

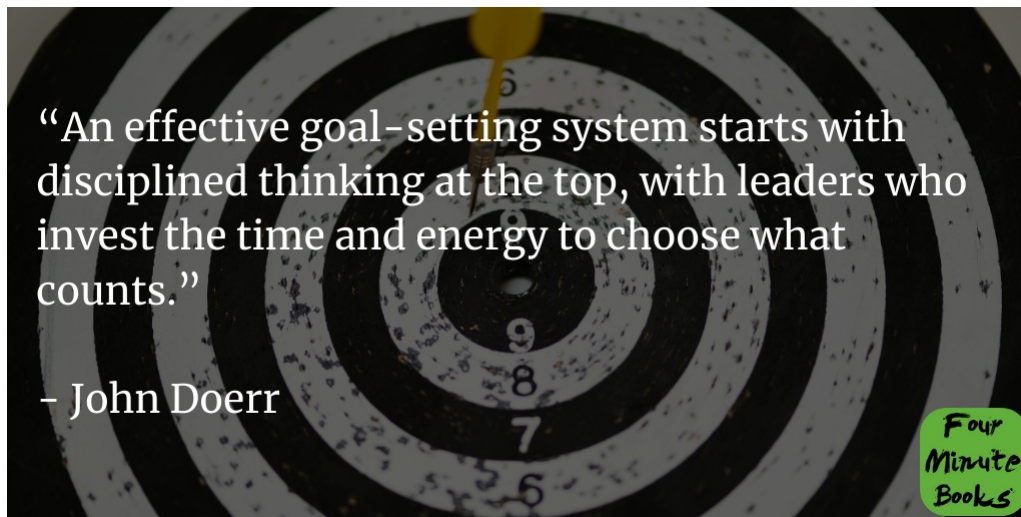
Measure What Matters Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *Measure What Matters* teaches you how to implement tracking systems into your company and life that will help you record your progress, stay accountable, and make reaching your goals almost inevitable.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



From August 2008 to August 2010 I was a missionary. The work was tough, but I learned and grew more than any other time in my life up to that point. One of the most useful tools I discovered that I still use today is what we called key indicators.

Basically, we followed a set of goals we worked toward daily. In the evening, we would record how we did and make plans for the next day. Today, I do the same for all my goals, from my relationships to finances and health.

It's helped me stick to my greatest aspirations for the last decade. I've come far because of the clarity and consistency that this system gives me.

Measure What Matters: How Google, Bono, and the Gates Foundation Rock the World with OKRs teaches organizations and individuals how to implement a similar process by a different name. They call it objectives and key results, or OKRs for short. This powerful system is about to transform everything you know about productivity.

Here are the 3 most helpful goal-setting lessons I got out of this book:

1. Use objectives and key results (OKRs) to keep you going in the right direction toward achieving your goals.
2. Account for your efforts by implementing consistent tracking measures to help you stay on course.
3. To achieve great success, stretch yourself by setting your sights high.

Are you ready for some dramatic improvements to your ability to set and achieve goals?
Let's go!

Lesson 1: **If you want to stay on course toward your goals, you need to use objectives and key results (OKRs).**

First, let's recognize that this book teaches these skills primarily to businesses. But don't let that stop you from finding ways to implement the lessons here in your personal life!

We also want to make sure to understand what OKRs even are right up front. First, you set your objectives, or your longer-term goals. In the case of Intel, they had an objective to become the best in their industry. As you can see, this part is a little more vague. You can think of it more like your vision of where you want to end up.

The second part of an OKR is the key results, or KRs. **One of Intel's KRs, for example was to get one of their processors to be used in other companies products ten times.** This perfectly sums up the more concrete next-steps of this part of OKRs. Another way to look at it is like the plan for how you will achieve your objectives.

We see a similar system in *The 12-Week Year*. Here, the authors refer to lead indicators, which is what you track, and lag indicators, which is your end goal. In other words, an objective is a lag indicator and a key result is a lead indicator.

To make the best use of this system, record your progress on KRs frequently. Then occasionally review how they're helping you get closer to achieving your objective. This way you will constantly have information on how you're doing while also maintaining the ability to modify your long-term objective.

Lesson 2: **Constantly track how you're doing to realign yourself when you get off track.**

I use a personal tracking system to help me keep up with my own objectives quarterly and key results daily. Sometimes I find that midway through a quarter, I need to make some adjustments. This is easy to do because of the way I've set it up, which is a major benefit of OKRs as well.

I check in with my progress on KRs every day, but if you're running an organization you might do it a little differently. Google, for example, meets with employees monthly to review their progress on quarterly goals. **In these sessions, they can review their progress, identify roadblocks, and make updates.**

There are four ways that you can change your OKRs if you find that they need modification:

- Continue
- Update
- Start
- Stop

Continue is the most common outcome of a review. This option makes sense when your goal is running smoothly and you still feel that you want to end up where it's taking you.

But sometimes external factors make it difficult to reach your lofty objectives. Right now the COVID-19 pandemic is wreaking havoc on my productivity. That means during my weekly review I'll probably **update** my standards, lowering them just a bit.

In some cases though, you may finish one goal and want to **start** another, which is perfectly fine! And if you find that your plan just isn't working out and never will, don't be afraid to **stop** your OKR all together.

Lesson 3: Aim big and push yourself beyond your limits if you want to become successful.

Landing on the moon in 1969 almost seems like a distant piece of history now. But did you know that this was an ambitious goal that pushed NASA to its limits? Just think what would have happened had they not undertaken such a seemingly daunting task!

This shows the power that stretch goals can have for you individually or for your organization. **Research even indicates that employees that aim high have better motivation, engagement, and productivity.**

Shooting for the moon may seem terrifying at first, but with your OKR system running smoothly, you're likely to succeed!

One more tip first, though, before you go charging full-speed ahead. Some results are necessary to maintain to keep you or your company going strong. Make sure to commit to these and also give time for your more ambitious dreams. Google, for example, breaks their goals into two types.

They use **committed objectives** for the tasks that must have 100% completion for the smooth operation of the company. These are the day-to-day things like hiring or selling.

Stretch objectives, on the other hand, are for their big-picture objectives. Ambitious projects usually fail about 40% of the time. But their committed objectives allow Google to keep running smoothly even if their moonshots fall short.

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Measure What Matters Review

I enjoyed *Measure What Matters*, there's a lot of good advice here for executives especially. I don't think this means you can't take what the book teaches and apply it on a personal level, though. In fact, I believe anyone can apply these principles regardless of their status in the company.

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Who would I recommend the Measure What Matters summary to?

The 52-year-old CEO who is looking for a better way to unify the company's growth efforts, the 34-year-old who is just beginning their own business and wants to start off on the right foot, and anyone that wants to learn how accountability will make them more productive.

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