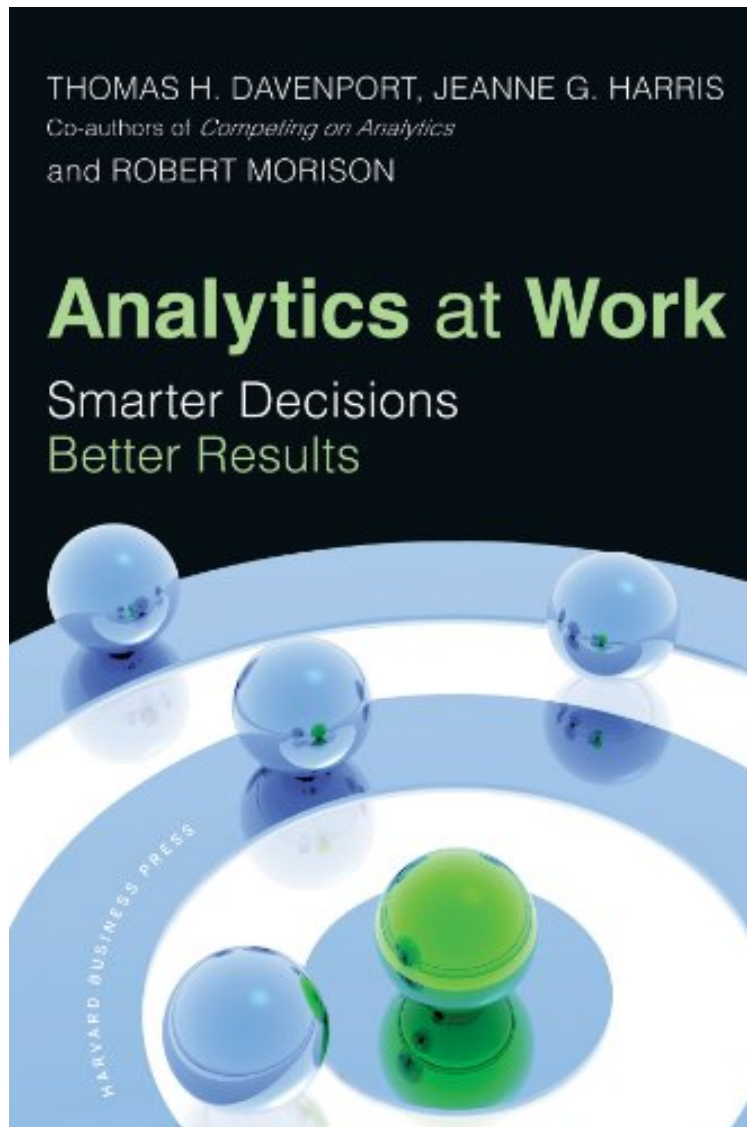


Analytics at Work: Smarter Decisions, Better Results

Thomas Davenport, Jeanne Harris

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Thomas Davenport, Jeanne Harris : Analytics at Work: Smarter Decisions, Better Results before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Analytics at Work: Smarter Decisions, Better Results:

21 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Analytics at Work, actionable and practical advice on working with information. By Mark P. McDonald Analytics is a hot topic and executives looking to get value from business intelligence. This book discusses how they do that. I recommend this book as perhaps THE book for people looking to establish and sustain an ability to use information in decision-making and process execution. There is a sweet spot for business books between the illustration of a business idea and a discussion of its practical implementation. Business

books that are too high level offer great ideas that appear realistic only to angels. Too low of a level and it's a technical manual that makes the idea seem mundane. I mention this because *Analytics at Work* rests firmly in the sweet spot between these extremes. Davenport, Harris and Morison have taken ideas originally expressed in *Competing on Analytics* and taken them to the next level - reality. If competing on analytics describes the characteristics of an 'analytic competitor' and their principles, then this book moves from principle to practice discussing issues from data management, through to changes in corporate structure and culture. The book is comprehensive without being a compendium. It is clearly written to provide a guide that helps you apply analytics to your situation without being a set of instructions that are applicable to few people.

Strengths: The book has frequent and recognizable examples of executives and applications of analytics. These examples illustrate the author's points without appearing contrived. The examples and case studies are a real strength particularly as they come from companies with different levels of analytic intensity. This gives the reader the ability to see how analytics comes in many sizes and fits different situations. A practical discussion of the issues related to analytics rather than a relentless boosting of the idea and principles. The authors recognize that business intelligence has been around for a while, that people will adopt analytics at different levels of intensity and that makes the book real to executives and practitioners. The book offers a comprehensive discussion of the strategies, organization structure and execution implications of analytics in the enterprise. For a 214-page book, *Analytics at Work* covers a lot of ground without seeming rushed or superficial. Graphical, the book makes effective use of frameworks and diagrams that bring the concepts into tighter focus and reality. Executives can use these diagrams to understand and perhaps more importantly to share with others to explain how analytics apply to their business.

Challenges: While the book discusses analytics at all levels, it tends to concentrate analytics activities into a specific group of subject matter experts. While I agree that analytics requires specific skills, setting these 'quants' up as a special group may limit the spread of analytics across the enterprise. This is a minor point that does not reduce the value of the book.

Overall *Analytics at Work* is a rare book that covers both the concept and the implementation of a business idea. I recommend the book as it represents a well-balanced, action oriented approach that executives should read to raise the value of information in their enterprise.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Still good but falls short of promises
By Aaron U. Bolin
Analytics at Work is billed as a how to guide for managers to "effectively deploy analytics in their day-to-day" operations (from the inside cover). Though I enjoyed the book, I don't believe that a reasonable person could say that it lives up to the promise. Instead, Davenport and his co-authors provide a very general framework that lacks the advertised day-to-day details required for deployment. I found the book to be interesting and quite useful from a "oh, I hadn't thought of that..." perspective. However, I'm not sure that there is much original material here beyond the general framework -- most of which was presented in an earlier work by the same authors. Though I wouldn't recommend this book for serious analytic how-to, it would be a good read for someone seeking a general overview of the topic in a reasonably non-technical format. For me, the measure of a book's contribution to my understanding of a topic is the number of marginal notes I make as I read. In this particular volume, I didn't make many marginal notes. I'm still very much of fan of Thomas Davenport; the quality of his thought on the topic of business analytics is top notch. *Analytics at Work* is still worth a quick read, especially if this is your first exposure to Davenport's framework for business analytics.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good so far
By Gregory Dellacroce
The book with in great condition. I will say that I have not finished it yet, but I wanted to get this in while I was thinking about it.

Most companies have massive amounts of data at their disposal, yet fail to utilize it in any meaningful way. But a powerful new business tool - analytics - is enabling many firms to aggressively leverage their data in key business decisions and processes, with impressive results. In their previous book, *Competing on Analytics*, Thomas Davenport and Jeanne Harris showed how pioneering firms were building their entire strategies around their analytical capabilities. Rather than "going with the gut" when pricing products, maintaining inventory, or hiring talent, managers in these firms use data, analysis, and systematic reasoning to make decisions that improve efficiency, risk-management, and profits. Now, in *Analytics at Work*, Davenport, Harris, and coauthor Robert Morison reveal how any manager can effectively deploy analytics in day-to-day operations— one business decision at a time. They show how many types of analytical tools, from statistical analysis to qualitative measures like systematic behavior coding, can improve decisions about everything from what new product offering might interest customers to whether marketing dollars are being most effectively deployed. Based on all-new research and illustrated with examples from companies including Humana, Best Buy, Progressive Insurance, and Hotels.com, this implementation-focused guide outlines the five-step DELTA model for deploying and succeeding with analytical initiatives. You'll learn how to:

- Use data more effectively and glean valuable analytical insights
- Manage and coordinate data, people, and technology at an enterprise level
- Understand and support what analytical leaders do
- Evaluate and choose realistic targets for analytical activity
- Recruit, hire, and manage analysts

Combining the science of quantitative analysis with the art of sound reasoning, *Analytics at Work* provides a road map and tools for unleashing the potential buried in your company's data.

Harvard Business School Press, Davenport in particular, has produced some excellent books on competitive analytics and the like, with good case studies; - ZD Net