Writing OKRs Cheat Sheet

How to write effective OKRs that inspire action and deliver results.

OKR Formula

I will   **Objective**   **as measured by**   **Key Results**   **via**   **Key Initiatives and Projects**

Understanding the OKR formula

OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) is a proven goal-setting framework for creating alignment, focus and a highly engaged work culture to drive business outcomes.

There is a standard formula for goal-setting with OKRs:

Objectives
Qualitative goal that you want to achieve. This is your desired outcome.

Key Results
Measurable, quantitative metrics that contribute to the achievement of an objective.

Key Initiatives and Projects
These are the actions that will be taken to achieve key results.

OKRs are not

- Unrealistic or ambiguous goals

- Task list or to-do list

- Overly specific

Common mistakes

- No real plan to achieve OKRs

- Key results aren't measurable

- Too many Objectives or Key Results

Step 1: Write– Follow a formula

Objectives

Actionable, meaningful

Formula
verb + what you're going to
do + so that / in order to

Example
Deliver a "must-have" product in order to delight customers and grow our user base

Key Results

Measurable, quantitative metrics

Formula
verb + what you're going to track/count + from x to y

Example
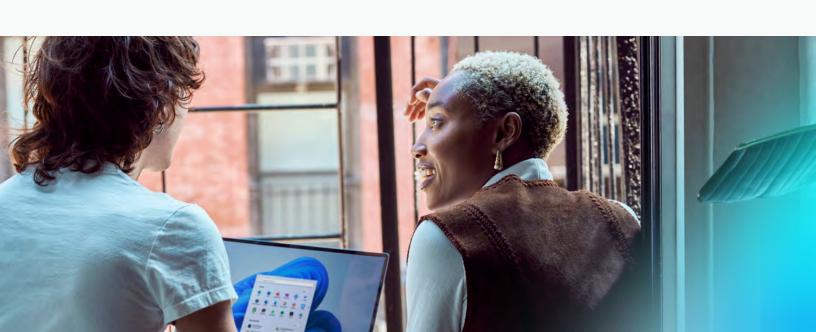Increase our NPS score from 40 to 50

Key Initiatives and Projects

- Measured as % completed

- Used to track milestones

Formula
verb + what you're going to measure

Example
Build a dashboard to track UX performance issues

Step 2: Edit–Ask the right questions

OKR Superpowers

Review your OKRs against the 5 OKR superpowers:

- **Focus:** What can be eliminated?

- **Alignment:** Who are the stakeholders?

- **Tracking:** Can we track if we were successful?

- **Transparency:** Where are there unseen implications or bottlenecks?

- **Stretch:** Is it propelling the business forward?

Necessary and Sufficient Test

Review your OKRs against these 2 key questions:

Question 1: Are all these Key Results necessary to achieve my Objective?

If YES: It passes the necessary test

Example Objective

- Key Result 1
- Key Result 2
- Key Result 3
- Key Result 4
- Key Result 5

If NO: Remove what isn't needed

Example Objective

- Key Result 1
- Key Result 2
- Key Result 3
- ~~Key Result 4~~
- ~~Key Result 5~~

Question 2: Will accomplishing my Key Results be sufficient enough to achieve my Objective?

If YES: It passes the sufficient test

Example Objective

- Key Result 1
- Key Result 2
- Key Result 3
- ~~Key Result 4~~
- ~~Key Result 5~~

If NO: Modify or add Key Results to make them stronger

Example Objective

- Key Result 1
- Key Result 2
- Key Result 3 *Modified*
- ~~Key Result 4~~
- ~~Key Result 5~~
- Key Result 4 *Added*

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