

March 2022



Datathon: Strategies for Success!



OUR MISSION



The mission of the association is to facilitate the financial security of its members, associates and their families through provision of a full range of highly competitive financial products and services; in so doing, USAA seeks to be the provider of choice for the military community.

THE USAA STANDARD



Keep our membership and mission first

Live our core values: **Service, Loyalty, Honesty, Integrity**

Be compliant and manage risk

Build trust and help each other succeed

Embrace diversity and be purposefully inclusive

Innovate and build for the future

➤ **Team-building and coordination**

- ◆ Tactics for triumph within your datathon group

➤ **Business Pitch**

- ◆ Tips to go from 'brainstorm' to 'breakthrough' and sell your ideas on stage

➤ **Data Dive**

- ◆ Preparing today for agile prototyping tomorrow

Team-building and coordination

- **A key to success in any group project is a team's cooperation**
- **Whether you are participating in the datathon with an established team, or are matched to a team as an individual, the opportunity to lay the groundwork for a stellar performance starts well in-advance of the key participation dates**
- **By working through some of these aspects with your teammates, you can preempt potential difficulties and ensure a smooth, synchronized experience that will drive your team toward accomplishing your goals (and have fun too!)**

Team-building and coordination: Making a Team Functional



- **Share contact information and decide on the best mechanism to exchange ideas and thoughts**
 - Email? Discord? Google-docs? Zoom? In-Person Meetings?
- **Set expectations for meeting times**
- **Foster accountability by assigning group roles**
 - Maybe you want to establish a 'note-taker' for recording ideas and action items? Will someone play the role of the 'skeptic' for providing counterbalance and challenge to ideas?
- **Decide on the technologies you'll want to have available for executing the pitch/data-dive and prepare your environments so you can hit the ground running**
 - YouTube accounts, latest Python versions, packages for building visualizations, etc

Team-building and coordination: Making a Team Fantastic



➤ Leverage your Learning

- We all have different backgrounds and accumulated knowledge
- Sharing YOURS may bring new insight to the table

➤ Have Courage for Healthy Challenge

- It's OK to disagree!
- Through conflict resolution, your group becomes confident in each other, and you can catch misunderstandings or course-correct onto a better path

➤ Bootstrap to Betterment

- Working from each other's solutions can produce something collectively greater than any individual part
- Think about strategies to ensure that everyone can contribute equitability to your project

- **Familiarize yourself on manipulating and exploring datasets with your language of choice**
- **Read our 'How-To' on data access so you aren't struggling to get your hands on the source material at kick-off**
- **Where do you start?**
 - Outside-In Approach: Brainstorming ideas based on your curiosity, on current events, on local interests, and then combing the data for material to analyze in the context of your study
 - Inside-Out Approach: Exploring the columns and tables to spark ideas from which you can build a hypothesis to test
- **Don't be afraid to think outside-the-box and incorporate alternative open-sources to supplement the data in your study!**

Business Pitch: Presentation



➤ **Decide on the format of how you will demonstrate and record your presentation to upload as a private YouTube video**

- Record a PowerPoint through a Zoom screen-share?
- Film a projector and present 'in-person'?
 - › Will everyone be rotating through, presenting one component? Or will you have a dedicated person to present?

➤ **Be smart about your time management**

- Within 5-7 minutes, your team needs to motivate your idea, introduce it to the audience, explain the intended outcomes or unknowns that will be investigated, and 'sell' the importance of the project through the impacts of the exploration

➤ **Keep it 'high-level' and don't get stuck on fine details or technical execution**

➤ **Creativity, visual storytelling, and enthusiasm are all just as important as the content of the proposal**

➤ **If you are using this challenge as an opportunity to try out a new technology, that's awesome!**

- Learning on the fly is a part of every datathon, and we encourage you to push your boundaries
- Spend the prep-week learning the syntax and mechanics of your new tools so you can leverage them with ease at kick-off

➤ **Build out templates for common tasks to save time**

- Plotting styles, ML frameworks, and data-aggregation often follow established patterns
- Having these patterns familiar to you and ready to modify for the problem at hand will allow you more time to refine your project

➤ **If tasks can be parallelized, do it!**

- Datathons can have a lot to do in a short period of time, and having 4 people standing around a laptop watching a 5th person code something isn't the best use of your collective resources

Data Dive: Presentation

➤ **Decide on the format of how you will demonstrate and record your presentation to upload as a private YouTube video**

- Record a powerpoint through a zoom screen-share?
- Film a projector and present 'in-person'?
 - › Will everyone be rotating through, presenting one component? Or will you have a dedicated person to present?

➤ **Be smart about your time management**

- Within 5-7 minutes, your team needs to motivate your idea, introduce it to the audience, explain the investigation techniques, and convey the impacts of the exploration along with any future directions

➤ **Keep it 'high-level' and don't get stuck on fine details or technical execution**

➤ **Creativity, visual storytelling, and enthusiasm are all just as important as the complexity of the analytical techniques**



Internal