

Paper PD13

From Uncertainty to Clarity: A Personal Journey in Pharma Data Science Using the Johari Window

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ABSTRACT

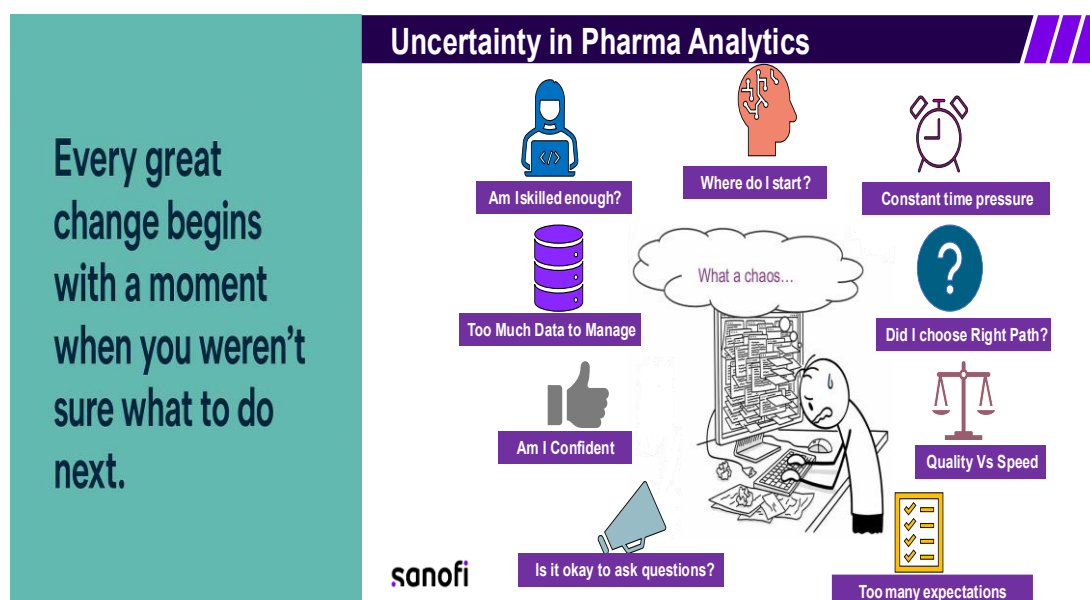
My journey into pharmaceutical data science didn't begin with a plan, it began with uncertainty and self-doubt. Over time, I found purpose and confidence, shaped by continuous learning and self-awareness. In this session, I'll share how I navigated that path and how a simple yet powerful self-awareness tool, the Johari Window, played a key role in my personal and professional growth. The Johari Window helps individuals understand how they see themselves and how others perceive them, revealing blind spots and hidden strengths. By applying this model, I learned to embrace feedback, communicate more openly with my team, and grow in ways I hadn't expected. These insights transformed how I approached learning, collaboration, and leadership. Whether you're new to the industry or seeking growth, this talk offers practical reflections on how self-awareness tools like the Johari Window can turn confusion into clarity and help you build a fulfilling career in pharmaceutical data science.

INTRODUCTION

In the pharmaceutical and clinical research field, career journeys are often filled with uncertainty, change and challenges. professionals may find themselves in roles they did not originally plan for, face communication gaps within teams or struggle with continuous self-improvement in fast-paced work environments. These challenges highlight the need for better self-understanding, open communication, and stronger team collaboration to support long-term professional growth. The purpose of this paper is how Johari window helped me improve self-awareness and development in uncertain situations and above-mentioned problems and how to achieve goals in career through personal improvement.

1. EARLY CAREER CHALLENGES IN PHARMA DATA SCIENCE

Starting a career in pharmaceutical data science can feel overwhelming due to new concepts, regulations, and workflows, often leading to self-doubt and hesitation.



4

These challenges are normal and temporary; focusing on learning, building confidence, and connecting with teams helps to overcome uncertainty and achieve long-term success.

2. SELF-AWARENESS, CONFIDENCE, AND TEAM BUILDING

Self-awareness helps professionals understand their strengths, weaknesses, and reactions, fostering confidence and effective communication. In pharmaceutical data science, it enhances collaboration, builds trust, and supports growth, making it essential for both individual success and team performance.



3. THE JOHARI WINDOW MODEL

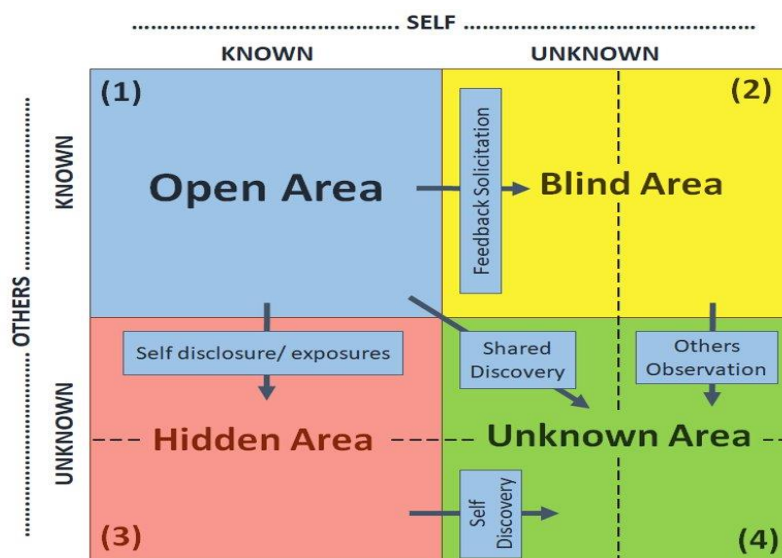
To better understand self-awareness in a practical and structured way, the **Johari Window** model can be applied. The Johari Window is a simple framework that explains how individuals understand themselves and how they are perceived by others. It divides self-knowledge into four areas based on whether information is known or unknown to oneself and to others.

The Johari Window model was devised by American psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955, while researching group dynamics at the University of California Los Angeles. The model was first published in the Proceedings of the Western Training Laboratory in Group Development by UCLA Extension Office in 1955 and was later expanded by Joseph Luft.

Luft and Ingham called their Johari Window model 'Johari' after combining their first names, Joe and Harry. In early publications the word appears as 'Johari'.

The model helps individuals identify communication gaps, recognize strengths, accept feedback, and explore hidden potential. It is especially useful in professional environments like pharmaceutical data science, where teamwork, trust, and clear communication are essential.

The four Johari Window perspectives are called 'regions' or 'areas' or 'quadrants'. Each of these regions contains and represents the information - feelings, motivation, etc – known about the person, in terms of whether the information is known or unknown by the person, and whether the information is known or unknown by others in the group.



3.1 OPEN AREA (KNOWN TO SELF AND KNOWN TO OTHERS)

The *Open Area* represents information that both the individual and others are aware of. This includes skills, experience, roles and responsibilities that are openly shared and visible within the team.

REAL LIFE EXAMPLE:

A statistical programmer knows that they have strong SAS or R programming skills, and their team members also recognize this through consistent delivery and quality of work. The individual openly communicates progress, share updates during meetings, and is comfortable asking or answering questions.

IMPACT:

A larger Open Area leads to better collaboration, clearer communication, and stronger trust within the team. Increasing this area is one of the main goals of personal development, as it improves both individual confidence and team effectiveness.

3.2 BLIND AREA (KNOWN TO OTHERS BUT UNKNOWN TO SELF)

The Blind Area contains traits or behaviours that others notice but the individual is not aware of. This area often becomes visible through feedback.



REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

A team member may believe they are being direct and efficient during meetings. However, others may perceive their tone as aggressive or dismissive, even when no offense is intended. Without feedback, the individual remains unaware that their communication style may be impacting team dynamics.

IMPACT: Early in a career, individuals may be unaware of how others perceive them, creating blind spots.

Seeking feedback through discussions, reviews, and mentoring helps bring these perceptions into self-awareness. With an open mindset, feedback strengthens confidence and supports continuous improvement by highlighting both strengths and areas for development.

3.3 HIDDEN AREA (KNOWN TO SELF BUT UNKNOWN TO OTHERS)

The Hidden Area includes information that the individual knows about themselves but chooses not to share. This can include fears, career goals, self-doubt, or personal aspirations.

Known to Self Not Known Self

OPEN AREA	BLIND AREA
HIDDEN AREA	UNKNOWN AREA

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

A professional may want to take on leadership or mentoring roles but does not express this interest due to fear of rejection or failure. Similarly, they may struggle with a task but hesitate to ask for help, fearing it may be seen as weakness.

IMPACT: A large Hidden Area can hinder communication and slow growth.

Sharing goals, concerns, and questions in a safe environment reduces misunderstandings, builds trust, and strengthens team relationships.

3.4 UNKNOWN AREA (UNKNOWN TO SELF AND UNKNOWN TO OTHERS)

The Unknown Area represents abilities, strengths, or reactions that have not yet been discovered by self and others. These often emerge through new experiences, challenges, or responsibilities.

Known to Self Not Known Self

OPEN AREA	BLIND AREA
HIDDEN AREA	UNKNOWN AREA

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

An individual who has never led a discussion may discover strong facilitation or leadership skills when asked to present work, train a peer, or lead a small initiative. Neither the individual nor the team was aware of this potential before the opportunity arose.

IMPACT:

Exploring the Unknown Area helps professionals uncover hidden skills and interests through new experiences. Activities such as presenting, mentoring, or taking on small leadership tasks reveal untapped potential, build confidence, and support sustained career growth.

4. USES OF THE JOHARI WINDOW:

The Johari Window supports professional growth by helping individuals:

- Accept and use feedback to reduce blind area
- Share appropriately to improve communication
- Build confidence by recognizing hidden and unknown strengths
- Strengthen teamwork and trust

By consciously working to expand the Open Area, professionals can improve self-awareness, communication, and collaboration. In pharmaceutical data science teams, this leads to stronger relationships, reduced misunderstandings, and more effective project execution.

5. WORKING SHEETS:

Take two copies of the adjective list—one for self-evaluation and one for peer feedback. On the self-evaluation sheet, select the adjectives that you believe best describe you. Distribute the peer feedback sheet to your colleagues or friends and ask them to mark the adjectives they feel describe you. After collecting the completed peer feedback, compare both sets of responses. Adjectives identified by both you and your peers should be placed in the **Open Area**. Adjectives identified by your peers but not by you should be entered in the **Blind Area**. Adjectives identified by you but not by your peers should be recorded in the **Hidden Area**, while adjectives not identified by either you or your peers should be placed in the **Unknown Area**. Now refer the below image to know about your Open, blind and hidden areas which could help you to improve your open area.

Able	Accepting	Adaptable	Bold	Brave	Calm	Caring
Cheerful	Clever	Complex	Confident	Dependable	Dignified	Energetic
Extroverted	Friendly	Giving	Happy	Helpful	Idealistic	Independent
Ingenious	Intelligent	Introverted	Kind	Knowledgeable	Logical	Loving
Mature	Modest	Nervous	Observant	Organized	Patient	Powerful
Proud	Quiet	Reflective	Relaxed	Religious	Responsive	Searching
Self-assertive	Self-conscious	Sensible	Sentimental	Shy	Silly	Smart
Spontaneous	Sympathetic	Tense	Trustworthy	Warm	Wise	Witty

Open Area: Adjectives both you and your peer selected.

Blind Area: Adjectives peer selected, but you did not.

Hidden Area: Adjectives you selected, but peer did not.

Unknown Area: Adjectives not selected by anyone.



CONCLUSION

In the early phase of our career shift, we often questioned about our abilities and felt unsure about our future. It was the Johari Window that helped us, shift from self-doubt to a clearer understanding of our abilities. By learning about our strengths, reducing blind area through feedback, and openly sharing the aspirations with managers, and received valuable opportunities that helped us to grow. This experience helped us open up more and believe in ourselves. We are thankful for the Johari Window because it supported our self-awareness and development.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

We, the authors, express our sincere gratitude to all our managers, for their continuous guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback throughout the development of this paper. We also acknowledge the supportive professional environment that has contributed significantly to our professional growth and self-reflection.

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