# Comprehensive Data Cleaning and Transformation in SQL: A Full Project Walkthrough



Data Cleaning in MySQL | Full Project

Alex The Analyst 🥥

In this lesson we are going to be building a data cleaning project in MySQL! Download Dataset: ...

LINK: Data Cleaning in MYSQL by Alex the Analyst

#### **OUTLINE:**

- 1. Data loading
- 2. Removing Duplicates
- 3. Standardizing Data
- 4. Dropping Unnecessary Columns
- 5. Export to CSV



### **Business Requirement**

The layoffs data file provided contains **several issues** that need to be addressed before it can be used for meaningful analysis. First, there are numerous **missing values** (NULLs) in key columns such as total\_laid\_off, percentage\_laid\_off, and industry, which could lead to inaccurate insights if not handled properly. Additionally, the dataset contains **duplicate records**, where the same company appears multiple times with **identical or near-identical** data. There are also **inconsistencies** in formatting across various columns, such as location and industry, where different naming conventions or incomplete entries are present. Moreover, some unnecessary columns that **do not contribute** to the analysis need to be removed. To ensure the data is ready for business use, it is essential to **clean**, **standardize**, **and remove any irrelevant or problematic entries**, providing a final cleaned dataset in **CSV format**.

### **Problem Statement & Project Goals**

- Problem Statement: The layoffs dataset has issues such as missing values, duplicate records, inconsistent data formats (e.g., location, industry, date fields), and unnecessary columns. These issues hinder the ability to generate reliable insights and visualizations.
- Project Goals: The goal of this project is to clean and standardize the layoffs data by:
- 1. Handling missing values (NULL).
- 2. Removing duplicate records.
- 3. Standardizing text fields and formatting.
- 4. Dropping unnecessary columns.
- 5. Delivering the cleaned data in CSV format.

#### Use Case

The cleaned dataset will allow the client to analyze **trends in layoffs** across industries and locations. By handling **missing values and removing duplicates**, the client will gain **accurate insights** into which sectors and regions are experiencing the most layoffs. Standardized data will also make it easier to create **consistent reports** and visualizations, leading to better decision-making

### **Technical Requirements**

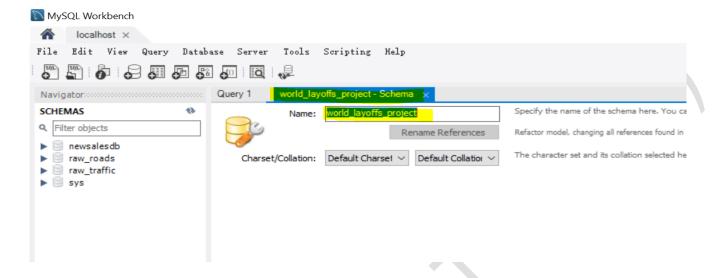
The following are the technical tasks and requirements to meet the **project goals.** This includes the specific steps for data cleaning, the tools, and how the final product has been delivered.

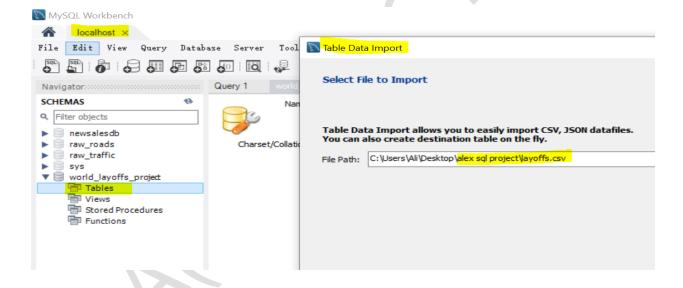
#### Technical Tasks:

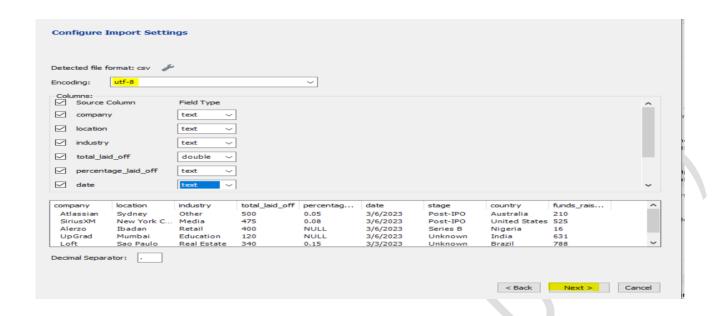
#### 1. Data Loading:

First, we will set up the schema for this project by creating a new schema named **world\_layoffs\_project** in **MySQL Workbench**, though this task can be completed using any SQL platform or tool. The schema will act as the **structured** environment where we will store and manipulate

the data. After creating the schema, we will load the provided layoffs dataset into it, ensuring that the table structure aligns with the **raw data**. This will allow us to begin the process of **cleaning and transforming the data** for further analysis.





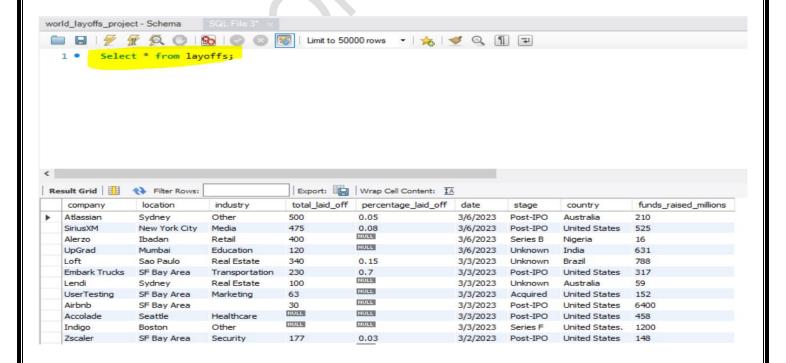


#### Import Data

The following tasks will now be performed. Please monitor the execution.

Prepare Import

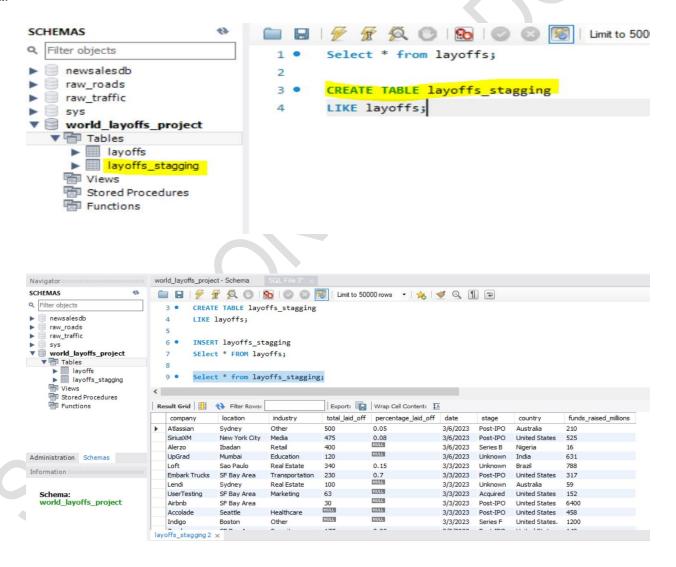
Import data file



#### Staging Table:

The **staging table** is created because it provides a **safe environment** for data cleaning and manipulation. Working **directly** on the **original data** can be **risky** because any mistakes could lead to **data loss or corruption**. By using a staging table, you protect the **raw data**, ensuring you can always go back to the **original version** if something goes wrong.

The staging table allows you to **experiment, clean, and transform data** without worrying about damaging the original dataset. Once you're **satisfied** with the cleaned data, you can replace or update the original data if needed. It provides the flexibility to test multiple **cleaning steps, rollback changes, and validate the results** in an isolated environment before applying them to the original dataset. In short, the **staging table** is necessary because it acts as a **temporary workspace** for performing **potentially destructive tasks** without endangering the original data.



### 2. Removing Duplicates:

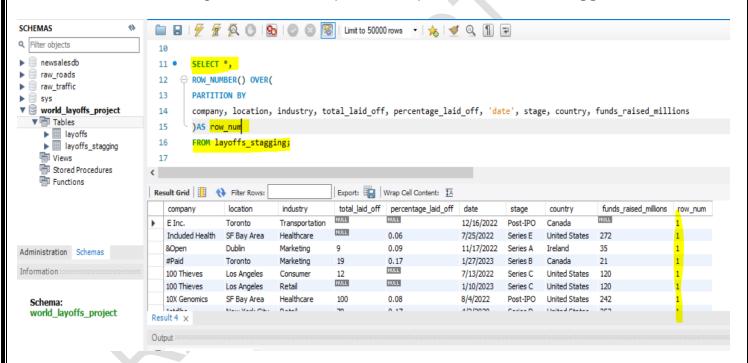
#### Identifying Duplicates in Dataset Using ROW\_NUMBER() Function

The query is selecting the company, industry, total\_laid\_off, and date columns from the layoffs\_staging table, while also adding a new column row\_num that assigns a **row number** to each record. The ROW\_NUMBER() function is used to **generate a unique row number for each record within a partition**. In this case, the **partition** is defined by company, industry, total\_laid\_off, and date. T

his means that the row numbers will be reset within each combination of these values. The purpose of this query is likely to **identify duplicates** in the dataset.

By using the ROW\_NUMBER() function with the **PARTITION BY** clause, the query helps to assign a unique number to each row within the same group of records that share the same values for company, industry, total\_laid\_off, and date.

Records with a row\_num greater than 1 are potential duplicates and can be flagged for removed

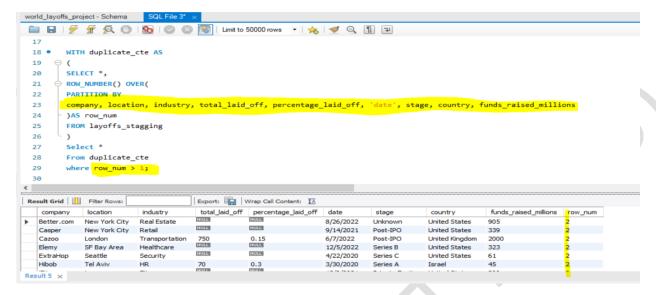


#### CTE for Identifying Potential Duplicate Records (duplicate\_cte)

This query uses a **Common Table Expression (CTE)** named **duplicate\_cte** to first compute a **unique row number** for each record in the **layoffs\_stagging table**.

The **ROW\_NUMBER()** function assigns this row number within **each partition** defined by multiple columns, including company, location, industry, total\_laid\_off, percentage\_laid\_off, date, stage, country, and funds\_raised\_millions. Records that share the same values across these columns are **grouped together**, and row numbers are assigned within each group.

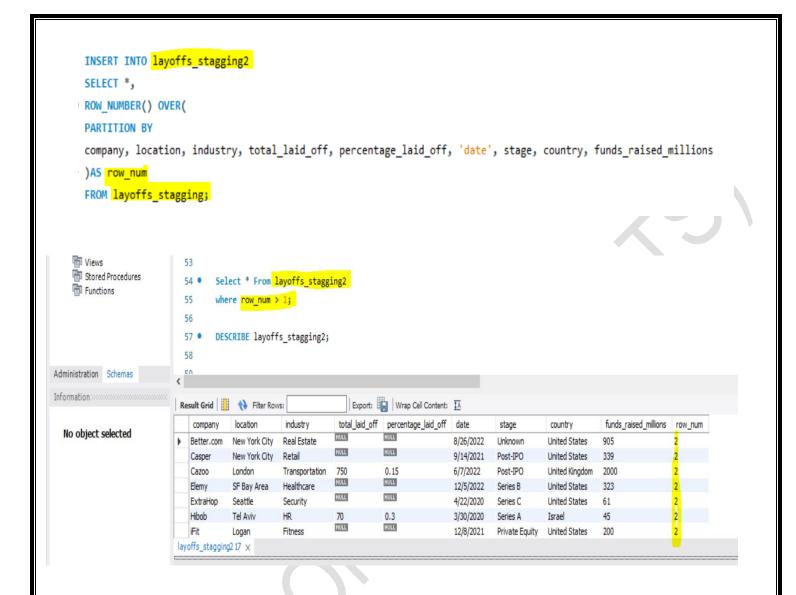
The outer query then selects records from the **duplicate\_cte** where the **row\_num** is greater than 1, effectively identifying and retrieving duplicate records based on the specified columns.



## Creation of New Staging Table layoffs\_stagging2 for Enhanced Data Handling

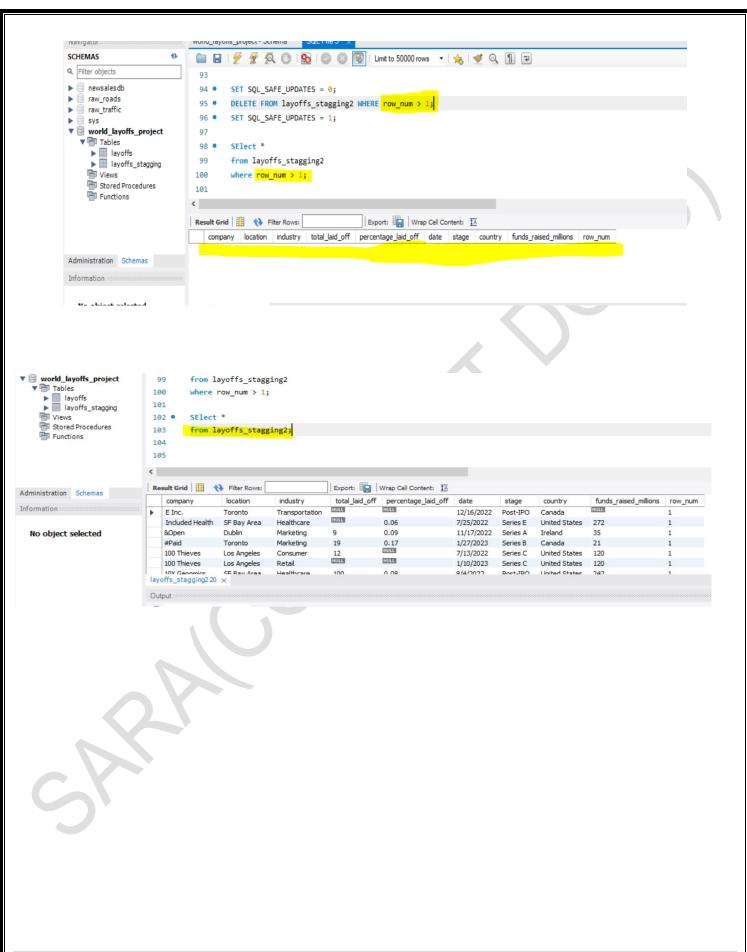
Created another staging table, **layoffs\_stagging2**, is created to **improve data handling or** staging for further analysis or processing. We can also create through **right click** on **layoffs\_stagging**, then click on **copy to Clipboard**, further click on **create statement** and **add column** named **row\_num** with **INT** data type.

```
CREATE TABLE layoffs_stagging2 (
    company TEXT,
    location TEXT,
    industry TEXT,
    total_laid_off INT DEFAULT NULL,
    percentage_laid_off TEXT,
    date TEXT,
    stage TEXT,
    country TEXT,
    funds_raised_millions INT DEFAULT NULL,
    row_num INT
);
```



## Deleting Duplicate Records from layoffs\_stagging2 Table Based on row\_num Values

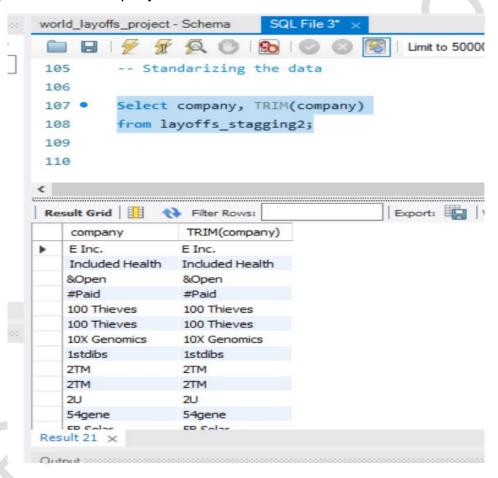
The following query deletes **all records** that are considered **duplicates**, assuming that **row\_num** was assigned using a method that identifies duplicates by numbering them within each group. Records with **row\_num values greater than 1** are typically the **duplicates** within those groups, so this query effectively cleans up the table by removing these duplicate entries.



### 3. Standardizing Data

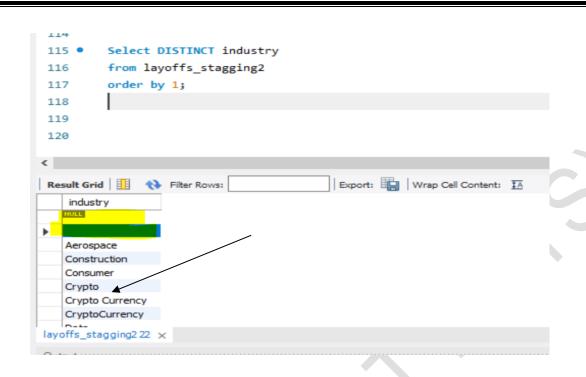
## Removing Leading and Trailing Spaces from company Field Using TRIM() Function

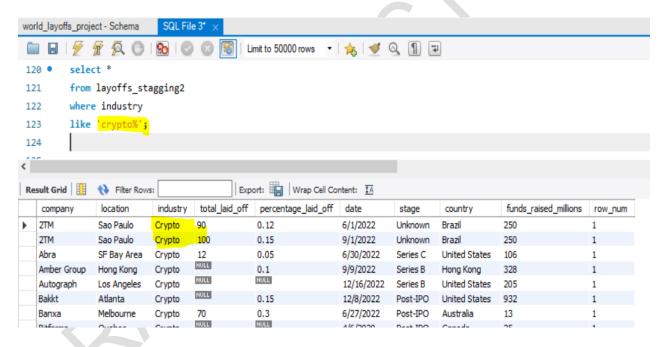
The following query retrieves **two columns** from the layoffs\_stagging2 table. The first column is the **company field** as it is stored in the **table**, while the **second column** is the same company field with any **leading or trailing spaces** removed. The **TRIM()** function is used to clean up the data by **removing these extra spaces**, which can help in **standardizing the company names** and improving data consistency. This query is useful for identifying and addressing any issues related to **unnecessary spaces** in the company field.



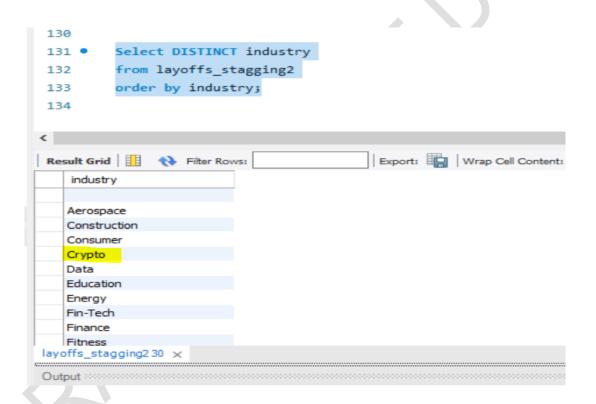
## Standardizing Industry Values for Accurate Exploratory Data Analysis: Grouping Variants of 'Crypto' and 'Crypto Currency

The following sql query is used to retrieve and sort unique values from the industry column in the layoffs\_stagging2 table. During EDA, we noticed inconsistencies in the industry column, where some entries were listed as "crypto" and others as "crypto currency." To streamline the analysis and ensure that all related entries are grouped correctly, we standardized all such entries to "crypto." This approach ensures that the exploratory analysis is accurate and efficient, reducing the potential for errors and making the dataset easier to work with.



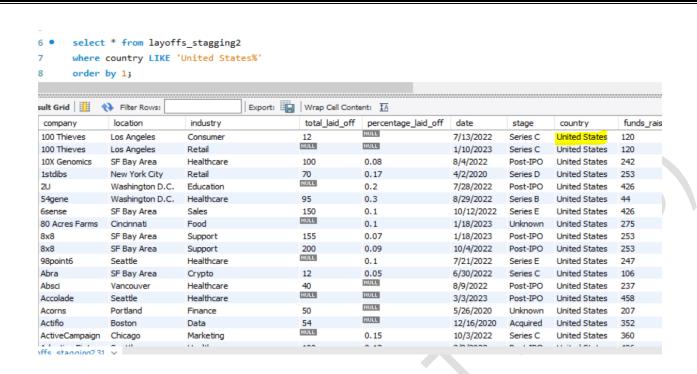




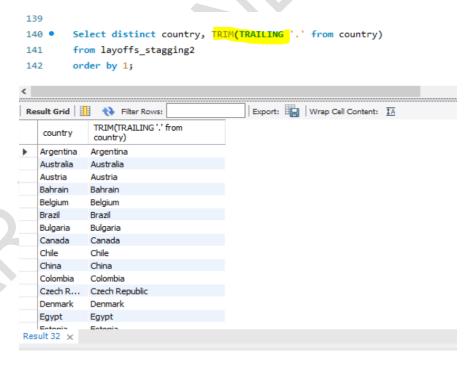


## Cleaning and Updating 'country' Field: Removing Trailing Periods and Standardizing Entries

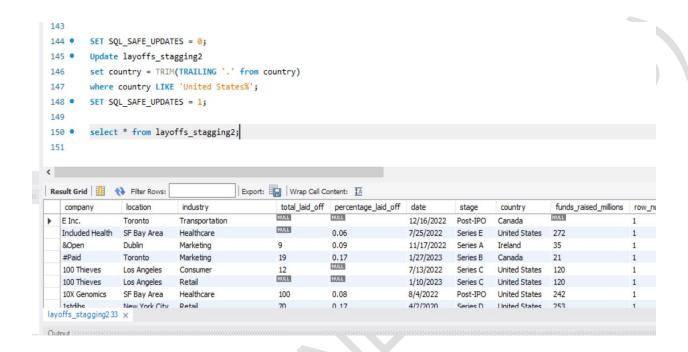
This query retrieves **all records** from the layoffs\_stagging2 table where the country column starts with "**United States**" (including variations such as "United States of America"). The results are sorted based on the first column in the SELECT statement, which is typically country in this case.



It retrieves **unique values** from the country column in the **layoffs\_stagging2** table, while also removing any trailing periods ('.') from these values using the **TRIM()** function. The DISTINCT keyword ensures that only **unique country names** are listed, and the results are sorted based on the **first column**, which is country after trimming.



This sequence of **commands updates** the country column in the **layoffs\_stagging2** table for records where country starts with "**United States**." It removes any trailing periods ('.') from the country values.



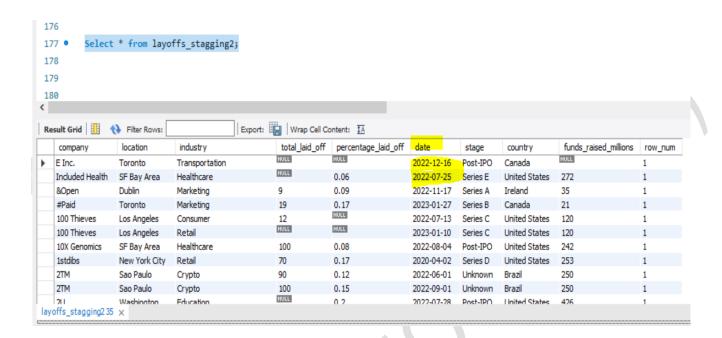
## Converting and Updating Date Format in layoffs\_stagging2 Table Using STR\_TO\_DATE Function

This query selects the **date column** from the layoffs\_stagging2 table and converts the date values from a string format ('%m/%d/%Y') to a proper date format using the **STR\_TO\_DATE()** function. It shows both the original string date and the converted date for comparison.

Furthermore, updates the **date column** in the layoffs\_stagging2 table by converting the **string format of dates** to a proper date format using the **STR\_TO\_DATE()** function. This operation replaces the original string dates with properly formatted date values.

```
162
             -- Update the date column by converting the string date to a date format
    163
            UPDATE
    164 •
                layoffs_stagging2
    165
            SET
    166
    167
                date = STR_TO_DATE(date, '%m/%d/%Y');
    168
    169
            -- Modify the column type of date to DATE
    170
    171 •
            ALTER TABLE
                layoffs_stagging2
    172
            MODIFY COLUMN
    173
    174
                date DATE;
         -- Select the date column and convert it using STR TO DATE function
156
157 •
         SELECT
158
              date,
              STR_TO_DATE(date, '%m/%d/%Y')
159
160
         FROM
161
              layoffs_stagging2;
                                            Export: Wrap Cell Content: IA
STR_TO_DATE(date,
   date
               '%m/%d/%Y')
   12/16/2022
              2022-12-16
   7/25/2022
              2022-07-25
   11/17/2022 2022-11-17
   1/27/2023 2023-01-27
   7/13/2022
              2022-07-13
   1/10/2023 2023-01-10
   8/4/2022
              2022-08-04
   4/2/2020
              2020-04-02
Result 34 ×
Action Output
```

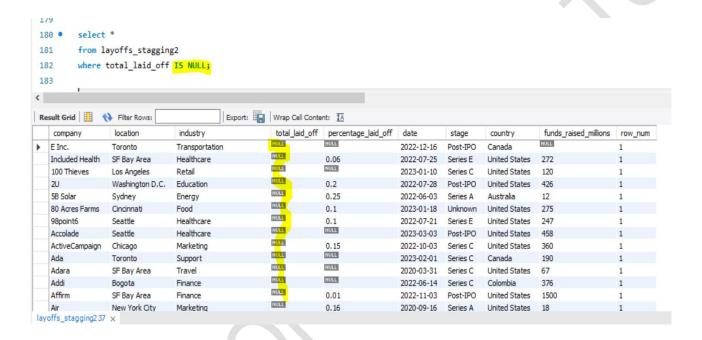
#### **Properly Formatted Date**

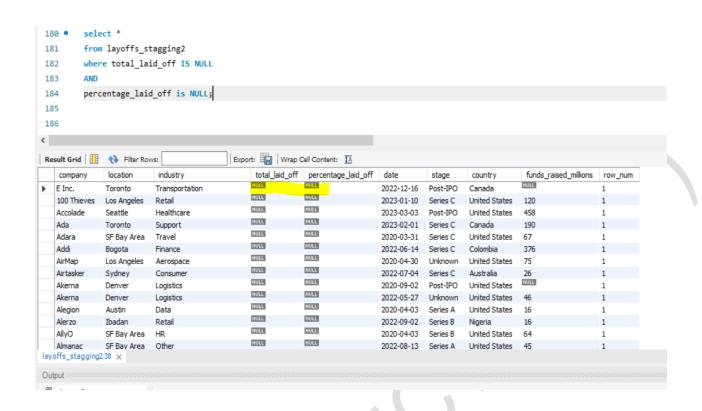


### 4. Dropping Unnecessary Columns

### Identifying Records with Missing or Empty Values in layoffs\_stagging2 Table

Retrieves all records from the **layoffs\_stagging2** table where both the **total\_laid\_off** and **percentage\_laid\_off** columns have **NULL values**. This is useful for identifying records with **missing data** in these specific fields.



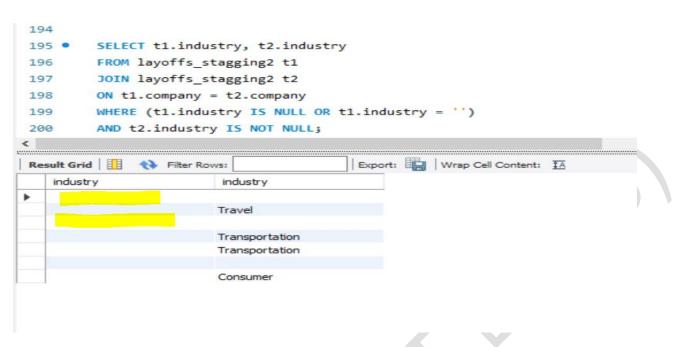


The query is designed to **find and compare records** with **missing** or empty industry values against those with **non-null industry values** for the same company. This can help in identifying **inconsistencies** or gaps in the data where some entries are incomplete.

Performs the following actions:

- 1. **Joins the layoffs\_stagging2 Table with Itself:** It uses a **self-join**, where t1 and t2 are two aliases for the same table.
- 2. **Join Condition:** It matches rows from t1 and t2 where the company column is the same in both aliases (t1.company = t2.company).
- 3. Filter Conditions:
- From t1, it selects rows where the industry column is either NULL or an empty string.
- From t2, it selects rows where the industry column is not NULL.

This results in pairs of records where the industry field is **missing or empty** in one record (t1) but has a value in a **corresponding record (t2)** for the same company.



The query updates the **layoffs\_stagging2** table by setting the industry value to the value from another row in the same table (where the company matches) only if the **industry value is NULL** in the current row and **not NULL in the other row** 

```
UPDATE layoffs_stagging2 t1

JOIN layoffs_stagging2 t2

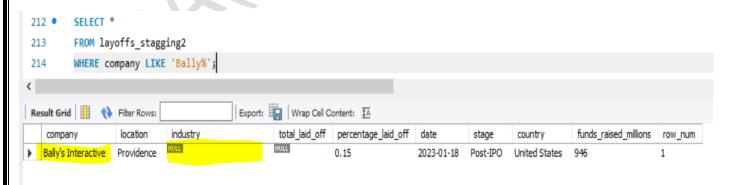
ON t1.company = t2.company

SET t1.industry = t2.industry

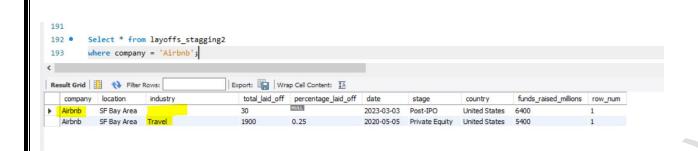
WHERE t1.industry IS NULL

AND t2.industry IS NOT NULL;
```

It allows you to **filter and retrieve specific rows** from the layoffs\_stagging2 table based on a pattern in the company name. By using LIKE **'Bally%**', you can quickly find and analyze all records where the company name starts with "**Bally**," which can be useful for Identifying and examining data related to specific companies that match the pattern, helping in focused analysis or reporting.

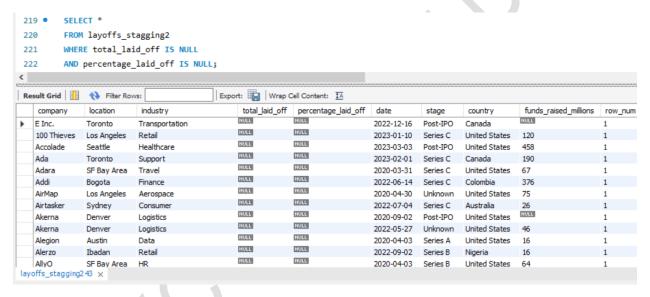


It filters the data to include only those rows where the company name matches 'Airbnb' precisely.



## Identifying and Removing Records with Missing Data in layoffs\_stagging2 Table

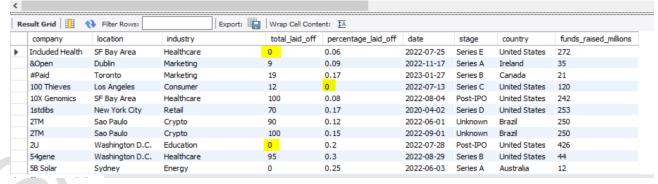
This query selects and displays **all rows** from the layoffs\_stagging2 table where both total\_laid\_off and percentage\_laid\_off columns are **NULL**. It helps in identifying records with **missing data** in these specific columns.



This query **deletes all rows** from the layoffs\_stagging2 table where both total\_laid\_off and percentage\_laid\_off columns are **NULL**. It is used to **remove records** that have **no useful data** in these columns, effectively cleaning up the table by removing entries that **can't be used for analysis**.

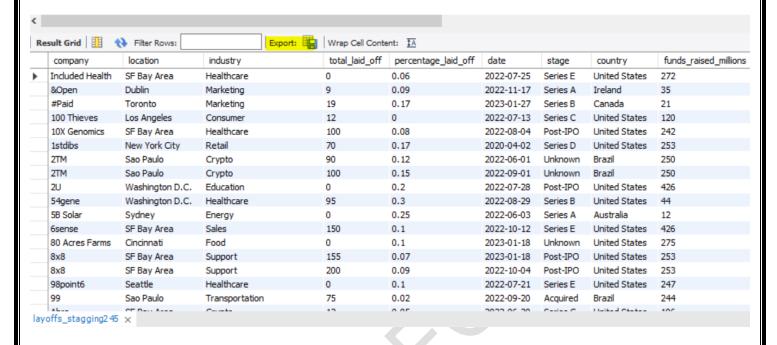
```
223
224
           -- Delete Useless data we can't really use
          DELETE FROM layoffs_stagging2
225 •
          WHERE total_laid_off IS NULL
226
           AND percentage_laid_off IS NULL;
227
228
229
          SELECT *
          FROM layoffs_stagging2;
230
231
Export: Wrap Cell Content: ‡A
                   location
                                     industry
                                                              total_laid_off
                                                                           percentage_laid_off
                                                                                                           stage
                                                                                                                      country
                                                                                                                                    funds_raised_millions row_nu
                                                             NULL
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   #Paid
                   Toronto
                                    Marketing
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                                                                                                          Series B
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                   SF Bay Area
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                                    Energy
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                   SF Bay Area
                                   Sales
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   6sense
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layoffs_stagging244 ×
```

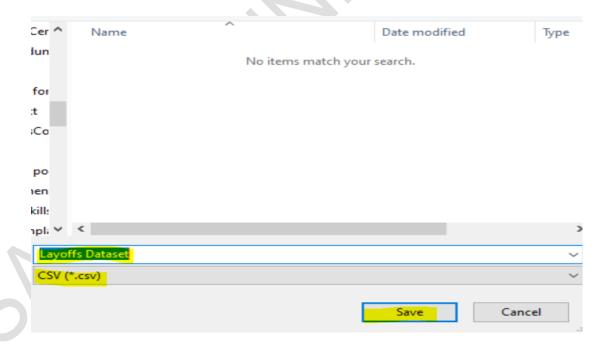
240	UPDATE layoffs_stagging2
241	SET total_laid_off = 0
242	WHERE total_laid_off IS NULL;
243	
244 •	UPDATE layoffs_stagging2
245	SET percentage_laid_off = 0
246	WHERE percentage_laid_off IS NULL;
247	
248	SELECT *
249	FROM layoffs_stagging2;

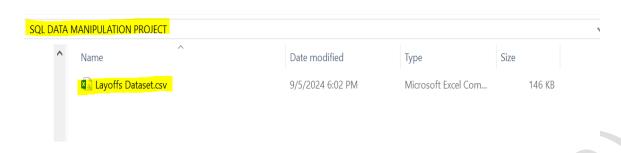


### 5. Exporting Cleaned Data:

Export the cleaned and standardized dataset into a CSV file and share it with the client.







#### **Tools:**

- MySQL Workbench for queries and code.
- CSV format for the final data delivery.

#### **Deliverables**

- A cleaned, standardized layoffs dataset in **CSV format**.
- **Documentation** explaining the steps taken and any **assumptions made** during the cleaning process.

### **Acknowledgement:**

"I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to <u>Alex The Analyst</u> for creating and sharing such valuable projects and resources. His detailed explanations and well-structured tutorials have been immensely helpful in expanding my understanding of data analytics and project workflows. By following his project, I was able to gain hands-on experience and successfully complete it.

Thank you, Alex, for your generosity and dedication to helping others in the data community. Your guidance has truly made a significant impact on my learning journey"