SNOW FOX DATA

FINDING AND RETAINING DATA SCIENCE TALENT

The ROI of data science is evident, but finding and retaining skilled workers to do the job is increasingly difficult. The overall labor quit rate in the US is at 2.3% and climbing. That percentage is much worse in a high-demand role like data science with some polls indicating that data scientists are likely to remain with their current employer for only a mere 1.7 years on average.

In order to drive better business decisions and outcomes, we need to work proactively to close the skills gap. This resource will explore how to find, train, and retain data science talent, so your organization can see the highest potential benefit.

1.7 YEARS
Average time data scientists are remaining with their current employers

2.3%
overall labor quit rate in the US

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN HIRING A DATA SCIENTIST.

Start by learning what a day in the life of a data scientist looks like. That way you can understand what they're providing to your organization and whether it will be an effective investment.

Successful businesses target outcomes, not insights. As a result, your data scientists should have more than just academic experience. Business experience is also mission-critical. During your hiring process, ask potential candidates about what business outcomes they have driven.

Another key quality to look for is the ability to effectively communicate. When asking a candidate about their experience, can they communicate a narrative end-to-end? They should explain the business problem, the insights found, how they operationalized that insight, and the business outcome it drove.

The ability to collaborate is a crucial additional skill. Many data scientists are hired but then are essentially placed in a closet. If you are managing a data scientist, be prepared to protect their time but don't quarantine them from the business. Data scientists that collaborate are a valuable resource, and it's important that they want the team to improve. When interviewing, ask if potential candidates have been part of a team in the past and how they worked within it.

Collaboration is mission-critical. You will miss valuable insights if the business team sees the project once at the beginning and once at the end.

HOW TO STRATEGICALLY FILL SKILLS GAPS.

If you have five open roles for data scientists right now, it makes sense to revisit your needs before making any hiring decisions. Do you really need five highly skilled individuals (that are increasingly expensive)? Instead, consider utilizing a handful of citizen data scientists to do more of the upfront data collection and preparation so your data scientists have more time to spend on expert-level activities.

Automation can also take a lot of the workload off your team. By automating model retraining and deployment, your data scientists can focus on the next project instead of monitoring past ones.

Increase your team's capacity through consulting. Ensure your consulting partner can understand your unique data challenges and supports data science as a competency within your organization. Consulting groups who are skilled at supporting organizational success through data science can set your company up toward a powerful and scalable data solution benefitting your business for years to come.

Need help solidifying your data science team?

REQUEST A CONSULTATION
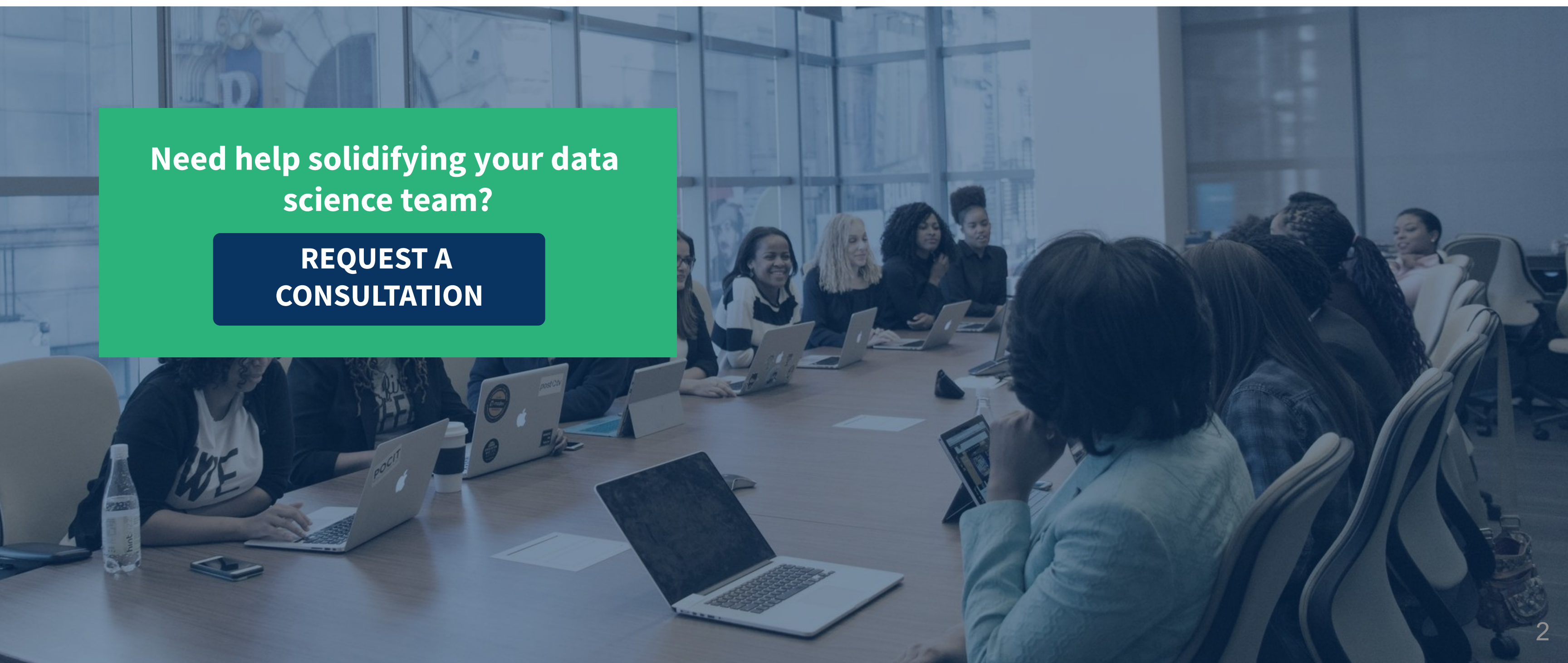
HOW TO RETAIN YOUR DATA SCIENCE TALENT.

If data scientists are likely to remain with their current employer for only a mere 1.7 years on average, what can you do today to help minimize talent turnover? These key elements can help you retain your top data science talent.

Effectively Train and Onboard
Standardize onboarding procedures to set accurate expectations upfront and get your new data scientist up to speed quickly. This will set your team up for immediate success, making it easier to collaborate with the rest of the team.

Minimize Bureaucracy and Hinderance
Enterprises are struggling to select where analytics groups exist in organizational structures, which leads to bureaucracy. Decide if your advanced analytics team is part of your business team or part of your IT team.

Ensure Support from Managers and Leaders
A lot of leaders don't understand what data scientists do or what it takes to be good at data science as an enterprise. Be sure to train your leaders to be supportive and effective.

Encourage Collaboration
Don't hide your data scientists away. Get them working with your business teams and collaborating together to drive outcomes.
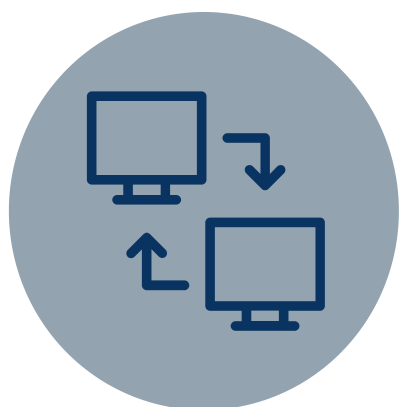
Provide Access to Tools
A lack of access to tools is another huge reason data scientists leave. Utilize an end-to-end tool for the operationalization of machine learning models.

THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE.

It's time to take a good look in the mirror and understand if your organization is ready to hire, train, and retain a data science team. Use these tactics for strategic hiring and retention to maintain a strong, effective team that drives impactful business results.

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