

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -- DATA GOVERNANCE

Data Governance

Explained Simply

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THE CORE IDEA

Data Governance is the system that makes sure a company's information is organised, accurate, secure, and usable -- with clear ownership at every step. It is not paperwork. It is the foundation every report, every AI system, and every business decision is built on.

"If nobody owns it, nobody fixes it." -- The golden rule of Data Governance.

THE LIBRARY ANALOGY

Think of your company's data as a library. If someone is in charge, everyone benefits. If nobody is in charge, books go missing and nobody notices until it is too late.

Data Owner

The Head Librarian. Sets rules, approves access, accountable for quality.

Data Steward

The Shelf Manager. Day-to-day custodian who fixes quality issues and updates metadata.

Data Custodian

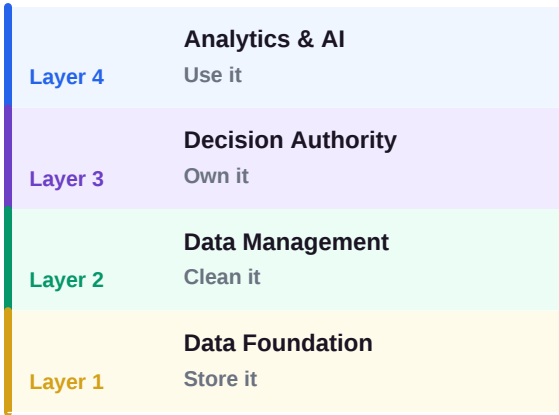
The Security Guard. Manages storage, access controls, and infrastructure.

Data Consumer

The Library Visitor. Analysts and AI systems that use the data.

THE FOUR LAYERS

Each layer depends on the one below it.



THE FIVE CORE PRINCIPLES

Accountability	Every dataset has a named owner responsible for its quality and correct use.
Integrity	Data is accurate and consistent -- no duplicates, no contradictions across systems.
Protection	Sensitive data is secured; access is granted only where genuinely needed.
Transparency	A full audit trail exists -- where data came from and who touched it.
Compliance	All data use follows legal requirements: GDPR, India's DPDP Act, and sector rules.

WHAT POOR GOVERNANCE LOOKS LIKE

- Five teams report five different customer counts
- Nobody knows which version of a report is correct
- AI produces nonsense because training data was bad
- A data breach because old access was never revoked
- Regulatory fines for untracked or unverified data use

WHY IT MATTERS FOR YOUR CAREER

Organisations are deploying AI at pace. Those AI systems are only as good as the data feeding them. Graduates who understand governance principles ask better questions, flag real risks, and build trustworthy habits from day one -- making them immediately more valuable.

Three habits to build from day one:

- Ask "Who owns this data?" before acting on any dataset.
- Document sources and changes -- create your own audit trail.
- Learn what GDPR and India's DPDP Act mean for your role.

"Data Governance is not about controlling people. It is about making data trustworthy enough to actually use -- at scale, without fear."

Read the full article (with diagrams):

[promptedgrad.com/data-governance-explained-simply /](https://promptedgrad.com/data-governance-explained-simply/)

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