firm delivering **fresh perspectives** and **reliable results** — for higher education institutions like yours.

We help mission-driven institutions:

- Work smarter and move faster
- Navigate complex change with confidence
- Align people, systems, and strategy



**SEI MEEC
Website**

SEI's expertise aligns with these five service categories:

01

Change Management & Strategic Planning

02

Technology Management

03

**Transition to Cloud Applications, Shared Services, and
Managed Services**

04

Analytics

05

Training



Thank you!