Dazzle

2026 EDITION

The CDP Response Checklist

What to have ready before you open the portal

BEFORE YOU START

Where this list comes from

When we ran a CDP Ask Me Anything, we asked the room what slows them down most. The answers came back in this order: mapping data to the modules, getting the internal team aligned, gathering evidence, and quality-checking before you submit. This checklist follows that order. Mapping came up most often, and it is rarely a data problem, it is a translation problem.

The 2027 cycle opens earlier than this year's, in spring rather than June, and the response window is a month shorter. Everything below is easier to put in place now than in the week the portal opens. Deadlines shift, so check the current dates on CDP's own site.

PART 1 OF 4

Mapping your data to the modules

- Pull last year's response and mark every answer you would have to rebuild from scratch this year
- Build one mapping sheet: question number, the data it needs, where that data lives, and who owns it
- Check for duplication: where the same figure is used across modules, make sure everyone is using the same source
- Flag where CDP asks for a specific number but you currently only have a narrative or general explanation
- Identify dependencies early: flag anything that needs input from Finance, Procurement, Operations or suppliers, and start those requests first
- Keep the supporting evidence with the data, so answers can be checked quickly when the submission is reviewed

Done looks like: every question has a named source and a named owner before anyone starts writing.

PART 2 OF 4

Getting the internal team aligned

- Put one name against every module, and tell that person what a good answer looks like rather than only what is missing
- Agree the internal deadline 4 weeks before the external one, so review is not the thing that gets cut
- Book the governance answers early. Board oversight questions need someone senior to confirm what actually happens
- Give procurement and finance a single request instead of 5, and say what the data is for
- Write down who signs off the final submission

Done looks like: the people who hold the data know their deadline before you send the first reminder.

PART 3 OF 4

Gathering the evidence

- Keep every figure traceable to a document, a system export or a policy, and store the source next to the answer
- For targets, hold the approval date, the baseline year and the scope covered, not only the number
- For policies, check the published version says what your answer claims it says
- Where you rely on an estimate, record the method now. Next year you will not remember it
- Keep the evidence file in a shared place, not in the inbox of whoever ran it this year

Done looks like: a reviewer can pick any answer and find the source in under a minute.

PART 4 OF 4

Quality-checking the response

- Read the scoring criteria alongside each question, not just the question itself
- Check that every answer actually addresses what CDP is asking, rather than providing related information
- Check that numbers, targets, dates and terminology are consistent across the whole response
- Review the "Other" and narrative fields carefully. Use them to explain gaps, not to repeat information you have already given
- Do a final question-by-question review from the perspective of a CDP scorer, asking: "What evidence in this answer earns the point?"

Done looks like: every answer has a clear reason for being there and can be traced to a specific scoring requirement.

HOW SCORING WORKS

What actually moves a score

CDP scores in bands, and each band asks for something different from the one below it. Read the published scoring methodology for your questionnaire before you start writing, because most lost points come from answering a question that was not asked.

- Disclosure: the question is answered at all. Blanks cost more than an honest no
- Awareness: you show you understand how the issue affects your business, in your own terms
- Management: you can point to actions, owners and dates, not intentions
- Leadership: the practice is embedded, verified and consistent across the whole response

One thing that trips people up

Consistency across modules. Scorers read your answers together. A target in one module that does not match the emissions figure in another is a visible gap.

Who checked this

Panos K. ran the CDP Ask Me Anything for Dazzle on 14 July 2026 and reviewed this checklist. He is an independent CDP expert from the Dazzle network and has worked on more than a dozen CDP submissions.

Need someone alongside you this cycle

Dazzle connects companies to curated sustainability freelancers and interim experts, usually within 48 hours. A full CDP response, a second pair of eyes before you submit, or a review of last cycle's score.

Book a free 30 minute session: dazzle-platform.com/cdp-ama/

Next steps

You've downloaded this checklist. Now let's put it to work.

In 30 minutes, one of our experts can walk through where you stand, point out the fastest wins, and help you set a plan for the next cycle.

Scan the QR code to book your free discovery call.
www.dazzle-platform.com