



## IDA's Third Applying Data Analytics Forum

The IDA Applying Data Analytics Forum is an opportunity to improve collaboration among practitioners by providing venues for sharing ideas and networking across government, industry, and academia. The third forum in this ongoing series focused on usable information—how to make the best use of the data available in a way that produces actionable and useful results.

IDA hosted the half-day forum on September 18, 2019. Following welcome remarks from IDA Vice President for Management Linda Hunt, speakers and panelists gave their perspectives on useable information.



*"I would ask a simple question about why are your resources going towards a data storage and management instead of analytics if we could solve the enterprise problem of...managing data [by centralizing]? Free up your resources to do higher end work. That is what the machines are intended to do for us."*

—Robert Daigle, Rebellion Defense



*"Data are just data and might be really, really valuable, but we really need to turn it into information...look at it...process it...for it to be useful. If we apply advanced analytics to that information and data, then we can make better decisions. We often do not need big data to make a difference."*

—Laura Albert, University of Wisconsin-Madison



*"I would say communicating uncertainty is key. [Weather forecasting] is an imperfect science. And what we try to do especially for significant events is give ranges and present scenarios. For snowstorms, what we do is we present what we call boom and bust scenarios, which is the likelihood the snowfall will either exceed or fall below our most likely forecast. We lay it out so people understand the full range of possibilities so they can be better prepared to make decisions."*

—Jason Samenow, Capital Weather Gang

*"All of this is really made possible because it is a natural language interface... The fact that people are free to talk about whatever they want provides all of this data that then can be analyzed to produce these actionable insights..."*

—Ian Beaver, Verint



*"This institutional change of how data within the CIO office—and now that [the] CDO [is] coming online—is really creating an environment where there is a spin... of getting to actualized data. And data that is really going to create change. But there has to be proof of pilots and confidence in that."*

—Rob Cranston, CANA Advisors



*"We don't necessarily need [leaders] to understand data, we need them to ask better questions, ask more difficult questions, and hold us accountable for generating data that helps them answer those questions and putting that data to work."*

—Daniel Morgan, U.S. Department of Transportation



*"One of the first things we do is lay out what is the vision for that product. Who are the personas that are going to be using it and what are the objectives and key results we want to have? In other words, what is the story you want to tell in the next three months? A layman's story of what are the business outcomes we're trying to achieve with this? That is the first thing I do. Without that, the rest doesn't matter."*

—Greg Little, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)



*"I think the future as we go forward is figuring out the best way to do human machine teaming. Letting the automation takeover where we have those monitoring processes. So we can broaden our time to study in depth the big problems."*

—Kristin Saling, Army Talent Management Task Force

*"The issues we have in our workforce, such as retention, recruitment, attrition, I think would be better understood if we looked at how other law enforcement agencies address these problems. This is an example of how people can share information."*

—Evelyn Yee, Department of Homeland Security



Video of Laura Albert's talk and private sector and government panel discussions are available on IDA YouTube at [https://idalink.org/Data\\_Analytics\\_Forum-2019](https://idalink.org/Data_Analytics_Forum-2019).



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IDA's Applying Data Analytics Forum is supported by IDA's Independent Research Program.