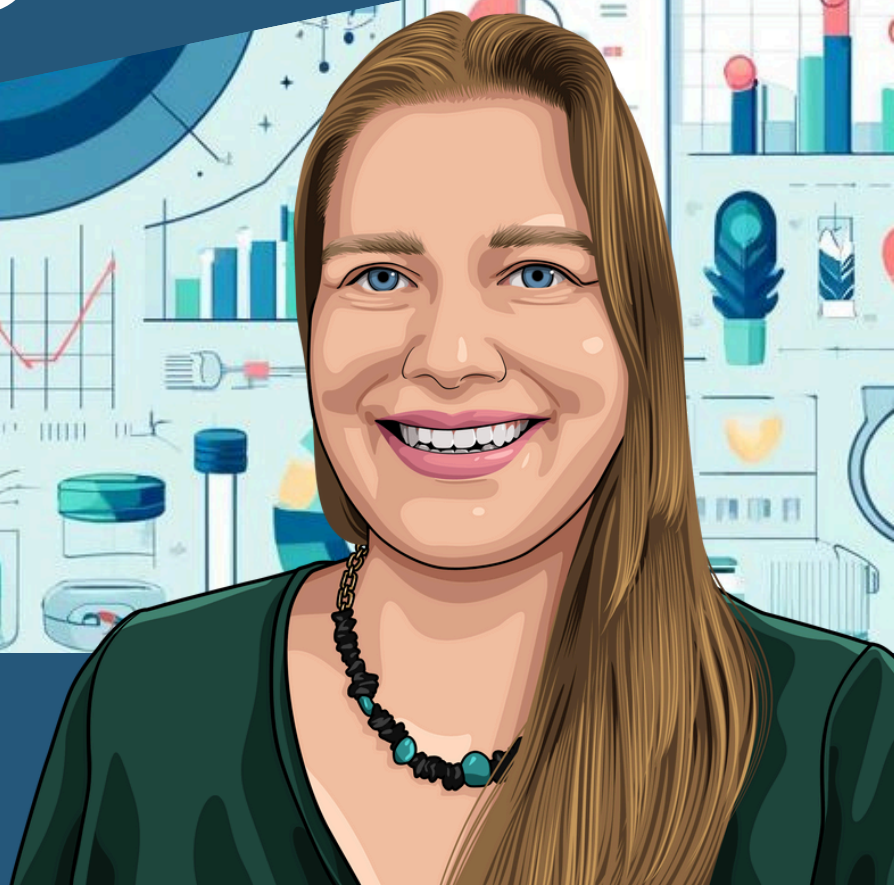# DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS PART 1

SPD DATA EXPERT

BEYOND CLEAN

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Data-Driven Decisions, Part 1

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So, you've been told you need to become a data-driven Sterile Processing department. What does that mean? And where should you start? This will be a two-part post because 300 words just isn't quite enough!

At its very simplest level, being data-driven means making decisions that are supported by data. The opposite of this is making decisions based solely on your own intuition or feelings. (Does this mean that your intuition developed from years of on-the-job, real-life experience is meaningless? Absolutely not! More on this in a future month.)

Based on our simple definition above, being data-driven has two elements: decisions and data.

Let's say you are getting a lot of complaints from some OR nurses about incomplete trays. What should you do about that? Certainly, you can raise awareness in your daily huddles and tell staff not to send up incomplete trays. That might work. It might not. And how would you know for sure? Let's see if we can approach this **decision** in a more data-driven way.

Now what I'm going to say next is going to sound completely obvious, but you must have relevant **data** to make a data-driven decision. And yet, it has often been my experience that key data points are not being measured.

For our hypothetical situation here, do you have data about the number of incomplete trays being sent to the OR? If that isn't something you currently measure, you will need to create a plan to start measuring it. It's critical for making data-driven decisions.

For now, that's where I'll have to leave you. Identify a decision and the type of data you need to support it, and next month I'll show you how to put them together.
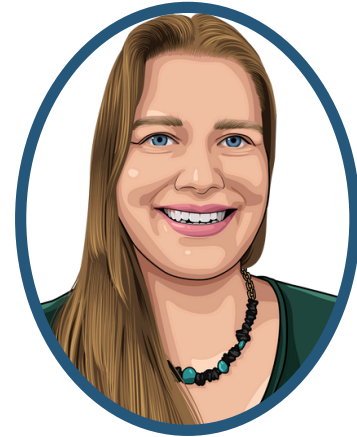
Beyond Clean SPD Data Expert™:

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Beth is a Business Intelligence and Analytics Engineer with Censis Technologies. She has 17 years' experience exploring databases and designing data visualizations. With her educational background in journalism, she strives to find practical ways to communicate insights both clearly and effectively.

Since 2012, Beth has enjoyed building and supporting tray tracking software programs critical to Sterile Processing teams across the United States. Her passion is to create data and analytics tools that drive operational excellence and ensure patient safety. She won an innovation award in 2022 for her work on Censis' analytics platform.

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