

Data science project kickoff checklist

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Guidance

This checklist is intended to help you start a data science project while reducing the risk of failure to complete.

Please see <https://fastdatascience.com/starting-a-data-science-project/> and <https://fastdatascience.com/the-key-stages-of-a-data-science-project/> for more information.

Organisational

Item	Remarks
Who are the main stakeholders of the project?	
What is the reporting frequency?	
What is the reporting process?	
Is the organisation new to data science?	
How long has the organisation been gathering data?	
Has the business attempted this before? What happened?	
Does the business have a preferred cloud provider?	

Financial

Item	Remarks
Budget agreed?	
What will happen if unforeseen circumstances prolong the project?	

Administrative

Item	Remarks
Sign NDAs	
Request physical access to the client's site and computer systems.	

Data

Item	Remarks
Request access to all in house data sources, any third party data sources and also any APIs.	
Is there a long wait to get data (approvals, permissions, IT, etc)?	
Does data need cleaning?	
Any privacy constraints (GDPR, HIPAA)?	
Request access to version control,	

ticketing systems, and cloud computing accounts.	
Do we have a sensible amount of data? A database of 100 customers is not enough.	
Is any extra (ancillary) data available on customers?	
Obtain data dump	
Explore data and perform sanity check.	
Try to build a very quick and dirty machine learning model.	

Project

Item	Remarks
What are we predicting?	
How will it help the business?	
Is there an existing method of making a prediction?	
Measures of success	
Deliverables agreed?	
Milestones agreed?	
What are the major risks?	
Have all stakeholders approved?	
Timeline agreed?	
Scope agreed?	

Team

Item	Remarks
Who is managing the project?	
Are team members available?	
Are team members capable of performing their tasks, and aware of their responsibilities?	
Are team members and stakeholders committed to the project?	
All team members and stakeholders needed for kickoff meeting	
Do we need to hire more people for the project? Have we kicked off this process?	