Microsoft Viva Goals

OKR Cheat Sheet: Simple Formulas and Real-World Examples

How to write effective OKRs that inspire action and deliver results

Microsoft Viva

Introduction

Both leaders and employees agree ... having aspirational, measurable, and easy-to-understand goals drives focus on the work that matters, helps teams align to strategic priorities, and leads to measurable results.

Using a goal framework based on **OKRs (Objectives and Key Results)** serves as a powerful tool to structure and guide the process of setting and achieving your goals.

While the OKR framework isn't complicated, it's helpful to start with a few simple best practice formulas for writing and refining OKRs, and reference real-world examples for inspiration.

Definitions

Objectives:

What your team wants to accomplish. They are 3-5 clear, inspiring goals shared across teams and organizations.

Key Results:

How the team will measure results. They should be 3-5 measurable outcomes which contribute to the achievement of an objective.

Initiatives:

Actions that help the team achieve outcomes. They are focused efforts that will help you define the path to impact for each OKR.

How the pieces fit together:

We will [Objective] as measured by [Key Results] via [Initiatives]

How to write good OKRs:

Objectives

Questions to ask:

- What is the most important area of our business that we need to focus on?
- Why does this objective matter to us?
- How would we write our objective into a statement that inspires our team?

Formula to follow:

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

Questions to ask:

- What metric would let us know that we were successful?
- Do we currently measure that metric?
- What is our target and baseline?

Formula to follow:

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

Example:

Increase our NPS score from 40 to 50

Initiatives:

Questions to ask:

- What do we need to do in order to be successful?
- What can we get done in this period?
- Who needs to be involved?

Formula to follow:

Verb + what you're going to do

Example:

Conduct market research initiative to identify "customer delighters"

Take your OKRs from good to great:

Questions to ask as you review your OKRs:

- Do our OKRs go beyond "business as usual" to strive for ambitious outcomes and reaching for what's possible?
- Have we limited both Objectives and the Key Results below them to 3-5 at most?
- Can our team directly impact the results or are we reliant on stakeholders? If the latter, can we make it a shared OKR?
- Do we have the right owners identified who will feel accountable for driving progress?
- Will we be able to see progress on each Key Result in the current time frame?

Using the "necessary and sufficient" test to finalize your OKRs:

- In looking at an OKR, ask yourself, "Are all these Key Results *necessary* to achieve my Objective?"
  - If the answer is yes, then it passes the necessary test.
  - If the answer is no, then remove what isn't needed.
- Next, ask yourself, "Will accomplishing my Key Results be *sufficient* enough to achieve my Objective?"
  - If yes, then it passes the sufficient test and you're good to go.
  - If no, then modify existing Key Results to make them stronger, and add any Key Results to achieve your Objective.

Questions to ask as you enter OKRs into Viva Goals:

- Where can we set up integrations to enable faster and better decision making based on dynamic real-time data and insights?
- Have we aligned our goals from the top down, bottom up, and across teams to ensure everyone is driving towards the same purpose, across the organization?
- Are our OKRs public for all team members to see in order to create accountability and surface dependencies and roadblocks?

Examples for an overall OKR program

Example 1 (Rollout)

Objective: Deploy Viva Goals in order to sharpen focus, align teams, and drive measurable results

- **Key Result 1:** 100% of senior leaders have established OKRs in Viva Goals

- **Key Result 2:** At least 75% of OKRs have had a check-in in the last 30 days

- **Key Result 3:** At least 50% of the organization has viewed and interacted with org OKRs within the first quarter

- **Initiative 1:** Configure Viva Goals to meet the needs of our team

  - **Task 1:** Configure settings and notifications within the admin dashboard
  - **Task 2:** Import teams and users into Viva Goals
  - **Task 3:** Enable integrations at the admin level

Example 2 (Engagement)

Objective: Drive broader Viva Goals adoption and engagement in order to deliver business value

- **Key Result 1:** 100% of teams have established OKRs in Viva Goals

- **Key Result 2:** At least 80% of team OKRs are aligned to company OKRs

- **Key Result 3:** At least 50% of employees have logged in over the past 90 days

- **Initiative 1:** Create a standardized format for OKR check-ins and monthly business reviews

  - **Task 1:** Host listening sessions with people managers to understand check-in requirements
  - **Task 2:** Align all departmental MBRs with new fiscal year calendar

OKR Examples for **Organizations** at the annual and quarterly level

Example 1

Annual Objective: Create a profitable and sustainable company in order to increase annual revenue

Annual Key Result: Increase ARR from $12m to $24m

- **Quarterly Objective:** Increase revenue and optimize sales processes to ensure we reach double annual revenue

- **Quarterly Key Result:** Increase new product sales from $12m to $15m in Q1

- **Initiative:** Develop new sales enablement materials

Example 2

Annual Objective: Build a world class company culture to attract and retain the best employees

Annual Key Result: Reduce voluntary attrition of our employees from 25% to 10%

- **Quarterly Objective:** Improve our DEI commitment to better reflect the local community that we serve

- **Quarterly Key Result:** Improve the ratio of female applicants from 20% to 30%

- **Initiative:** We are committed to increase diversity through recruitment at universities in 3 new geographic regions

Example 3

Annual Objective: Elevate our brand presence in order to attract new prospects and create a fiercely loyal customer following

Annual Key Result: Achieve 5000 positive G2 reviews

- **Quarterly Objective:** Increase brand presence among major channels in order to attract new prospects

- **Quarterly Key Result:** Get 60K signups by launching new features

- **Initiative:** Develop new social media campaign

OKR Examples for **Marketing**

Example 1

Objective: Improve our brand presence through media channels to strengthen brand as a leader

- **Key Result 1:** Increase monthly website visitors by 10%

- **Key Result 2:** Grow social media followers from 50,000 to 75,000

- **Key Result 3:** Grow NPS score from 7 to 8

- **Initiative 1:** Develop a social media campaign

- **Initiative 2:** Develop a NPS survey

Example 2

Objective: Improve our marketing funnel to become the vendor of choice in the industry

- **Key Result 1:** Gain 5% of new customers from top competitors

- **Key Result 2:** Acquire 950 new MQLs for sales

- **Key Result 3:** Drive $10M in marketing generated pipeline

- **Initiative 1:** Update marketing materials

Example 3

Objective: Improve quality of blog content to establish ourselves as thought leader in the space

- **Key Result 1:** Gain 1,500 new blog subscribers

- **Key Result 2:** Increase content shares and mentions from 200 to 500

- **Key Result 3:** Increase avg. Time on page from 3:00 to 4:00

- **Initiative 1:** Develop a blog content strategy plan

OKR Examples for **Sales**

Example 1

Objective: Drive record-breaking growth in Q4 to increase financial stability

- **Key Result 1:** Increase weekly sales calls from by 25% per AE
- **Key Result 2:** Generate 3.5M in new mid-enterprise sales pipeline
- **Key Result 3:** Reduce closed/lost opportunities from 100 to 25
- **Initiative 1:** Create AE job description

Example 2

Objective: Diversify our sales channels in order to increase global revenue

- **Key Result 1:** Close $500k in new enterprise (ENT) deals1
- **Key Result 2:** Close $300k in new mid-market (mm) deals
- **Key Result 3:** Close $200 in new small and medium-sized business (SMB) deals

Example 3

Objective: Move to a territory-focused sales model in order to expand footprint

- **Key Result 1:** AE and SDR pairings create 10 outbound-generated opportunities in their territory
- **Key Result 2:** 100% of AEs complete their territory strategy presentation
- **Key Result 3:** Leads per territory are within 20% variance
- **Initiative 1:** Create new territory-focused sales enablement materials

OKR Examples for **Business Operations**

Example 1

Objective: Provide best-in-class revenue operations in order to support the GTM teams

Key Result 1: Increase pipeline velocity from $30,000 to $45,000

Key Result 2: Increase customer and user data unified between Marketo and Salesforce from 80% to 90%

Key Result 3: Decrease weekly hours of subscription management manual effort from 3 to 1

Example 2

Objective: Decrease cash burn QoQ in order to keep the company financially stable

Key Result 1: Consolidate internal work tools to decrease monthly spend from $12,000 to $8,000

Key Result 2: Increase employees working full time from home from 20% to 50% of workforce

Key Result 3: Decrease variable expenses from 8% to 6%

Initiative 1: Adjust company-wide audit process from quarterly to monthly

Example 3

Objective: Scale company operations efficiently and effectively in order to better serve our customers and employees

Key Result 1: Double supply chain capacity from 10,000 to 20,000 units

Key Result 2: Improve profit margin from 12% to 16%

Key Result 3: Increase employee NPS score to 80%

Initiative 1: Build capacity model report for each department

OKR Examples for **Customer Success**

Example 1

Objective: Scale and improve implementation and adoption process in order to accelerate time to value

- **Key Result 1:** 90% of all customers live in 4 weeks

- **Key Result 2:** 90% of customers reach their engagement threshold within two weeks of going live

- **Key Result 3:** Increase implementation CSAT from 60% to 70%

- **Initiative 1:** Build implementation infrastructure, reporting, and help documentation

- **Initiative 2:** Refine and document account handoff process with sales

Example 2

Objective: Drive customer expansion in order to increase profit margins

- **Key Result 1:** Increase customer expansion revenue from $1M to $2M

- **Key Result 2:** 100% of key accounts have a QBR this quarter

- **Key Result 3:** Increase referral pipeline from 20 to 50 opportunities

- **Initiative 1:** Complete success plan for 100% of key accounts

- **Initiative 2:** Finalize new QBR deck

Example 3

Objective: Optimize training process in order to increase product adoption

- **Key Result 1:** Increase key account MAU from 250,0000 to 350,000

- **Key Result 2:** Increase customer-facing knowledge base articles from 25 to 100

- **Key Result 3:** Double participation at success office hours from 500 to 1,000 people

- **Initiative:** Outline customer events calendar for next two quarters

OKR Examples for **Product & Engineering**

Example 1

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

- **Key Result 1:** Increase our NPS score from 40 to 50

- **Key Result 2:** Increase daily active users (DAUs) from 1,200 to 1,500

- **Key Result 3:** Achieve 1,000 downloads in the app store

- **Initiative 1:** Launch mobile version of product

- **Initiative 2:** Develop bug tracker for mobile complaints

Example 2

Objective: Launch 2.0 version of product in order to fix bugs, refine UI and drive user engagement

- **Key Result 1:** Reduce number of support tickets from 120/month to 30/month

- **Key Result 2:** Reduce number of steps in check out process from 9 to 6

- **Key Result 3:** Increase user time spent on site from 2:37 per session to 3:45 per session

- **Initiative 1:** Perform a click study

- **Initiative 2:** Compile bug report

Example 3

Objective: Ensure a reliable, scalable, and secure online platform to enable successful operations for internal teams and external customers

- **Key Result 1:** Increase database security and integrity risk mitigation metrics by 10%

- **Key Result 2:** Ensure all new hires take Security Awareness training and have deployed Mobile Device Management solutions within 30 days

- **Key Result 3:** Reduce average response time to customer security and compliance requests from 3 business days to 2

- **Initiative 1:** Obtain Service Organization Control 2 Type 1 certification

- **Initiative 2:** Enable sales team to secure deals

OKR Examples for **Human Resources**

Example 1

Objective: Increase employee retention in order to do our best work

- **Key Result 1:** Reduce voluntary attrition from 30% to 10%
- **Key Result 2:** Increase ratio of open positions filled internally vs externally from 30% to 50%
- **Key Result 3:** 100% of our employees have a standardized career plan approved by HR
- **Initiative 1:** Offer 5 new courses for internal career development
- **Initiative 2:** Revamp our exit interviews to better capture reasons for leaving

Example 2

Objective: Launch a comprehensive diversity and inclusion program in order to enhance our culture

- **Key Result 1:** 90% of our employees give a score of 4 + when asked "our company embraces DEI as part of our DNA"
- **Key Result 2:** Increase company diversity by 10 percentage points to reflect the local community we serve
- **Key Result 3:** Score 80% or above on our third-party DEI audit
- **Initiative 1:** Hire a Director of DEI
- **Initiative 2:** Research and select consulting partner to deliver 4 DEI events

Example 3

Objective: Revamp our employee hiring portal in order to attract the best talent

- **Key Result 1:** Reduce time to hire from 2 months to 1 month
- **Key Result 2:** 100% of job postings in Q1 pass the gender-neutral test before going live
- **Key Result 3:** Increase candidate satisfaction score from 30% to 50%
- **Initiative 1:** Replace current ATS with a modern vendor
- **Initiative 2:** Train all hiring managers on the new interview process

OKR Examples for **Finance**

Example 1

Objective: Focus on controlling cash burn in order to improve operational efficiency

- **Key Result 1:** Increase company runway from 4 months to 6 months

- **Key Result 2:** Reduce budget approval process from 30 days to 20 days

- **Key Result 3:** 95% of customers pay their invoices within 30 days

- **Initiative 1:** Audit past 4 quarterly budgets to improve future budgeting process

- **Initiative 2:** Create new employee reimbursement process and playbook

Example 2

Objective: Improve book-keeping and accounting operations in order to provide timely and error-free financial results

- **Key Result 1:** Reduce time to complete final month-end numbers from 15 days to 10 days

- **Key Result 2:** Ensure 100% of customer purchase data is synchronized between Salesforce and Stripe

- **Key Result 3:** Reduce average number of required changes to month-end financials after close from 4.1 to 1.5

- **Initiative 1:** Provide training to all customer support agents on Stripe

- **Initiative 2:** Create a standardized process for account executives to collect account payable in a more secure way

Example 3

Objective: Rebuild company's salary structure in order to promote equity and fairness across our workforce

- **Key Result 1:** Increase employee salary satisfaction rating specifically for compensation from 50% to 75%

- **Key Result 2:** 95% of employees are confirmed into their appropriate salary band

- **Key Result 3:** Reduce discrepancies of salary within same job level from 10% to 7%

- **Initiative 1:** Conduct industry salary research for latest comparison ranges

- **Initiative 2:** Present company-wide the new salary structure for transparency

OKR Examples for **Designers**

Example 1

Objective: Revamp website in order to increase customer engagement

- **Key Result 1:** Increase website traffic from 10k to 25k daily visitors
- **Key Result 2:** Reduce clicks between major pages from 5 to 2
- **Key Result 3:** Increase average time on home page from 52 seconds to 120 seconds
- **Initiative 1:** Add 5 product videos to website
- **Initiative 2:** A/B test landing page design layout

Example 2

Objective: Support all requests from marketing and sales

- **Key Result 1:** Increase infographic downloads by 25%
- **Key Result 2:** Update ad design to increase clicks on ads by 30%
- **Key Result 3:** Decrease average time to completion on new sales enablement asks from 4 weeks to 2 weeks
- **Initiative 1:** Complete 1 e-book for marketing
- **Initiative 2:** Complete 15 infographics

Example 3

Objective: Develop customer enablement materials in order to ease product adoption

- **Key Result 1:** Increase number of downloadable assets from 10 to 25
- **Key Result 2:** Rebrand 85% of material in resource library
- **Key Result 3:** Increase accessibility to 5 new business verticals
- **Initiative 1:** Develop rebranding hex guide for all new material
- **Initiative 2:** Compile list of existing material for rebranding