

Video Segment 5: Would You Rather Have a Better Coach or Better Data?

“We can’t ignore data, we can’t ignore algorithms, we can’t ignore the predictions. But they are...support tools to help the expert make decisions.”

-Dr. Eric Bradlow, Wharton Professor

NOTE-TAKING GUIDE

Erika James says, “We oftentimes use this phrase data driven. I’ve always taken exception to that phrase because it assumes that data is always correct and whatever the data say is what you should do.” Explain why she takes exception to “data driven” and what term she prefers to use.

According to Professor Eric Bradlow, “better coaches use better data.” And he also admits that he’d rather have a great coach than a team that relies solely on data to make decisions. Take note of how these themes from the video segment speak to the balance of data and other influences on decision-making in sports and sports betting:

Asking the right questions:

Dr. Bradlow’s work with the Philadelphia Eagles:

Coaching observations on the field:

Executive judgment:

Dr. Bradlow says, “Anybody can give you a prediction. You hire statisticians to understand risk and uncertainty.” Briefly explain the role of risk and uncertainty in analytics. Why so critical?

Reflection: Okay, now it’s your turn. Would you rather have a better coach or better data? Explain (and debate with your classmates).

THE LANGUAGE OF BUSINESS

(Linked terms are defined in the Wharton Global Youth Video Glossary)

[CEO or Chief Executive Officer](#)

[Company](#)

[Data](#)

[Data Mining](#)

[Executive](#)

[Franchise](#)

[Manager](#)

[Marketing](#)

[MBA or Master of Business Administration](#)

[Organization](#)

[Resource Allocation](#)

[Risk Management](#)

[Statistician](#)

[Tradeoff](#)

Algorithm: A procedure used for solving a problem or performing a computation. Each algorithm is programmed as a step-by-step process for performing calculations and data processing.

Amy Howe: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of FanDuel, who earned her Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the Wharton School in 1999.

Analytics: The systematic computational analysis of data or statistics. It is used for the discovery, interpretation, and communication of meaningful patterns in data.

Beyond Business: An ongoing conversation at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania that explores the most complex and pressing issues impacting individuals and organizations across the world. Each year Wharton Global Youth creates [Explore Business mini-sites](#) for high school students around different Beyond Business themes.

Bill Belichick: General manager of the New England Patriots American football team.

Data Science: The study of data to gather meaningful insights for business.

Eric Bradlow: A marketing professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and Vice Dean of [Analytics at Wharton](#).

Erika James: Dean of the Wharton School with research interests in crisis leadership, workplace diversity and management strategy. Erika James hosts the annual Beyond Business series of business conversations around which Wharton Global Youth's Explore Business mini-sites are built.

FanDuel: An online gambling company founded in 2009 that offers sportsbook, daily fantasy sports, and more.

Philadelphia Eagles: A professional American football team based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

National Football League or NFL: A professional American football league that includes 32 teams.

Howie Roseman: The executive vice president and general manager of the Philadelphia Eagles football team.

Jeffrey Lurie: Owner of the Philadelphia Eagles football team.

Machine Learning: Using and developing computer systems that learn and adapt by using algorithms and statistical models to analyze and understand patterns in data.

Machine Learning Model: A program that has been trained to recognize certain types of patterns and make decisions from data it has not yet seen.

McKinsey & Co.: A global management consulting firm where FanDuel's Amy Howe served as a partner for more than 14 years.

Predictive Model: A statistical technique to predict future behavior. In this form of data-mining technology, you analyze historical and current data and generate a model to help predict future outcomes.

Sports Analytics: The analysis of sports data, including information on player performance and business operations, to make predictions and support decision-making on and off the playing field.

Sportsbook: An organization that takes bets on sporting events and pays out winnings.

Statistics: The practice or science of collecting, analyzing and interpreting numerical data in large quantities.

The Wharton School: The Wharton School, also referred to as just Wharton, is the business school of the University of Pennsylvania, a private Ivy League university based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Wharton is a world leader in business education and a hub for academic research in all areas of business.

EXPLORE MORE IN OUR ONLINE BUSINESS JOURNAL

[3 Things to Know about the Direction of Data Analytics](#)