

Data Confidence Scales

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Level	Label	Description	Example Language
5	Rock-Solid Confidence	Data is highly reliable. Definitions are clear, tracking is consistent, and external factors are minimal.	"We'd bet the farm on this number." "These are audited-quality results."
4	High Confidence	Good data hygiene, minor caveats known but low impact.	"We're very confident in this metric." "There may be small tracking gaps, but directionally it's sound."
3	Moderate Confidence	Data is useful for trends, but exact values may vary due to sampling, tracking gaps, or lag.	"Treat this as a trend indicator, not an exact count." "We're confident in the direction, less so in the decimals."
2	Low Confidence	Known inconsistencies, mismatched definitions, or incomplete tracking.	"Directionally helpful, but the numbers are fuzzy." "Think of this as a clue, not evidence."
1	Speculative / Noisy	Weak data or inferred estimate. May reflect process bias or unreliable tracking.	"This is a rough guess." "We'd need better instrumentation to trust this."

Optional Alternate Framing Styles

1. Weather Metaphor Scale

- **Sunny (5)** – Clear visibility, data is clean and direct.
- **Partly Cloudy (4)** – Mostly clear, with some noise.
- **Hazy (3)** – You can see the trend but not the detail.
- **Foggy (2)** – Proceed carefully, context missing.
- **Stormy (1)** – Data is chaotic or misleading.

2. Scientific Scale

- **Empirical Evidence** – High-confidence KPI, verified source.
- **Validated Observation** – Minor caveats, but tested.
- **Working Hypothesis** – Directional, mid-confidence.
- **Preliminary Data** – Early signal, low confidence.
- **Anecdotal** – Gut feel, unverified, or speculative.

3. Storytelling Scale

- **“Fact we can quote”** – Use in board decks.
- **“Strong headline”** – Use confidently in marketing.
- **“Interesting subplot”** – Keep in the appendix, mention with nuance.
- **“Rumor in the village”** – Say with caution.
- **“Myth or legend”** – Don’t report it; just investigate further.