

# OKR

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**OKRs** stands for Objectives and Key Results. It is a framework of defining and tracking objectives and their outcomes.

Its main goal is to define company and team "objectives" along with the measurable "key results" that define achievement of each objective. One OKRs book defines OKRs as "a critical thinking framework and ongoing discipline that seeks to ensure employees work together, focusing their efforts to make measurable contributions."<sup>[1]</sup> OKRs may be shared across the organization so that teams have visibility into goals across the organization, helping to align and focus effort.

Individuals may create OKRs, but they are often set only at the company and team levels in connection to a company's vision and mission.

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## Implementation

The objective is a qualitative goal for a set period of time, usually a quarter. The key results are quantitative metrics used to measure if the objective has been met by the end of the period.<sup>[2]</sup>

When rolled out to the full extent, OKRs exist at company (top-level vision), team (inherited and team-generated, not just the bucket of individual goals) and individual level (personal development and individual contributions).

While most goals are usually defined by management, some choose half of the objectives to be created from the bottom up instead to increase team motivation.<sup>[3]</sup>

Company-wide publication of drafted OKRs or presentation including Q&A can assure cross-functional alignment and agreement on dependencies before finalization.

Especially at the end of a goal period, an assessment of each key result per goal and its accomplishment grad on average should happen. Expectations for how many goals must be met vary. Google and Uber suggest that employees should achieve about 70% of an OKR respectively its total of key results each quarter,<sup>[4]</sup> while Zynga expects employees to achieve 2 out of 3 OKRs each quarter.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Expected benefits

OKRs can foster longer-term thinking and the discipline of planning before taking action. For the assignee, putting goals in writing also clarifies expectations and enables open measurement of progress and definition of success. For other stakeholders, OKR can establish transparency on topics and priorities and support cross-functional communication.

## History and usage

OKRs were invented at Intel, and made popular by John Doerr.<sup>[6]</sup> OKRs and OKR tools<sup>[7]</sup> are used today by many companies, including Airbnb, Schibsted, Uber, Google,<sup>[8]</sup> MongoDB, Sparkfund, LinkedIn,<sup>[9]</sup> Twitter,<sup>[10]</sup> and Zynga.<sup>[5]</sup>

## See also

- OKR: Objectives and Key Results FAQs (<https://7geese.com/okr-objectives-and-key-results-faqs/>)
- Management by objectives
- Objectives, Goals, Strategies, and Measures (OGSM)
- Strategy Markup Language
- Performance Indicators aka KPIs

## References

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## Videos

- Ben Lamorte on OKRs, moderated by Brett Knowles (<https://allianceenterprises.wistia.com/medias/wzn2ubmld0>)
- "How Sears Drives Execution, Productivity, and Accountability with OKRs" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZLrFLRugXs>)

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