



# Data quality action plan: your 7-step project checklist

Improving data quality is a businesswide initiative that requires leadership alignment, clear prioritization, and ongoing commitment. Use this checklist to build a sustainable data quality strategy that aligns with your company's objectives.

## 1. Ask executives what they mean by "data quality"

Data quality means different things to different stakeholders. Start by asking your leadership team:

- What does "good enough" data look like for decision-making?
- Which metrics are critical for business strategy?
- What data issues are causing friction in reporting, forecasting, or execution?

## 2. Get buy-in on how data should be categorized and prioritized

Not all data carries the same weight. Align with leadership on which data categories are most critical for go-to-market success. Top teams prioritize:

- Product purchase data to streamline customer support
- Lead and intent data to help prioritize outreach
- Firmographic and demographic data to determine TAM, SAM, and SOM
- Product usage data to measure customer engagement and health
- User inputs (such as opportunities and customer health scores) to support appropriate planning for resource management

## 3. Educate executives about the realities of data quality

Set expectations early. Help leaders understand:

- Tradeoffs between cost, completeness, and accuracy
- The difference between real-time accuracy and long-term trends
- Why some data types (e.g., customer firmographics) will always have gaps



## 4. Put a dollar amount on the cost of bad data

Executives pay attention when a problem has a financial impact. Quantify the cost of poor data by linking it to:

- Revenue leakage from inaccurate forecasting
- Wasted marketing spend due to bad prospect data
- Lost deals from incorrect customer information
- Increased operational costs from inefficiencies

## 5. Build to scale

Companies with acceptable data quality do things differently than companies with poor data quality. To follow their winning strategies, design processes that are:

- Automated where possible (e.g., enrichment, deduplication, validation tools)
- Auditable and trackable (clear ownership and accountability)
- Flexible and adaptable (can evolve with business needs)

## 6. Develop KPIs for data quality

What gets measured gets managed. Define KPIs to track improvements, such as:

- Percent complete
- Conversion rates
- Forecast accuracy over time

## 7. Accept that perfection is impossible—but continuous improvement is essential

No company has 100% perfect data. What separates high-performing organizations is their commitment to ongoing data governance. This includes:

- Ensuring fields are accurate, complete, and up-to-date
- Validating and protecting business-critical data for making hiring and investment decisions
- Using customized data solutions to resolve data hygiene challenges specific to your organization
- Making end-user input as streamlined as possible

Fixing data quality doesn't happen overnight, but the sooner you start, the sooner you'll see results. By aligning leadership, focusing on what matters most, and committing to continuous improvement, your team can build a data foundation that drives smarter decisions and better business outcomes.