Digital **Quality Transformation** and AI Readiness Playbook

Insights and actions for consumer goods executives

Welcome

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This playbook offers nine high-impact plays to help consumer goods leaders implement digital quality transformation initiatives. We'd like to thank our **132 Veeva executive summit masterclass participants** whose insights were pivotal in developing this playbook.

Content

Executive Summary

Leading consumer goods companies are redefining quality. Instead of operating as a cost and compliance function, quality is being recognized as a competitive advantage. Digital transformation is key to this shift, with leaders focused on connecting people, processes, and data.

44% of companies are already implementing GenAI solutions

12% of leaders have established and scaled use cases

39% of leaders have yet to move their digital quality transformation efforts past the pilot stage

To unlock the value of digital platforms and AI, quality leaders are focusing on three things:

1. Faster decisions based on data and risk

2. Smarter, connected predictive operations

3. Proactive compliance

For quality leaders, connecting people, processes, and data today lays the foundation necessary for automation, scaled AI initiatives, and predictive quality. This vital groundwork helps businesses safeguard product quality, elevate the consumer experience, and drive measurable business growth.

Quality Executives' Top Challenges

People

60% are not confident their teams have the skills and mindset to leverage AI-enabled quality.

For digital transformation to succeed, people need a clear vision, and must be empowered to act. Without this, even the best solutions will fail.

1. Stakeholders are not invested in partnering to deliver success

2. Leadership is not engaged and does not advocate for the digital journey

3. Teams lack the skills, confidence, and trust to adopt and fully leverage new technologies

Processes and Systems

61% confirmed their quality processes are currently disconnected or paper-based.

Quality needs structured, scalable processes and integrated systems to deliver consistency, speed, agility, and insight across the value chain.

1. Key processes are disconnected, inefficient, and non-standardized

2. Operational inconsistency and stalled digital implementations are failing to deliver promised value

3. Overly complex ways of working present execution barriers

Data

71% rate their data's quality, connectivity, and AI readiness as very poor to fair.

AI, digital tools, and quality teams all rely on connected and trusted data. A strong data foundation turns raw information into actionable intelligence to drive strategy.

1. Perfectionism restricts progress limiting value, credibility, and engagement

2. Lack of connected thinking about quality data assets and potential value prevents investment and progress

3. Data is not connected or centralized, preventing effective insights and action

Digital Quality Transformation and AI Readiness Playbook

We identified nine action-focused plays to address the top challenges described by the quality executives. Each play entails practical steps to overcome common barriers and accelerate your company's digital quality journey. Use these plays in combination to align and focus your organization. As you move from ambition to execution, quality will start to become a value engine.

Pillar	Challenge	Play
People	Stakeholders are not invested in partnering to deliver success	1. Craft & Tell Compelling Change Stories
	Leadership is not engaged and does not advocate for the digital journey	2. Make Digital Quality Success Tangible for Business Leaders
	Teams lack the skills, confidence, and trust to adopt and fully leverage new technologies	3. Ready the Quality Workforce for the Digital and AI Era
Process & Systems	Key processes are disconnected, inefficient, and non-standardized	4. Standardize Processes to Digitalize
	Operational inconsistency and stalled digital implementations are failing to deliver promised value	5. Formalize Process Governance to Accelerate Execution
	Overly complex ways of working present execution barriers	6. Reimagine Quality Processes for a Digital-First Future
Data	Perfectionism restricts progress, limiting value, credibility, and engagement	7. Apply A Progress Over Perfection Approach
	Lack of connected thinking about quality data assets and their potential value prevents investment and progress	8. Define a Three-Year Quality Data Strategy With Use Cases
	Data is not connected or centralized, preventing effective insights and action	9. Connect and Centralize Sources of Truth

Play 1: Craft & Tell Compelling Change Stories

Why it matters

Without clear and resonant change narratives, people don't understand why change is needed, what's at risk, or what their role is. People pull in different directions, resist the change, and fail to adopt new ways.

What good looks like

Stories connect personal value with strategic goals and real challenges. People can articulate "What's in it for me" and feel personally invested in the success of the quality transformation. Messaging is consistent, tailored, and reinforced.

How to put into action

- Codevelop stories with cross-functional input, including shop floor and corporate voices
- Align narrative with strategic goals and personal benefits, focusing on benefits to your organization and your partners
- Build targeted, two-way communication strategies using multiple channels
- Use short, engaging storytelling formats (videos, visuals, testimonials)
- Reinforce regularly via sponsors and advocates; equip leaders with simple communications toolkits

Quick wins

- Video message from the C-suite
- Visual explainer deck used by line managers
- Define "what it means for me" for key groups
- Implement feedback loops for continuous improvement

Enabling partners

- Communications team
- Transformation office
- Change ambassadors

Play 2: Make Digital Quality Success Tangible for Business Leaders

Why it matters

Leadership won't prioritize or champion digital quality without a clear vision of its potential business benefits.

What good looks like

Leaders communicate confidently about digital quality transformation and understand its tangible value. Leaders actively and visibly advocate for changes and lead others to the destination.

How to put into action

- Develop a digital quality vision that connects to priority business goals and the consumer or customer
- Quantify and communicate digital consolidation's financial benefits, as well as likely improvements to quality, efficiency, and risk mitigation
- Share contextualized use case scenarios with leadership that resonate with goals and value
- Define, monitor, and communicate KPIs for future-state success, with leadership dashboards to visualize ROI
- Facilitate immersion sessions with key internal influencers
- Embed success stories into leadership communications

Quick wins

- Define a digital quality vision and benefits
- Workshops with site and functional leaders on future state benefits and impacts
- Create a one-page visual roadmap with key milestones

Enabling partners

- Digital transformation office
- Finance
- IT
- Strategy teams

Play 3: Ready the Quality Workforce for the Digital and AI Era

Why it matters

A workforce resistant to, or mistrustful of, new technologies undermines adoption and slows progress. Inconsistent adoption increases risks of investment failure and reduced competitiveness.

What good looks like

A digitally-confident workforce understands both the potential and boundaries of technology, and is guided by clear principles to create business value. Curiosity, collaboration, and responsible digital innovation are embedded in the culture.

How to put into action

- Assess skills, digital literacy, and cultural readiness across functions
- Define and communicate principles for ethical, transparent, and accountable use of digital and AI tools
- Prioritize organizational change management, with focus on user impacts, benefits, guardrails, and business purpose
- Develop tailored upskilling programs, combining digital, data, and ethical competencies
- Promote digital champions who model collaborative, experimental, and responsible technology use to drive local adoption
- Create spaces and networks for experimentation, learning, and reflection

Quick wins

- Launch a digital and AI readiness survey to identify capability and trust gaps
- Run internal "AI in practice" sessions to build confidence in new tools
- Celebrate examples where teams have applied technology to enhance quality outcomes

Enabling partners

- Internal communications
- Learning and development
- Digital transformation teams
- Regional or functional leads

Play 4: Standardize Processes to Digitalize

Why it matters

Inconsistent processes across sites, regions, or functions lead to inefficiencies, duplication, and risk. Without common standards, digital platforms can't scale or connect.

What good looks like

Streamlined global processes that are codeveloped with stakeholders, applied consistently, digitally-enabled, and embedded in ways of working. Standardization is 'as common as possible, as different as necessary.'

How to put into action

- Identify two or three critical QMS processes to standardize first, based on greatest impact and business value
- Align definitions, roles, and data points, and any essential variations (based on regulations or legislation)
- Modernize, unify, and embed in a digital QMS platform, ensuring consistent onboarding and training
- Maintain alignment with a governance framework and accountable global process owners
- Communicate decisions across stakeholder functional leadership

Quick wins

- Map 'as-is' critical processes, stakeholders, and critical data
- Define a common process standardization blueprint template and communicate design principles
- Develop and share a terms glossary

Enabling partners

- QMS owners
- Global process owners
- Governance committee

Play 5: Formalize Process Governance to Accelerate Execution

Why it matters

Without structured governance, clear expectations, and robust oversight, organizations struggle with decision-making, accountability, and resource provisioning.

What good looks like

Clear mandates drive digital quality process and system initiatives. A governance model defines roles, responsibilities, and decision rights. Transparent decision-making, cross-functional accountability, and an operating rhythm ensures consistent execution.

How to put into action

- Define a fit-for-purpose global strategy for business process and technology transformation
- Establish a formal steering group with defined remit, cadences, and data-driven discussion
- Equip steering group team with clarity on business case, scope, timeline, and contextual benefits
- Create structured approval processes for priorities, budgets, resources, issue resolution, and risk acceptance
- Use reviews to track progress, unblock delays, and reallocate resource as needed
- Assign ownership and KPIs for transformation outcomes

Quick wins

- Draft a governance charter and decision-rights map / RACI
- Implement a monthly cross-functional digital quality review

Enabling partners

- IT PMO
- Quality strategy team
- Finance
- Executive sponsors

Play 6: Reimagine Quality Processes for a Digital-First Future

Why it matters

Replicating legacy processes directly "as-is" into digital systems repeats existing inefficiencies and complexities, and fails to take advantage of opportunities to be leaner, faster, and more automated.

What good looks like

Processes are intentionally designed for digital execution, with fewer steps, minimal manual intervention, and built-in automation. Digital processes leverage master data, analytics, and AI to deliver business outcomes.

How to put into action

- Challenge why each process step exists in the new system context – remove or rethink if value is unclear
- Be critical and consider "If we started with today's technology, how would we design this?"
- Identify areas where technology (including integrations and master data) can eliminate tasks or steps
- Partner with digital / IT teams to explore automation, AI, and advanced analytics opportunities
- Pilot radical redesigns in a controlled environment, capture results, and scale proven approaches
- Collaborate with digital groups outside of quality to to learn best practices and drive innovation

Quick wins

- Use process monitoring data to analyze cycle times and identify critical bottlenecks
- Run short digital quality hackathons with cross-functional teams to identify and protype high-impact automation and simplification opportunities

Enabling partners

- Digital innovation teams and automation specialists
- Quality systems teams and process owners
- Digital solution architects
- Data science / AI specialists

Play 7: Apply A Progress Over Perfection Approach

Why it matters

Focusing on, and waiting for, perfect data delays progress and stifles momentum, causing disengagement and preventing value realization.

What good looks like

Progressive, incremental data improvements are made through practical, real-world, targeted applications. Confidence is built by connecting progress to clear future goals.

How to put into action

- Identify high-impact data use cases where improved data unlocks real value
- Define MVP criteria focusing on the 80/20 rule and aspects that provide the highest ROI
- Start with "good-enough" data to test and develop hypotheses, with a pathway to the end goal
- Establish governance criteria for use case experimentation; use results to gain buy-in and scale
- Celebrate iterative improvements publicly; connect each step to the longer-term business objective
- Define single sources of truth for master data, and ensure stakeholder accountability

Quick wins

- Pilot dashboards and error detection tools
- Map sources of master data and align owners
- Document and communicate dependencies / blockers
- Identify and fix one high-impact data gap at a time

Enabling partners

- Data stewards
- Analytics teams
- Agile coaches
- Functional quality leads and SMEs

Play 8: Define a Three-Year Quality Data Strategy With Use Cases

Why it matters

Fragmented systems, disconnected initiatives, inconsistent standards, and low trust in quality data prevent clear contribution to business goals. This disconnect blocks actionable insights and limits improvement investments.

What good looks like

Quality drives a clear vision for trusted, enterprise-wide data. Quality have defined a roadmap that prioritizes high-value use cases, standardizes data and governance, and enables cross-functional integration in alignment with business priorities.

How to put into action

- Perform a due diligence assessment across key sources of quality data to understand organizational realities
- Define a connected quality data strategy, considering critical connections, gaps, and benefits
- Define enterprise-wide data standards and common methods and tools for data collection and management
- Develop a phased roadmap with defined milestones: foundational data > integrations > AI use cases
- Prioritize three business use cases, based on impact and readiness, with defined purpose and value statements
- Identify required technical enablers and process / people needs (e.g., platforms, data lakes, governance)

Quick wins

- Pilot one use case that connects two or more data sources and delivers a visible business outcome
- Assign a data strategy owner

Enabling partners

- CDO / CITDO
- Platform owners
- Data architects
- Operations leaders

Play 9: Connect and Centralize Sources of Truth

Why it matters

Disconnected data prevents insight generation and AI enablement.

What good looks like

Data flows across systems and platforms, enabling traceability, trends, and predictions.

How to put into action

- Create an inventory of key data sources across the value chain and overlaps
- Design integrations, leveraging data lakes / middleware as well as point-to-point connections
- Define data governance frameworks and standards, tagging data with standardized metadata
- Remediate data to agreed standards at the source of truth
- Establish sustainable methods to maintain data quality

Quick wins

- Define a data dictionary for critical data types
- Create a visual map of key data source relationships, clarify dependencies, and communicate with stakeholders

Enabling partners

- IT integration team
- Data governance council
- Platform vendors

Further Support

As you embark on your digital quality transformation journey, we encourage you to reference the following resources.

→ Learn how consumer goods leaders are pushing the boundaries of quality on our website.
www.qualityone.com

→ Hear directly from consumer goods industry quality and IT leaders.

EU Executive Summit Leadership Highlights

NA Executive Summit Leadership Highlights

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