

BUILDING AN ANALYTICS PRACTICE

In association with Gramener

Gramener, a data science company, partnered with **Jigsaw Academy** to train their team, build an analytics practice and grow their business.

"We were able to set up an analytics practice. As simple as that."

S Anand

CEO and Chief Data Scientist

Gramener

CHALLENGES

"What we are trying to do is help people understand the magic of data, what it can do beyond what you see in obvious terms."

Gramener is a data science company, focusing on data visualization, data science and domain specific storytelling for clients. Getting from data to insights, however, is a long and intricate process. It involves a series of complex activities, and requires a very wide and different combination of skills at different stages of the process.

It includes:

- Basic data preparation
- Exploratory data analysis to see what can be done
- Focused model application to get to a solution (requires knowledge and exposure to a wide variety of models)
- Interpretation of the model in the context of the client's domain (requires knowledge and understanding of different domains)

Gramener's key challenge is that not many people currently have this unique combination of skills. As Anand says, "There are a few unicorns out there I guess... somebody who knows programming as well as databases, as well as analysis, as well as statistics, as well as business. May be, and I am sure they cost a lot. But no, it's not a scalable model."

MARKET CONSTRAINTS

When trying to fill skill gaps, organizations face a lot of challenges. Hiring from colleges is unfortunately not an option. Not many colleges have an analytics course to begin with. Even if they do, they are not comprehensive in covering all the different tools and techniques that are being used in business today.

Hiring from the industry is an option, but there is a challenge here as well. Industry does not have an extensive pool of trained people, simply because there are too many areas to train for. Larger organizations try to solve the problem horizontally by putting together specialized teams. Smaller ones, will have to either build elite teams or outsource the needs. Either ways, this need for trained people is a "persistent need" and one that will keep moving. As Anand says,

"I believe that the need for training in analytics will exist for a long time. It will probably move its focus from training on technique, to training on insight, to training on action."



How do I do things?

Training on Technique

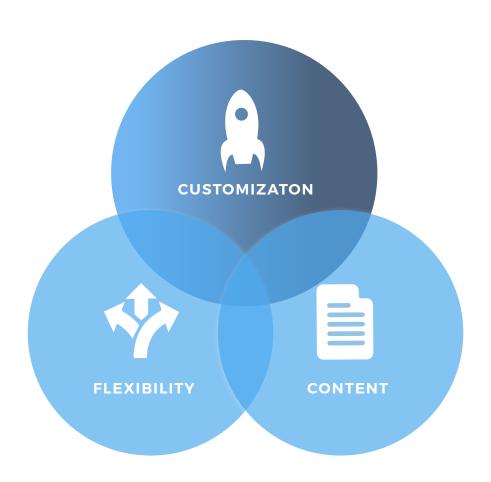
Solve the problem of breadth of analytics by focusing on techniques and making sure people know how to do things

REQUIREMENTS

Gramener partnered with Jigsaw Academy to train its employees in analytics with the following objectives:

- Firstly, ensure everyone has a **ground understanding** of all the elements across the process chain.
- Secondly, once everyone knows the minimum that is required, take them to the next level across all areas.

HOW JIGSAW ACADEMY HELPED





CUSTOMIZATION

Since Gramener's needs were very niche, Jigsaw structured a custom training program for them. The course and content was customized specifically to suit their unique needs.



CONTENT

According to Anand, "the uniqueness and solidity of the content" as well as the use of real world examples and datasets was a big differentiating factor. In fact, one of the things Gramener did was to take the same content, mimic it in Python and provide their own parallel training along with that to their team. This resulted in the team being able to use the same techniques on a different toolset.



FLEXIBILITY

The course was tailored down to the last team. As Anand says, "The thing that I really like about the way this course was run was that no person was left behind. Despite the gap in ability in some cases, despite the lack of inclination in some cases, nobody was left behind." The structure of the course and the faculty ensured that everybody worked through their assignments, until they got to the point where everybody was at the same level.

RESULTS

"We were able to set up an analytics practice. As simple as that.

We were able to go to clients and get business on analytics and visualization. It was post this training that we really set up this practice. And today we are serving a lot of clients, both existing as well as new, and we are able to showcase a team with skills, and help them do their analysis."

This journey of building a practice and the growth of the team was a very organic one. Once the team came on board and completed the Jigsaw Academy training, they were able to do a series of analysis on datasets that they gathered either from clients or from public data sources. So initially they began with collateral creation. But collateral helps only when its useful and its interesting. It met both those criteria. Soon clients started to ask for more such visualizations. New clients who looked at these visualizations, wanted to see more work in their domains.

Gramener started getting enquiries, and they were able to convert those enquiries and start delivery against those projects. The projects have been successful and the clients have continued working with Gramener on more projects. "We are recruiting more, we are training more. This cycle we started is now steadily growing and that's really been the impact of this course".

Anand on the benefits of an online training platform



Anytime Learning

"Most organizations have busy people as opposed to people who are available for trainings. Clearly the optimal solution is to allow them to complete the course at their own pace. So, an online training platform caters to that segment, and interestingly that is the largest segment, and it's a stronger need."



Effective Learning

"When a platform starts looking at a gamification mechanism, when it is a game to be played, with the kinds of rewards system, both explicit and implicit — that's when it starts to make a difference. The other aspect is comparative metrics. Am I going faster than my friend, who is roughly as busy or free as I am? Or am I going slower? What are the areas that he has jumped to learn and therefore maybe I should be looking at learning those things? This gamification aspect of the platform not only makes learning more interesting, but it also achieves its primary objective of getting people to learn."



Cost Benefits

"The benefit that we get with an online learning platform is that it is cheaper in some ways. I don't need to invest utilizable or billable time or productive time into training. There is the flexibility to skim off and take the surplus or the gap in availability and put that into training, which means that the cost of training from an employee utilization perspective will come down to zero. And at a zero cost I can train my entire organization."



Scalability

"There is scalability from the perspective that Jigsaw does not have to put an instructor, and we don't have to worry about the timing or the location of the instructor. The cost of the person being able to take the course will come down to zero, to the point that everyone can take the course. Which means that it is no longer a decision on should the course be made open. Instead, it is more a question of how effectively can we have the organization make use of the course and make the entire organization potentially more capable."

"Jigsaw is the best analytics training that I have seen. It's about breadth – some of the topics that we need are niche, some mainstream, but across all of these Jigsaw is able to provide unified training. It's also about flexibility and being able to customize the course specifically to our needs.

So, this combination makes it extremely potent."



S Anand
CEO & Chief Data Scientist