

READY FOR DATA GOVERNANCE?

# The Governance-Maturity-Checklist 2026

The direct path to clean data management:

Analyze your processes, minimize risks, and ensure data quality.



## NUMBERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

## 3 Facts About Data Quality and Governance That No One Talks About Openly

**€ 12,9**

MIO. PER YEAR

Average annual costs due to poor data quality  
— per company.

Gartner, "Data Quality: Best Practices for Accurate Insights"

**80 %**

DATA PREPARATION

Data teams' time is wasted on searching, cleaning, and  
preparing data — not on analysis and value creation.

Forbes, "Cleaning Big Data"

**23×**

CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

Data-driven companies are more likely to attract new  
customers than competitors without structured data  
governance.

McKinsey, "The Data Driven Enterprise"

*"These three numbers aren't cause for alarm—they're your starting point.*

*This document shows you where you stand today and what's possible tomorrow."*

Data projects rarely fail due to a lack of technology. They fail because of unclear responsibilities, inconsistent standards, and reactive rather than proactive quality assurance. Data governance solves exactly that—and this maturity assessment shows you where you stand today.

## FOREWORD

## Why this document?

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In our conversations with chief data officers and data leadership teams, we keep encountering the same pattern: reporting cycles take too long because no one knows for sure which dataset tells the truth. AI initiatives are put on hold after a short time because the data is too unreliable. Audits reveal surprises that should have been spotted long ago.

The problem here is rarely a lack of technology or expertise. The problem is the absence of a structured governance framework—a shared understanding of who is responsible for which data, how quality is measured, and what happens when discrepancies arise.

This document is not a sales brochure. It is an honest analytical framework that we have distilled from 20 years of MDM experience with over 30 enterprise customers. You can use the governance maturity checklist on page 8 with your team today—regardless of whether you use Goldright or not.

**My goal is for you to read this document and then know exactly where your greatest leverage lies.**

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**Robbin van Zanten**

Sales Development Representative, Goldright GmbH

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

# Why Reporting Cycles Are Too Long — and Why Data Isn't Trustworthy

The 4 Structural Root Causes of Poor Data Governance

## 1 Lack of Data Ownership

There is no clear designation of a data owner or data steward. Data drifts without anyone taking responsibility—no one feels accountable until the problem escalates.

## 2 Inconsistent Quality Standards

Every department defines “good enough” differently. What applies to Finance does not apply to HR — and certainly not to consolidated reporting.

## 3 Siloed data storage

After M&As or migrations, critical data is often scattered across countless systems. Without a master data layer, every integration becomes a costly one-off project.

## 4 Reactive Rather Than Proactive Governance

Quality issues become apparent only when reports show discrepancies or an audit fails —never before. No early warning system, no monitoring.

ROOT CAUSE	VISIBLE SYMPTOM	TYPICAL CONSEQUENCE
Lack of Ownership	Duplicate data records, unclear responsibilities	Reporting delays, high costs due to errors
Inconsistent Standards	Divergent KPIs depending on the data source	Loss of Trust in Data & Reporting
Data silo structure	Manual consolidation before each report	High effort, high susceptibility to errors
Reactive Governance	Surprises During the Audit, Late Detection	Compliance risks, damage to reputation

## FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

# The Goldright Governance Maturity Model

5 Stages of Development: From a Data-Poor Organization to a Fully Data-Driven Organization

- 1

**Ad-hoc** Level 1

No formal processes. Governance only takes place in the event of a crisis. Responsibilities are unclear, and quality issues go unnoticed until they escalate.

  

2

**Reactive** Level 2

Initial rules are in place, but they are only enforced after incidents occur. Individual problems are known, but a systematic solution is still lacking.

  

3

**Defined** Level 3

Processes have been documented, data owners have been designated, and initial quality metrics have been defined. Governance has been outlined—and is increasingly being put into practice.

  

4

**Controlled** Level 4

Governance is measurable. KPIs are monitored regularly. Deviations are addressed proactively. Reporting is reliable, fast, and trustworthy.

  

5

**Optimized** Level 5

Governance is a strategic competitive advantage. Fully automated. AI-ready. Reliable real-time reporting, with no manual effort required.

LEVEL	CHARACTERISTIC	MAIN INDICATORS	REPORTING CAPABILITY
<b>L1 – Ad-hoc</b>	No processes	Chaos, high error rate	Non-existent
<b>L2 – Reactive</b>	Basic Rules	Problems Known, Unresolved	Sporadic, unreliable
<b>L3 – Defined</b>	Documented	Data Owner, Basic Metrics	Periodic, manually inspected
<b>L4 – Controlled</b>	Measured & Monitored	KPI-Dashboard active	Fast, proactive, reliable
<b>L5 – Optimized</b>	Automated	AI-Ready, Zero-Touch	Real-time, fully automatic

*"The leap from Level 2 to Level 3 is the hardest—and the most crucial. It doesn't require new software, but rather clarity regarding responsibilities."*

PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

# From Diagnosis to Implementation: 6 Steps for the First 90 Days

Pragmatic, practical—no external consulting, no big budget.

- 1 Inventory**  
Inventory of all data sources and systems. Who uses which data?  
Where are the critical dependencies and gaps?

Week 1-2
- 2 Designate Data Owners**  
Designate a specific person to be responsible for each critical data domain and officially announce this designation.

Week 2-3
- 3 Define Quality Standards**  
Define measurable quality dimensions: completeness, timeliness, consistency, unambiguity — for each domain, in writing.

Week 3-4
- 4 Document the Governance Framework**  
Document guidelines, roles, and escalation paths in writing.  
Max. 2 hierarchical levels. Concise, clear, and binding.

Week 4-6
- 5 Select a pilot area & get started**  
Launch a specific use case (e.g., customer reporting or financial consolidation) as a pilot.  
Learn, adapt, scale.

Week 6-8
- 6 Set Up a Monitoring and Review Schedule**  
Measure initial KPIs, set up a dashboard, and establish monthly governance reviews as a regular calendar event.

Week 8-12

PHASE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	SUCCESS CRITERION
Week 1-2	Data-Inventory	CDO, IT Architecture	All sources documented
Week 2-3	Designate a Data Owner	CDO, Department	Every domain has an owner
Week 4-6	Document Framework	Governance Team	Guideline adopted
Week 6-8	Start Pilot	Data Owner, IT	Pilot active, metrics visible
Week 8-12	Live Monitoring	CDO, BI-Team	Dashboard active, KPIs tracked

## TOOL AND PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

# What Really Works:

## Recommendations from 20 Years of MDM Experience

Technology alone does not solve governance problems.  
Here's what works—and what doesn't—based on evidence.

 **PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ✓ **Data ownership first, tools second.**  
Without clear ownership, every tool becomes a data graveyard.
- ✓ **Monthly governance reviews**  
as a regular calendar event — not quarterly, not ad hoc.
- ✓ **Radically simplify quality metrics:**  
3–5 KPIs at most—better to have just a few that everyone knows.
- ✓ **Escalation paths with two levels max.**  
Complex structures are never put into practice.

 **TOOL CATEGORIES**

- ☰ **MDM Platform:**  
Centralized data storage, single source of truth, elimination of duplicates.
- ⚙️ **Data Quality Monitoring:**  
Automated checks for completeness, consistency, and timeliness.
- 🌐 **Data Lineage:**  
Traceability of data sources — essential for audits and AI systems.
- ⚡ **AI Readiness Layer:**  
Only organizations that practice Level 4+ governance can use AI safely and reliably.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

### My Governance Maturity Level Status

Answer each question honestly. Yes = 2 points · Partially = 1 point · No = 0 points

01	Has a specific data owner been designated for each critical data domain?	Yes	Partially	No
02	Does your company have a written data governance policy?	Yes	Partially	No
03	Are data quality metrics measured and reported on a regular basis (at least monthly)?	Yes	Partially	No
04	Are there defined escalation procedures for data quality issues?	Yes	Partially	No
05	Are your data sources fully documented (Data Catalog or inventory)?	Yes	Partially	No
06	Are changes to critical data records automatically logged (data lineage)?	Yes	Partially	No
07	Can business users independently access reliable data?	Yes	Partially	No
08	Is your reporting team able to proactively identify data quality issues?	Yes	Partially	No
09	Have the past 12 months been free of any significant compliance violations caused by data errors?	Yes	Partially	No
10	Does your management fully trust the company's reporting?	Yes	Partially	No

**My score**

\_\_\_\_\_ out of 20

**0-7 Points**  
**CRITICAL**  
Level 1-2 · Immediate Action Required

**8-15 Points**  
**AVERAGE**  
Level 2-3 · Set Priorities

**16-20 Points**  
**STRONG**  
Level 4-5 · Focus on AI-Readiness

## RECOMMENDATIONS

## What now?

You know your level of maturity. You know the causes. The next steps are clear.

### 1 Evaluate & Share the Self-Assessment

Share your findings from page 8 with your leadership team. Start a discussion about responsibilities—this is the most important first step, even before deciding on any tools.

### 2 Initiate the 90-Day Roadmap

Select a data domain as a pilot. Appoint a data owner. Define three quality metrics. Measure results after 30 days—the first quick win will build momentum for everything that follows.

### 3 Schedule a consultation with an expert • Free • No obligation

We'll show you where your greatest leverage lies. No generic pitch deck, no exaggerations. Just an honest conversation about your specific situation—and what's realistically possible in the coming months.

[Book a meeting →](#)

## ABOUT GOLDRIGHT

### We make AI consistent.

Goldright is a leading multi-domain MDM provider for enterprises.

For over 20 years, we have helped organizations build a data foundation that decisions — and AI — can rely on.

**30+**

enterprises rely on Goldright

**20+**

years of MDM experience

**99.9%**

data accuracy in operation

## THE GOLDRIGHT ENTERPRISE SUITE



### Agile Data Manager (ADM)

Central multi-domain data mastering and cleansing for consistent master data.



### Legal Entity Manager (LEM)

360° view of all legal entities, holdings, and corporate structures.



### Organizational Data Manager (ODM)

Transparency and control over organizational structures and hierarchies.



### Identity Manager (IDM)

Secure access management and permission control for critical data domains.

## INDUSTRIES

Finance

Manufacturing

Energy & Supply

Insurance

Real Estate

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*"Stop Hallucinating. Start Executing. We make AI consistent."*