

Startup OKRs Template

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Document History

Date	Version	Authors	Notes
2013.06.13	1.0	niket	Document creation
2013.06.14	1.1	niket, xander	Understanding OKRs, FAQ, Resources, += Formatting
2014.02.14	1.2	niket	Updated Common Qs + Pitfalls, template update

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Understanding OKRs

(If you don't need background, [go directly to the template](#)).

OKRs can help you focus on your company goals and reflect on progress each quarter. Some of the biggest tech companies in the world use OKRs including Google, Zynga, Upstart and many others. OKRs were invented at Intel Corporation.

OKR is an abbreviation for Objective & Key Result. Pro tip: Key results are almost always defined with numbers, so you can measure success. They don't specify exactly how a team will hit the numbers, just what the goal is.

At the end of a work period, your OKRs provide a reference to evaluate how well you did in executing your objectives. This feedback can help you plan better moving forward.

The more time spent crafting OKRs the better your strategy will be, which makes it easier for your employees to see how they are contributing to the big picture and align with other teams.

The template below is a simple version of a typical OKR set. It is an example of a real (but anonymous) OKR implemented at a company. You can copy this template and modify it to fit your needs. It should be widely distributed to your team and serve as a reference when making decisions around strategy and goals.

Common Pitfalls & Questions

[How many OKRs should I have?](#)

[Do Individuals have their own OKRs, or is it by groups?](#)

[Do we grade our OKRs midterm?](#)

[How do we decide our OKRs, and what if they're too ambitious or unrealistic?](#)

How many OKRs should I have?

The idea is not quantity, but quality of OKRs. Think about the key things you need to do to further your business, goals, or ideas and put the focus there. Also, not all Key Results are created equal. In more

sophisticated OKR sets they can range from ‘must have’ to ‘nice to have.’

Do Individuals have their own OKRs, or is it by groups?

This is up to you. At Google both individuals and groups have OKRs. The group (or project / product)-based OKRs are more important to define clearly. The people in that group should have a good idea of how they contribute to achieve those goals already (if there is confusion here you should already be concerned).

Individual OKRs are useful for personal development. As an individual contributor you can see how you’re doing in the areas that matter and where you might need to improve. Managers, if given access to your OKRs, can also help you refine your skills where they see you lacking and help you form new OKRs for the following work period to help you grow.

Do we grade our OKRs midterm?

This is a helpful way to keep the team aligned and on track. Without trying to disrupt the workflow too much, I have seen many teams grade their OKRs midway through the quarter to help understand what is getting dropped or requires more attention.

I’ve added a column for midterm OKRs in the template below, but it is not required. Sometimes seeing that things are slipping or ahead of schedule will help rally the troops midway through a quarter and allow for better planning as well.

Scoring your mid-term OKRs is more about illuminating what will likely happen at end of quarter based on current progress and situation. It’s meant to highlight areas that are failing so appropriate measures can be taken to change course or accept that trajectory.

How do we decide our OKRs, and what if they’re too ambitious or unrealistic?

At Google we are both encouraged and incentivized to go overboard with our goals. Sometimes reality can be limiting in nature if you’re unsure of the capacity of your team. Of course, failing at your goals doesn’t feel good either which is why we strive to hit a 0.7 or better. Ideally your goals will stretch the capacity of your team and if you’re continuously hitting 1.0s you are not thinking big enough.

If you use OKRs in at least a quarterly cycle you can adjust your goals as you learn how the team performs. Never be afraid to try big things. And make sure you reward and encourage people for going bigger (even if they fail).

Resources

Learning

- [Quora OKR Topic](#)
- [Video: How Google Sets OKRs](#)
- [How Upstart \(started by former Google VPs\) Sets OKRs](#)

QUORUM OKRs

OKR List

[2013 Q4](#)

{% Insert 2015 Q2 OKRs %}

2015 Q1

Objective	Mid	Score
Increase Quorum user-base	0.4	0.60
Get Validation that Quorum is useful from users	0.5	0.75
Improve Quorum infrastructure	0.5	0.65
Improve question matching technology	0.3	0.30
Refresh Quorum App UX & Design	0.4	0.90
	0.42	0.65

OKRS

Objective: Increase Quorum user base

Key Results: *NIKET, MATT*

- Increase per day views to 1,000
- Total monthly uniques 45,000

Objective: Get validation that Quorum is useful from users

Key Results: *MATT, NIKET, REED*

- Increase upgrade conversion rate to 10%
- Increase MAU (assumed to be flawed) to 30% using our analytics
- 70% of newly acquired users answer questions at least 100 times

Objective: Improve infrastructure

Key Results: *NAT, REED*

- Automate builds using hubot-like functionality
- Reduce latency on requests by 50%

Objective: Improve question matching technology

Key Results: *KAREEM, REED*

- Attempt 5 major algorithm improvements

- Build an algorithm accuracy measurement tool and achieve 80% positively matched question results

Objective: Refresh Quorum App UX & Design

Key Results: *XANDER, NIKET*

- Make a new, awesome, version of Quorum with 100% team approval
- 90% of current monthly active user base agrees this is an improvement from current iteration
- Launch new logo & app icon on app, website, social media, blog
- Refresh app store screenshots & copy