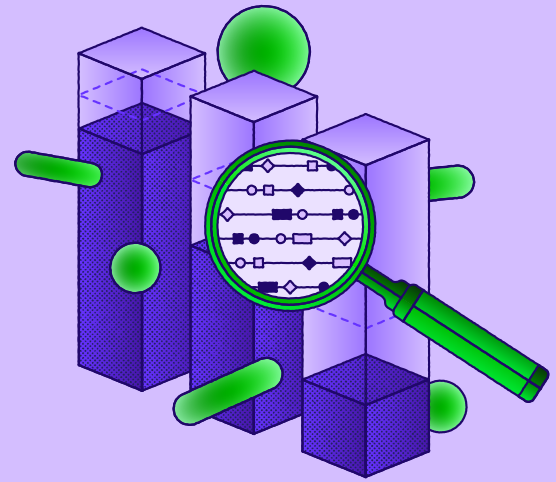




How Do You Know If Your Data Transformation Is Working?

The Five Dimensions of the Data Culture Pulse Check

By InterWorks

1. Decision Speed

How long does it take your organization to go from a data question to a confident decision?

Struggling: Decisions are regularly delayed waiting for data. Meetings end with “let us pull the numbers and reconvene.” Leaders frequently say “I will need to check on that” before committing to a direction.

Momentum: Most data questions can be answered within a day or two. Some leaders are pulling their own answers; others still rely on the analytics team.

Confidence: Leaders arrive at meetings already oriented. Data questions get answered in real time or before the meeting even starts. The conversation jumps straight to “what do we do?” instead of “what does this mean?”

2. Trust

When a number appears in a report or dashboard, does your team accept it, question it or quietly ignore it?

Struggling: Numbers are routinely questioned, debated or ignored. Meetings derail into “which version is right?” The phrase “I do not trust that number” gets said out loud regularly, or worse, it gets thought privately while the meeting just moves on.

Momentum: Most users trust most of the data most of the time. There are still a few legacy holdouts or known gaps, but the core datasets are generally accepted.

Confidence: The data is the source of truth, and everyone in the room is working from the same numbers. There is no spreadsheet with different numbers living in someone’s Downloads folder.

3. Self-Service

When a business user has a data question, what do they do first: Open a dashboard themselves or submit a request to the analytics team?

Struggling: Almost all data questions get routed to the analytics team. The request queue is long. Business users do not know where to look or do not trust what they would find if they did.

Momentum: Some users are finding their own answers. The analytics team is still handling many requests, but there are clear early adopters who have gone self-service. Adoption is uneven across the organization, with pockets of genuine engagement and pockets of total disengagement.

Confidence: Self-service is the default behavior across most of the organization. The analytics team is focused on building and improving, not working through ad-hoc data requests.

4. Curiosity Spread

Who in your organization is actively asking data questions: just the analytics team or people across functions?

Struggling: Data curiosity lives almost entirely inside the analytics or IT team. No one outside the data team is asking for new views of the data, and honestly, they are not sure they are supposed to.

Momentum: A growing number of people outside the analytics team are engaging with data. There are champions in a few functions, maybe finance or maybe sales, who have embraced the tools. Others are still waiting to be convinced that any of this applies to them.

Confidence: Data curiosity is organization-wide. People across most functions are asking questions, identifying gaps and requesting capabilities that do not exist yet. When people start asking for things you have not built, it means they have developed an appetite.

5. Action Rate

When data points to a clear insight, how often does your organization actually act on it?

Struggling: Insights get surfaced regularly but rarely translate to decisions. Reports get reviewed, acknowledged and filed. The data is pointing somewhere and nobody is moving. Teams are spending more time debating the numbers than acting on them.

Momentum: Some insights are being acted on, especially when they are tied to clear business priorities. Action is still inconsistent and depends heavily on the individual leader and the urgency of the situation.

Confidence: The organization has a clear pathway from insight to action. When the data points somewhere, the next step is obvious and someone owns it. The data is trusted. The story is clear. The action follows.

How to Read Your Results

Run through each dimension honestly. The goal is not to score well, it's to see clearly. Most organizations land in different places across the five dimensions, which is either reassuring or humbling depending on where you land. Either way, it is useful.

If most of your dimensions are **Struggling**: Course correct. Something foundational needs to change before you push harder, whether that is trust, adoption strategy, change management or the data itself. Adding more dashboards to a Struggling result rarely helps. Going back to basics usually does. I have seen organizations spend months building layer after layer on top of a cracked foundation, wondering why nothing is sticking.

If most of your dimensions are **Momentum**: Push forward. You are doing the right things. Stay consistent, keep measuring and resist the temptation to declare victory too early. The biggest risk at Momentum is complacency, thinking the hard work is over when really you are just getting to the interesting part. Getting from Momentum to Confidence usually comes down to three things: closing the adoption gaps your qualitative check-ins reveal, making your early wins visible so the culture reinforces itself and staying consistent long enough for the new behaviors to become the default.

If most of your dimensions are **Confidence**: Celebrate, and do it out loud. Tell the stories internally. Recognize the people who drove the change, the champions who believed early, the leaders who protected the investment, the team members who kept showing up even when adoption was slow. **Make it a part of your culture narrative and then raise the bar.** Confidence is only the floor for what comes next. Organizations at Confidence are positioned to tackle the problems they could not even see when they were still at Struggling. They can go deeper on governance. They can pursue more sophisticated analytics. They can start having serious conversations about AI, not because the technology is finally ready, but because the organization finally is.