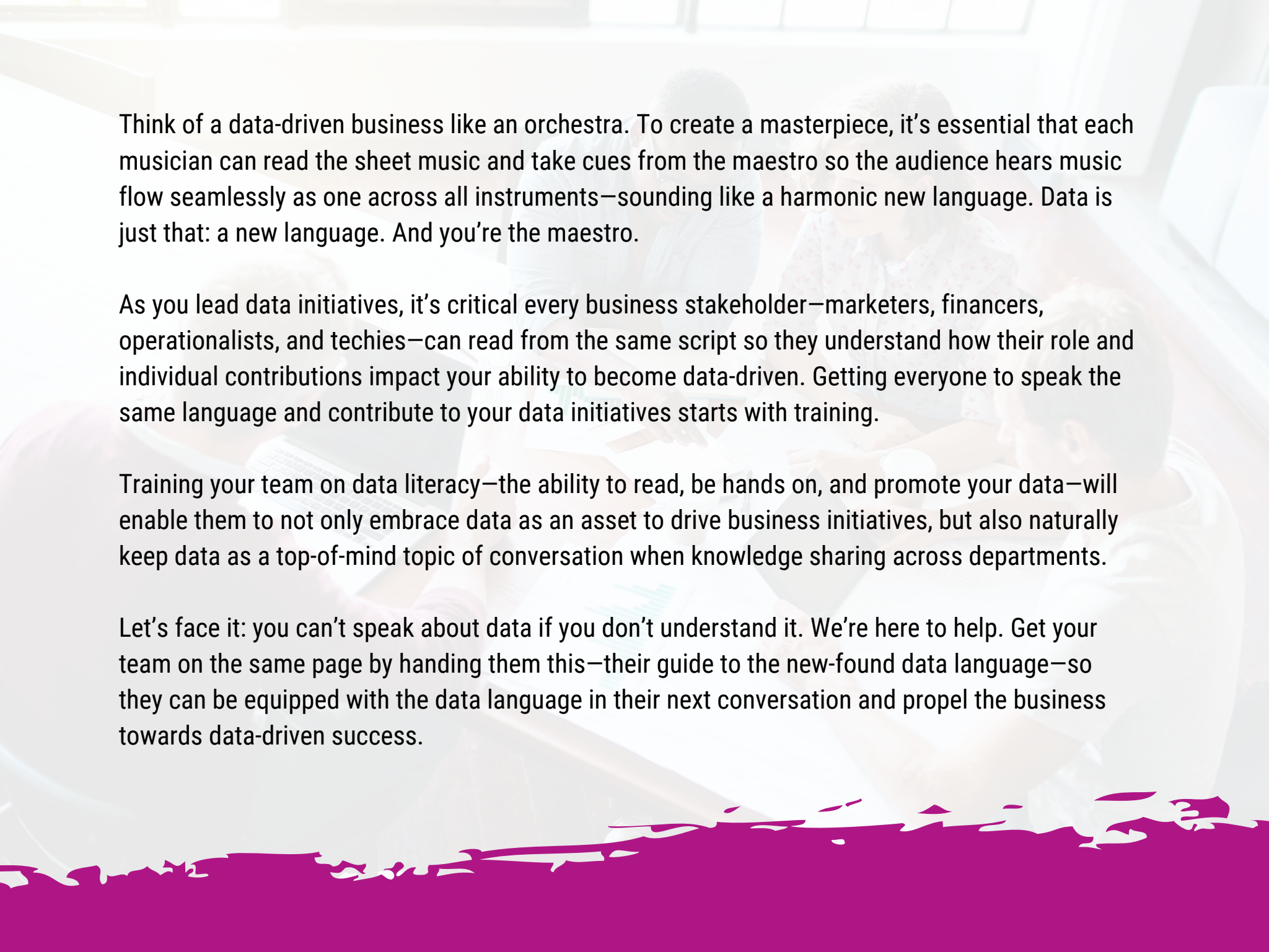# Data literacy

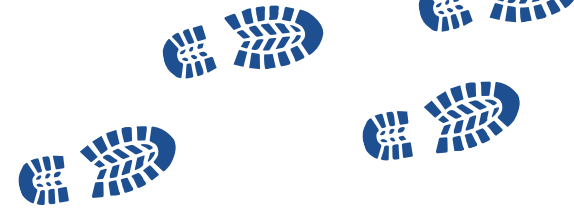Get your team to speak the same data language

experian™

Think of a data-driven business like an orchestra. To create a masterpiece, it's essential that each musician can read the sheet music and take cues from the maestro so the audience hears music flow seamlessly as one across all instruments—sounding like a harmonic new language. Data is just that: a new language. And you're the maestro.

As you lead data initiatives, it's critical every business stakeholder—marketers, financers, operationalists, and techies—can read from the same script so they understand how their role and individual contributions impact your ability to become data-driven. Getting everyone to speak the same language and contribute to your data initiatives starts with training.

Training your team on data literacy—the ability to read, be hands on, and promote your data—will enable them to not only embrace data as an asset to drive business initiatives, but also naturally keep data as a top-of-mind topic of conversation when knowledge sharing across departments.

Let's face it: you can't speak about data if you don't understand it. We're here to help. Get your team on the same page by handing them this—their guide to the new-found data language—so they can be equipped with the data language in their next conversation and propel the business towards data-driven success.

Data quality—your first step to prepping your data journey.

Data quality is the concept of completing, consolidating, and correcting your database. You do this through cleansing, monitoring, profiling, standardizing, and migrating tools to ensure all your data records are clean and live in one home.

Tip: Cleaning your data is the fundamental first step to any data initiative such as amplifying your marketing efforts or creating operational efficiency. Why? Because it allows you to begin any data project feeling confident that you are making decisions and predicting trends based on trustworthy data.

Tip #2 (Because data quality is that important): Make sure you are proactively managing your data on an ongoing basis. Data changes every day—people get married, move, change jobs, have kids, and win the lottery—so you want to ensure you are keeping up with the latest accurate customer information by always keeping a single view of your customers.

65 percent of inaccurate data undermines key initiatives.

69 percent of organizations struggle to be data-driven, and it's no secret that it's partially due to data debt.

Data debt is the concept of having a pile of untrustworthy data holding you back from acting on any project—like gaining deeper customer insight, excelling operations, complying to regulations, or innovating your strategies.

Taking data quality as your first step to incorporating data into your everyday life, you will relieve your pile of debt giving yourself data you can trust.

When you are prepping your data, make sure you go the extra mile with:

Data validation is completing and verifying your customer contact fields (address, phone, and email) to make sure you are getting in touch with your customers. With data validation, you can append any missing or incomplete customer information along with ensuring accuracy across the board.

Tip: If you are looking to clean up your database—say you want to scrub any inaccurate customer fields to start a new personalized campaign effort—first look to consolidate your disparate sources, then look to validate your customer addresses, emails, and phone numbers. This will give you confidence knowing your marketing efforts are reaching your customers at each and every touchpoint.

Data matching capabilities discover and connect data across all channels giving you a 360-degree view of your customers. For example, if you have data about customer A in one database as well as another, it will connect those dots ensuring you have one holistic view of each customer.

Tip: Eighty-one percent of organizations say that they have seen some progress linking data from different databases after implementing a data quality solution. Make sure you are data matching across your databases to gain a holistic view of your individual customers.

Data enrichment is the concept of appending new information into your customer database. With data enrichment, you can add details like, financial data, buyer propensity, automotive data, and more.

72

percent of organizations believe that data quality issues impact customer trust and perception.

Validating, matching, and enriching your data gives you the opportunity to get to know your customers on a deeper level, personalize your marketing efforts, ultimately giving your customers a one-of-a-kind experience with your brand.

After you prep for your data journey, you can weave it into your world with these practices:

Data literacy is the ability to read, work with, analyze, and argue with data. The goal is to make more people within the business data literate to empower data insights.

Tip: By training yourself and your team on the language and "how tos" that define data, you will be equipping them with the knowledge to leverage the information across different parts of the business, like compliance, marketing, and operations. Make sure you tailor your data literacy program to fit your organization's purpose and culture so it resonates with your team and you have easier adoption.

Data management is the process of gathering, hosting, and processing your data.

Tip: Fifty-eight percent of businesses say data management primarily sits with IT, while 42 percent report that it primarily sits with business users. With the growing number of business users getting their hands dirty with data, consider how you shift data ownership within your organization.

At mature data organizations, data management is more likely to be seen as a set of continuous processes.

Data enablement is the concept of enabling your team with the experts and resources to leverage data across your business (read: if you're reading this, you are on the right track!).

57 percent of businesses say data enablement is a key focus over the next 12 months.

Tip: If you are looking to take a step toward data enablement, start by implementing a data literacy training. By familiarizing your team with data terms (like, the ones you are reading here), they will be equipped with the knowledge to be more hands on with the information they need to drive decision-making and strategies.

Data governance is the process to ensure data meets precise standards and business rules as it is entered into a system. This framework encompasses the people, processes, and tools you need to make sure your data is fit for purpose.
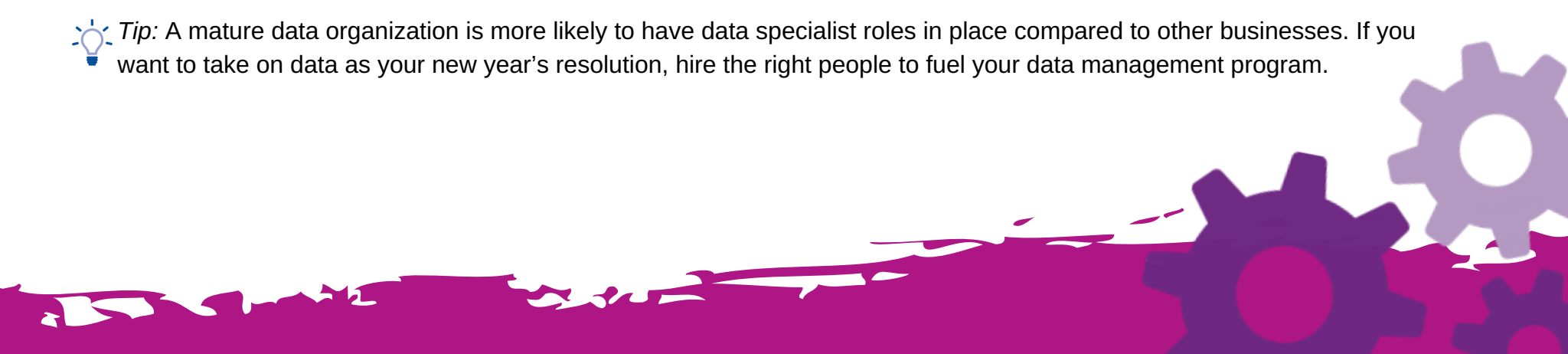
Tip: If you don't know how to get your data governance program started, you are not alone! In fact, 95 percent of businesses say that they struggle to implement a data governance program. To get started, first find your key data champions so you can partner to establish the right processes that work best for your team, and invest in the right technology.

Data maturity measures how sophisticated your business's data framework is by evaluating your people, processes, and tools. There are four categories which you could fall into based on your data practices today: unaware, reactive, proactive, and optimized.

Tip: Our research shows only 11 percent of businesses believe they are mature in their data quality initiatives. In other words, they land on the "optimized" data maturity curve. This means these businesses have chief data officer role in place, regularly monitor their data, and have data solutions which profile, monitor, and visual their data to best fit their team's needs. Make sure you take the time to evaluate your data practices and make improvements based on your gaps.

Data practitioners encompass specific data roles, like data analysts, data engineers, and chief data officer. These key resources act as drivers enabling the entire organization to adopt data practices.

Tip: A mature data organization is more likely to have data specialist roles in place compared to other businesses. If you want to take on data as your new year's resolution, hire the right people to fuel your data management program.

Becoming a data-driven business means you empower your people with the education and resources they need—like this guide!—so they can understand how to unlock the full potential of your data.

Starting the journey to becoming a data-driven business? Explore insights from more than 500 data practitioners about how they leverage data across the business.

Learn more