

# Data Governance Best Practices Checklist

Use this one-page check before accepting a data issue into governance, approving a definition, or closing a control action. The goal is a verified business decision, not more governance activity.

## 1. Prioritize the right problems

- ☐ State the business decision, process, risk, or customer outcome affected.
- ☐ Rate business impact and recurrence before adding the issue to governance.
- ☐ Fix isolated low-impact defects locally. Govern recurring or high-impact patterns.

## 2. Clarify the data and its meaning

- ☐ Record the data product, domain, source systems, table grain, and reporting period.
- ☐ Define the term, formula, exclusions, effective date, and approved use cases.
- ☐ Identify upstream producers and downstream reports, models, or decisions affected.

## 3. Assign decision rights

- ☐ Name one accountable business decision owner. List contributors separately.
- ☐ Set who recommends, who decides, who implements, and who verifies closure.
- ☐ Give every unresolved issue a due date and an escalation path.

## 4. Design an operational control

- ☐ Write the rule, threshold, frequency, owner, evidence, and required response.
- ☐ Test the control against known good and bad records before relying on it.
- ☐ Connect the control to a business action, not merely a dashboard alert.

## 5. Run a decision forum

- ☐ Send evidence before the meeting. Do not spend meeting time reading status slides.
- ☐ Put the decisions required, decision owner, options, and recommendation on the agenda.
- ☐ Record the decision, rationale, effective date, action owner, and review date.

## 6. Verify value and adoption

- ☐ Confirm the approved definition or rule reached the systems and teams that use it.
- ☐ Track decision cycle time, repeat issues, control failures, adoption, and exceptions.
- ☐ Measure the business result. Retire controls that add work without reducing risk.

### DECISION RECORD

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Issue or definition:   | _____                    |
| Accountable owner:     | _____ Due date: _____    |
| Decision and evidence: | _____                    |
| Verification result:   | _____ Review date: _____ |

### KEEP LEARNING

Free guide: [Read the complete Data Governance Framework](#).

Book: [Read The Data-Driven Executive book on Amazon](#) for deeper guidance on ownership, operating models, and decision discipline.