

Estimation Data Quality for Portfolio Planning

The Hidden Problem

Your portfolio decisions are only as reliable as the data underneath them.

Every quarter, leadership reviews roadmaps, approves budgets, and allocates resources based on aggregated estimates from dozens of teams. Jira Align rollups, PI planning forecasts, cost projections, workforce plans—all of it depends on one assumption:

That the estimation data flowing up from teams is trustworthy.

For most organisations, it isn't.

Teams estimate differently. Coverage is inconsistent. Data quality degrades silently. And by the time the consequences show up—missed commitments, blown forecasts, frustrated stakeholders—nobody can trace it back to the root cause.

You've invested in portfolio visibility. But visibility into bad data just means you're confidently wrong.

What's Actually Broken

Estimation data has quality problems that compound as it rolls up through the portfolio:

Coverage gaps. Not all work is estimated. When 30-40% of stories in an epic have no estimate, your epic-level forecasts are fiction. This isn't visible until someone manually audits—which nobody does consistently.

Consistency drift. What Team A calls a "5," Team B calls a "13." Even within teams, calibration drifts over time. When you aggregate estimates across 20 teams, you're adding numbers that don't mean the same thing.

Timing problems. Estimates added after work starts—or after it completes—are not estimates. They're record-keeping. But they look identical in your reports, silently corrupting your velocity and forecast calculations.

Structural disconnects. Stories not linked to epics. Epics not linked to initiatives. Work that exists but doesn't roll up. Your portfolio view has holes you can't see.

No feedback loop. When estimates miss reality, does anyone recalibrate? For most teams, the answer is no. The same estimation errors repeat quarter after quarter.

There's no standard way to detect these problems. No alert when quality degrades. No visibility into which teams' data you can trust and which you can't.

The Cost

When estimation data quality is unknown, portfolio planning becomes guesswork with spreadsheets.

PI planning that doesn't hold. Teams commit based on incomplete information. Dependencies are mapped against unreliable estimates. Two sprints in, the plan is already fiction.

Forecasts that erode trust. "When will this be done?" Every answer carries invisible uncertainty. Stakeholders learn to add their own buffer—or stop believing timelines entirely.

Resource decisions on bad inputs. Headcount planning, contractor budgets, team allocation—all derived from capacity models built on data you can't validate.

Jira Align views that mislead. Portfolio rollups look precise. Progress bars move. But the numbers underneath are inconsistent, incomplete, or stale. You're flying instruments that aren't calibrated.

Retrospectives that miss the point. "Why did we miss the quarter?" gets attributed to scope creep, dependencies, or team performance. The actual cause—flawed estimation data from the start—is never surfaced because it's never measured.

The Solution

We provide **continuous data quality monitoring** for your Jira estimation data—a validation layer that sits beneath your dashboards, rollups, and portfolio views.

Before your data flows into Jira Align, before it informs your PI planning, before it shapes your forecasts—we tell you whether you can trust it.

What We Measure

Dimension	What It Tells You
Coverage	What percentage of work is actually estimated? Where are the gaps by team, project, epic?
Consistency	Do teams estimate the same way? Is calibration drifting over time? Can you safely aggregate?
Timing	Are estimates in place before work starts? Or backfilled afterward?
Sizing patterns	For teams not using points, is actual work size consistent enough to trust throughput metrics?
Structure	Are stories linked to epics? Epics to initiatives? Where are the rollup gaps?
Learning signals	Are teams recalibrating? Or repeating the same estimation errors?

How It Works

Continuous monitoring, not one-time audit. Data quality degrades over time. We track trends, detect drift, and alert you when quality drops below your thresholds.

Benchmarked against your own teams. See which teams have reliable data and which need attention. Compare across programs, portfolios, or time periods.

Pre-aggregation validation. Run a quality check before PI planning, before Jira Align syncs, before quarterly reviews. Know what you can trust.

What Makes This Different

This isn't another dashboard. Dashboards show you metrics built on your data. We tell you whether the data underneath those metrics is reliable in the first place.

This isn't a reporting tool. Reporting tools assume your data is good. We validate that assumption—and show you exactly where it breaks down.

This is infrastructure for trustworthy planning. The quality layer that should exist before any portfolio-level analysis.

From Diagnosis to Action

Visibility alone isn't enough. You need to know what to do about it.

Every indicator includes **actionable playbooks**—specific guidance for improving data quality based on what we find:

- **Coverage gaps?** Playbook for estimation hygiene: when to estimate, what to estimate, how to make it stick.
- **Consistency drift?** Calibration exercises, cross-team alignment sessions, reference story libraries.
- **Timing issues?** Process checkpoints, definition of ready enforcement, backlog refinement cadences.
- **Structural gaps?** Hierarchy hygiene, linking standards, automated validation rules.

We don't just tell you what's broken. We show you how to fix it—with proven approaches that work at scale.

Track improvement over time. See your data quality scores trend upward as teams adopt better practices. Demonstrate progress to stakeholders.

What Changes

When you can see and trust your estimation data quality, portfolio planning transforms:

PI planning that starts with confidence. You know which teams' estimates are reliable, which need buffers, and where to focus calibration efforts before the big room.

Forecasts stakeholders believe. When estimates are consistent and complete, "when will this be done?" has an answer that holds up. Trust rebuilds.

Jira Align views you can act on. Portfolio rollups reflect reality. Progress tracking means something. Decisions are grounded in validated data.

Resource allocation that makes sense. Capacity models built on quality data. Headcount decisions you can defend. Fewer surprises at quarter-end.

A feedback loop that actually works. Teams see their estimation accuracy. Patterns emerge. Calibration improves. The whole system gets more reliable over time.

Who This Is For

Portfolio and Program Leadership

- Release Train Engineers preparing for PI Planning

- Portfolio PMOs aggregating data for executive reviews
- Program Managers coordinating across multiple teams

Engineering and Delivery Leadership

- VPs of Engineering reporting on capacity and productivity
- Directors of Delivery responsible for forecast accuracy
- Agile CoE leads driving estimation consistency at scale

Organisations Using Jira Align

- Anyone whose portfolio views depend on team-level data quality
 - Jira Align admins who need to trust what's flowing into rollups
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Get Started

See your estimation data quality in 10 minutes.

Connect your Jira instance and get an instant health assessment:

- Coverage score across your projects
- Consistency analysis across teams
- Specific issues identified with severity ratings
- Comparison against portfolio-ready benchmarks

No configuration required. No data leaves your Jira instance. Just clarity on whether your estimation data is ready for the decisions you're making with it.

[Start Your Assessment]

Your portfolio decisions deserve better than hope. Validate your data before you bet on it.