

Creating OKRs for your project

In this lesson, you are learning to define and create measurable project goals and deliverables. This reading will focus on creating effective objectives and key results (OKRs) and how to implement them into your project.

What are OKRs?

OKR stands for objectives and key results. They combine a goal and a metric to determine a measurable outcome.

Objectives	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defines what needs to be achieved• Describes a desired outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The measurable outcomes that objectively define when the objective has been met

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Company-wide OKRs are used to set an ultimate goal for an entire organization, whole team, or department. Project-level OKRs describe the focused results each group will need to achieve in order to support the organization.

OKRs and project management

As a project manager, OKRs can help you expand upon project goals and further clarify the deliverables you'll need from the project to accomplish those goals. Project-level OKRs help establish the appropriate scope for your team so that you can say “no” to requests that may get in the way of them meeting their objectives. You can also create and use project-level OKRs to help motivate your team since OKRs are intended to challenge you to push past what's easily achievable.

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Set your objectives

Project objectives should be aspirational, aligned with organizational goals, action-oriented, concrete, and significant. Consider the vision you and your stakeholders have for your project and determine what you want the project team to accomplish in 3–6 months.

Examples:

- Build the most secure data security software
- Continuously improve web analytics and conversions

- Provide a top-performing service
- Make a universally-available app
- Increase market reach
- Achieve top sales among competitors in the region

Strong **objectives** meet the following criteria. They are:

- Aspirational
- Aligned with organizational goals
- Action-oriented
- Concrete
- Significant

To help shape each objective, ask yourself and your team:

- Does the objective help in achieving the project's overall goals?
- Does the objective align with company and departmental OKRs?
- Is the objective inspiring and motivational?
- Will achieving the objective make a significant impact?

Develop key results

Next, add 2–3 key results for each objective. Key results should be time-bound. They can be used to indicate the amount of progress to achieve within a shorter period or to define whether you've met your objective at the end of the project. They should also challenge you and your team to stretch yourselves to achieve more.

Examples:

- X% new signups within first quarter post launch
- Increase advertiser spend by X% within the first two quarters of the year
- New feature adoption is at least X% by the end of the year
- Maximum 2 critical bugs are reported monthly by customers per Sprint
- Maintain newsletter unsubscribe rate at X% this calendar year

Strong **key results** meet the following criteria:

- Results-oriented—**not** a task
- Measurable and verifiable
- Specific and time-bound
- Aggressive yet realistic

To help shape your key results, ask yourself and your team the following:

- What does success mean?
- What metrics would prove that we've successfully achieved the objective?

OKR development best practices

Here are some best practices to keep in mind when writing OKRs:

- Think of your objectives as being motivational and inspiring and your key results as being tactical and specific. The objective describes what you want to do and the key results describe how you'll know you did it.
- As a general rule, try to develop around 2--3 key results for each objective.
- Be sure to document your OKRs and link to them in your project plan.

OKRs versus SMART goals

Earlier in this lesson, you learned how to craft SMART goals for your project. While SMART goals and OKRs have some similarities, there are key differences, as well. The following article describes how SMART goals and OKRs are similar, how they differ, and when you might want to use one or the other: [Understanding the Unique Utility of OKRs vs. SMART Goals](#)