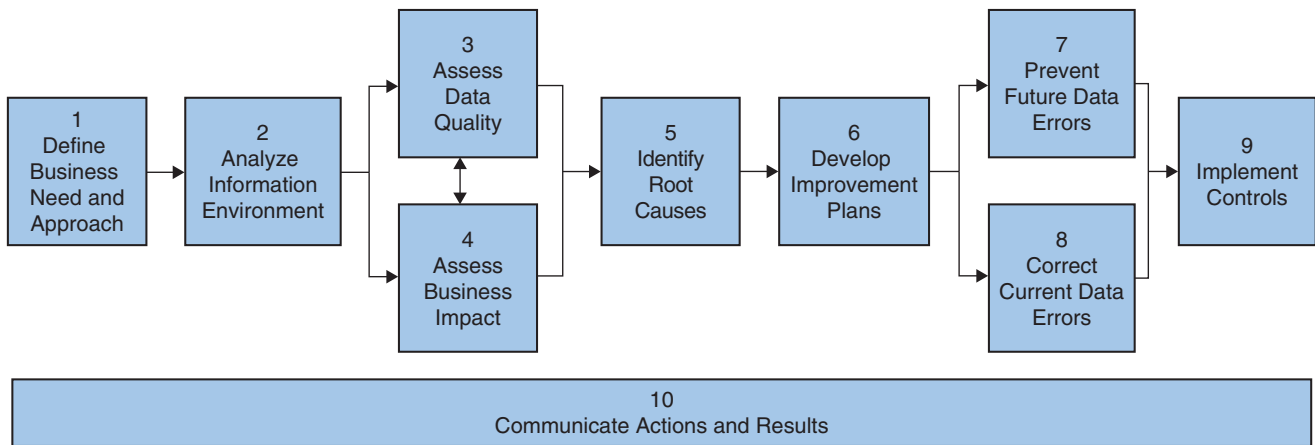# Overview of The Ten Steps Process

The Ten Steps process is the approach for assessing, improving, and creating information and data quality. The steps are shown in the figure and described in the box.

The Ten Steps Process—Assessing, Improving, and Creating Information and Data Quality

1. **Define Business Need and Approach**—Define and agree on the issue, the opportunity, or the goal to guide all work done throughout the project. Refer to this step throughout the other steps in order to keep the goal at the forefront of all activities.

2. **Analyze Information Environment**—Gather, compile, and analyze information about the current situation and the information environment. Document and verify the information life cycle, which provides a basis for future steps, ensures that relevant data are being assessed, and helps discover root causes. Design the data capture and assessment plan.

3. **Assess Data Quality**—Evaluate data quality for the data quality dimensions applicable to the issue. The assessment results provide a basis for future steps, such as identifying root causes and needed improvements and data corrections.

4. **Assess Business Impact**—Using a variety of techniques, determine the impact of poor-quality data on the business. This step provides input to establish the business case for improvement, to gain support for information quality, and to determine appropriate investments in your information resource.

5. **Identify Root Causes**—Identify and prioritize the true causes of the data quality problems and develop specific recommendations for addressing them.

6. **Develop Improvement Plans**—Finalize specific recommendations for action. Develop and execute improvement plans based on recommendations.

7. **Prevent Future Data Errors**—Implement solutions that address the root causes of the data quality problems.

8. **Correct Current Data Errors**—Implement steps to make appropriate data corrections.

9. **Implement Controls**—Monitor and verify the improvements that were implemented. Maintain improved results by standardizing, documenting, and continuously monitoring successful improvements.

10. **Communicate Actions and Results**—Document and communicate the results of quality tests, improvements made, and results of those improvements. Communication is so important that it is part of every step.