TRENDS REPORT 2023

The Global State of OKRs
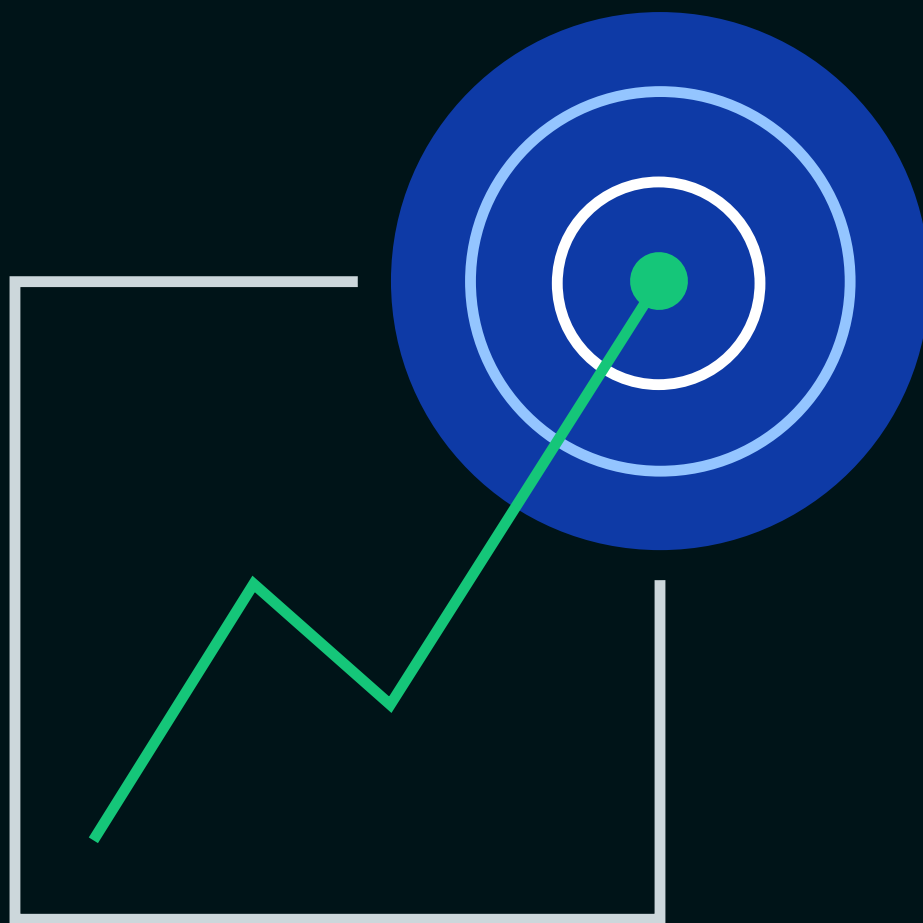
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Executive summary

The world's most successful and most valuable companies distinguish themselves by creating an inspiring vision with ambitious goals combined with a superior ability to execute that vision. Many of these successful companies, including Adobe, Deloitte, Meta, and Societe Generale, use the Objective and Key Results (OKRs) management framework to achieve their goals. OKRs are becoming a standard practice across various industries and companies of all sizes. Despite the increasing popularity, there is little information about what the best practices to operationalize OKRs are and the effect these practices can deliver. To answer these questions and many others, Quantive and OKRmentors conducted a first-of-its-kind survey of 466 corporate leaders to better understand the practices of strategy execution and the use of OKRs.

Here are the 8 key findings from responses across various countries, industries, and company sizes.

8 Key Findings

The OKR revolution is here, and it's global. From tiny startups to huge enterprises across borders and business sectors, the OKR method has taken root.

A more mature OKRs practice is strongly associated with enhanced strategic performance. Organizations with extensive knowledge of OKRs exhibit significantly superior outcomes across multiple strategic performance indicators, surpassing their counterparts by a substantial margin.

OKRs are still gaining traction within organizations. Less than half of respondents have used OKRs for over three years (48%).

The main motivations for implementing OKRs are improving alignment (61%), increasing performance (61%), and having better prioritization (49%).

Almost half of the organizations (46%) perceive themselves as performing below average in the execution of their OKRs. Of these respondents, many are either in the early stages of adopting OKRs or say they lack sufficient knowledge of OKRs.

Effectively executing strategy brings a diverse amount of challenges. The primary challenges organizations face regarding strategic performance include frequent changes in strategy, a need for greater alignment, disconnection between strategy and daily operations, and ineffective communication and understanding of the strategy.

OKRs do not follow a one-size-fits-all approach. There is considerable heterogeneity across responses, highlighting the diverse application of OKRs to meet the unique needs of various businesses.

OKR adoption does not differ significantly based on geography, organization size, or industry. However, the level of OKR knowledge within an organization has a significant impact, as overachievers employ OKRs differently than their peers.

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Best practices of overachievers

Overachievers are the respondents who report being very experienced with OKRs. As a result, they also report significantly better strategic performance compared with respondents who rate themselves and their organizations as being at the beginner, "okay," and "good" stages of adopting OKRs.

This is what overachievers do differently from their peers:

> They use quarterly cycles for setting OKRs, as opposed to biannual or annual cycles.
> They hold more frequent check-ins to discuss progress toward OKRs.
> They have larger teams and more roles involved with OKRs. These can include a designated OKR lead or OKR sponsor, an internal network of OKR champions, as well as external coaches or trainers that provide additional support.
> The implementation of OKRs begins at the highest levels, with a greater number of overachievers adopting OKRs at the company and business line levels.
> Overachievers seamlessly integrate their OKRs with existing company processes such as business and accounting cycles and performance evaluations.
> They use specialized solutions (not spreadsheets) for managing and tracking OKR progress.
> They design and implement a robust OKR training approach that leverages internal and external know-how.

Introduction

Quantive and OKRmentors partnered to survey managers and leaders involved with OKRs about their strategies and practices. The research generated more than 300,000 data points. The findings cover key challenges, motivations, and day-to-day practices when it comes to establishing and using OKRs. The report presents high-level survey findings and also zeros in on the practices that differentiate organizations with mature OKR strategies from their peers.

We've also included actionable insights from a global OKR strategy execution expert, founder of OKRmentors Elie Casamitjana.

This report aims to provide valuable insights for decision-makers, change, strategy, and transformation professionals aiming to improve their strategic performance and execution. It highlights the widespread use of OKRs and their applications as well as how the best performers leverage the method to make a difference.

Scope

Respondent typology

We surveyed 466 leaders that currently use OKRs across 13 countries, more than 20 industries, and companies of all sizes.

Headquarters location

The research has covered 13 target countries with the following distribution of respondents:

› 36% United States & Canada
› 20% United Kingdom & Ireland
› 9% Germany & Switzerland
› 14% France, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Finland
› 11% Australia
› 6% UAE

Industry

The panel comprises a relatively equal representation across industries from retail, information technology, and services, to manufacturing, telecommunication, pharma, and automotive, with a few highlights in representation from finance, banking, and software and technology.

Involvement with OKRs

When asked about their involvement with OKRs, most of respondents have indicated having several roles:
Besides their leadership or day to day responsibilities, 90% of respondents have a direct role in OKR implementation:

› 19% are executive sponsors of OKRs
› 18% own the OKR process
› 53% are internal OKR coaches or champions

The remaining respondents are mostly leaders who contribute and manage OKRs

Seniority level

Senior Manager or Manager	30%
Senior Director or Director	24%
Vice President (Executive, Senior, Associate)	17%
Executive or C-level	16%
General Manager or Line of Business Head	13%

Company size

- 1- 49
- 50-99
- 100 - 249
- 250 - 499
- 500 - 999
- 1,000 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 9,999
- More than 10,000

4%, 11%, 12%, 14%, 19%, 10%, 28%

Years of experience with OKRs

- 0-1 year — 9%
- 1-3 years — 39%
- More than 3 years — 49%
- Unsure — 3%
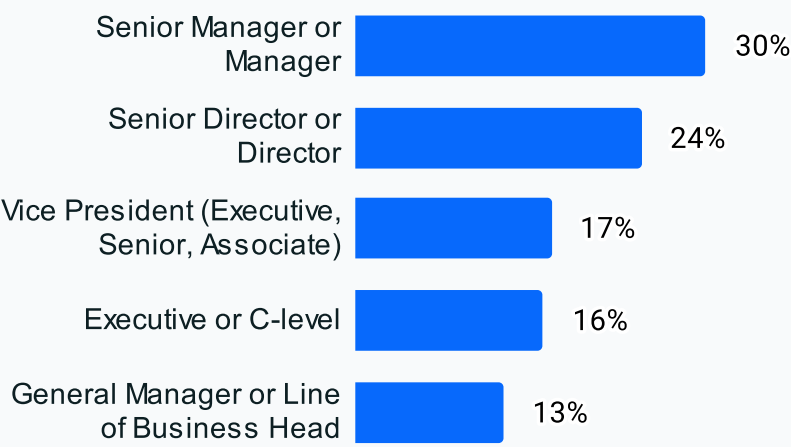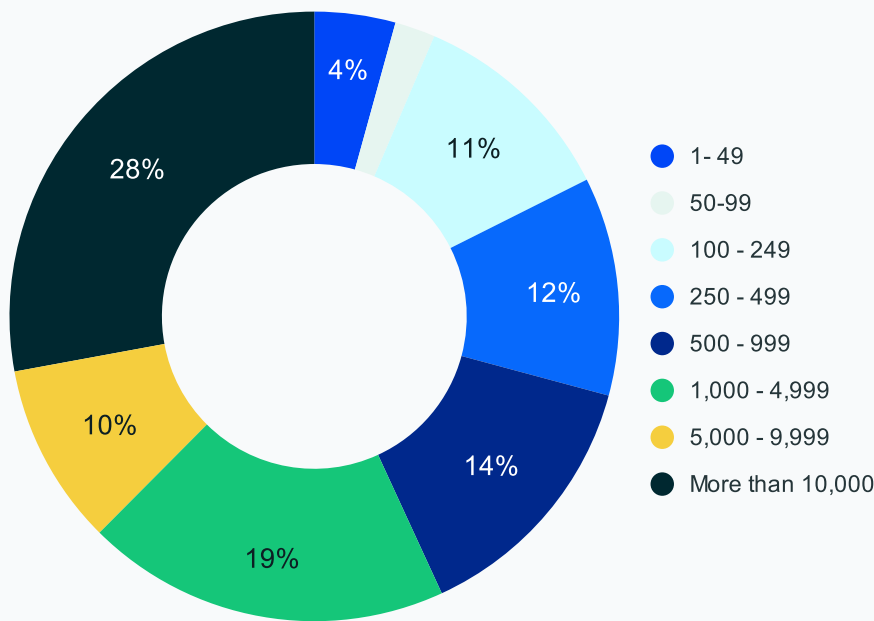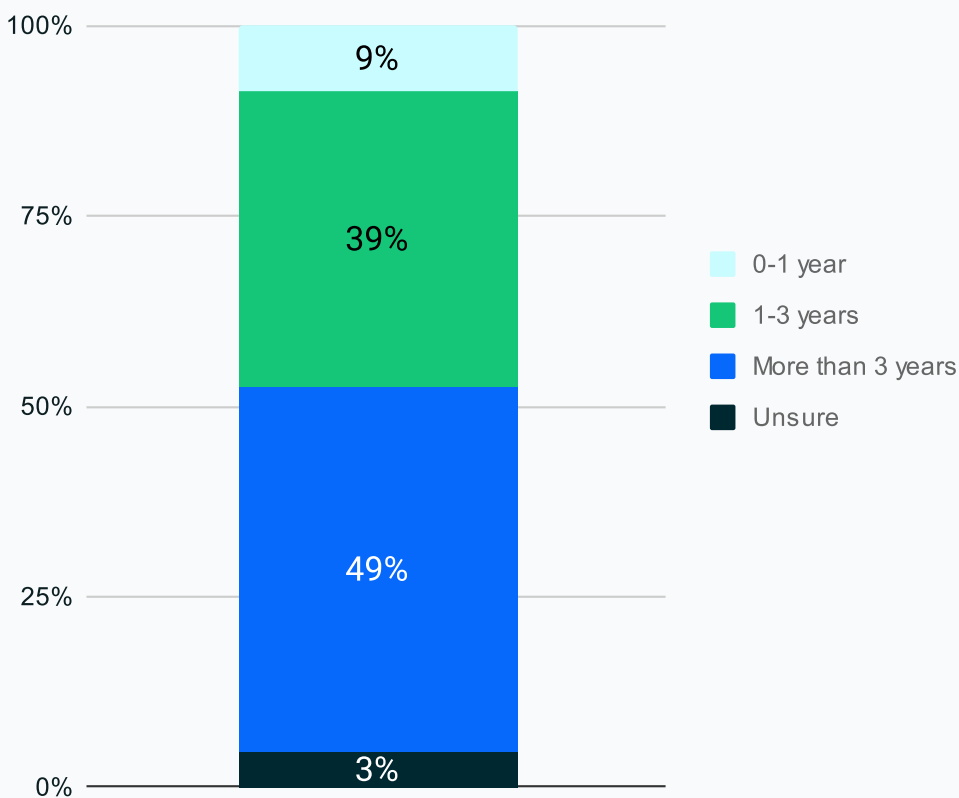
Why OKRs?

Key challenges

Key findings

We asked respondents to list their top three challenges when it comes to executing their overall business strategy.

> "Our strategy changes too often" is the No. 1 challenge for more than 25% of respondents.

> "There isn't full alignment or full support for the strategy" is one of the top three challenges for two-thirds (66%) of respondents.

> "Our strategy is disconnected from day-to-day operations" is one of the three biggest challenges for more than 60% of respondents.

Poor communication about strategy and lack of transparency are also top challenges for more than 50% of respondents.
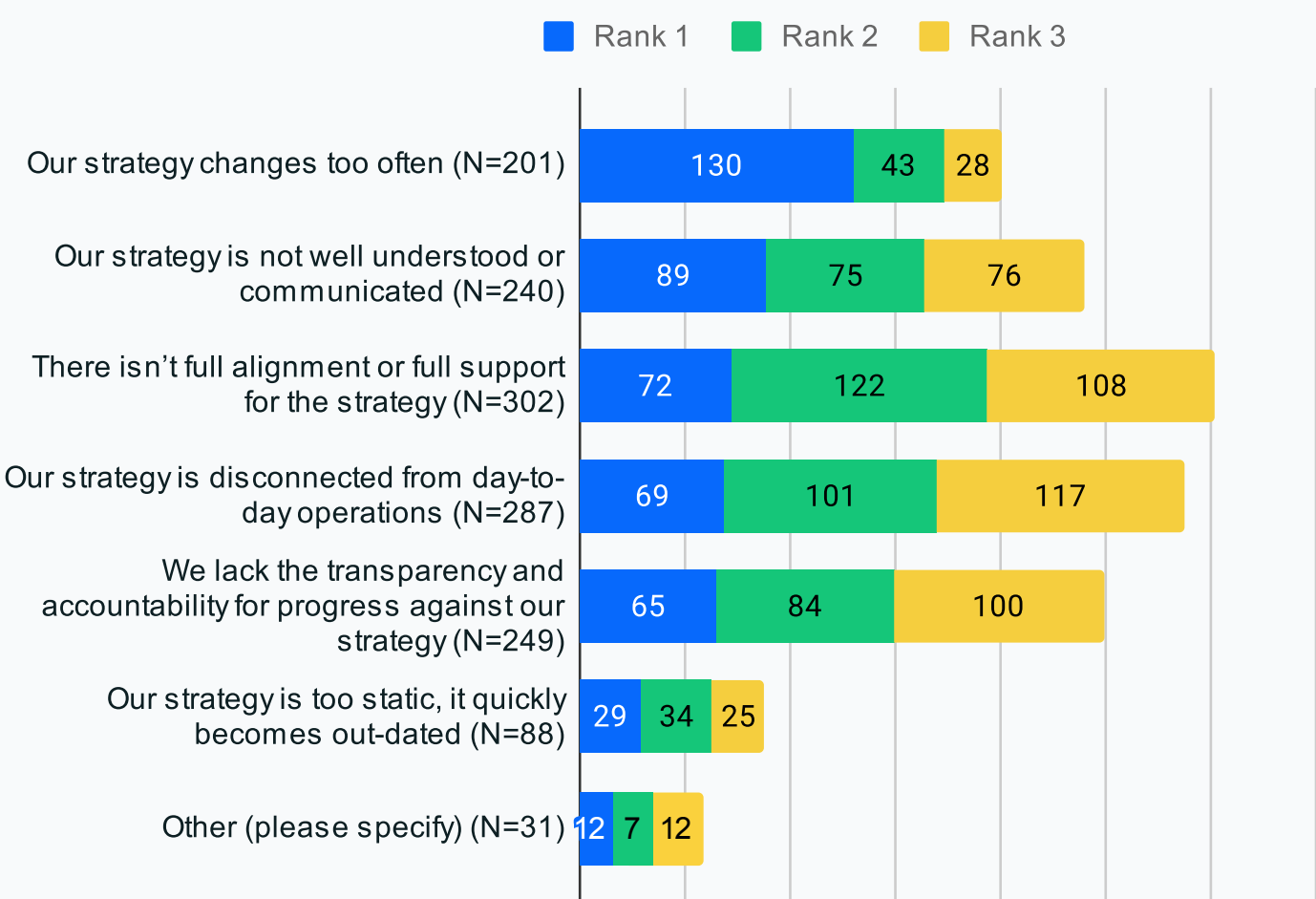
Biggest challenges when executing strategy

Legend: ■ Rank 1 ■ Rank 2 ■ Rank 3

Challenge	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Our strategy changes too often (N=201)	130	43	28
Our strategy is not well understood or communicated (N=240)	89	75	76
There isn't full alignment or full support for the strategy (N=302)	72	122	108
Our strategy is disconnected from day-to-day operations (N=287)	69	101	117
We lack the transparency and accountability for progress against our strategy (N=249)	65	84	100
Our strategy is too static, it quickly becomes out-dated (N=88)	29	34	25
Other (please specify) (N=31)	12	7	12

Trends

These trends are consistent across all countries, organization sizes, and industries — but variations arise based on companies' experience using OKRs.

Companies that are less knowledgeable about OKRs struggle the most with poor strategy communication and understanding. Conversely, this is the least common challenge for companies with the most OKR experience.

What the expert says

These statistics illustrate the diverse range of challenges companies encounter when bridging the divide between strategy and execution, specifically in terms of focus, alignment, and fostering engagement with the strategy in day-to-day operations. Companies must define and align on key challenges during the process of implementing OKRs in order to establish a strong foundation for success.

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors
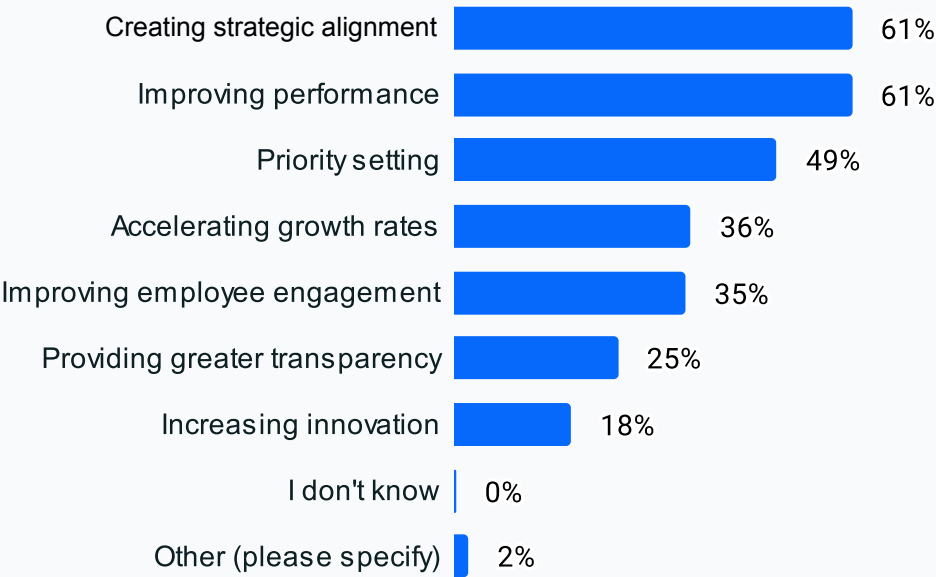
Motivations for using OKRs

Key findings

We asked respondents about their primary motivations for using goal-setting within their organizations.

Most respondents had multiple motivations — these are the top three:

> Improve alignment (61%)
> Improve performance (61%)
> Priority setting (49%)

Primary motivations for goal-setting

Motivation	Percentage
Creating strategic alignment	61%
Improving performance	61%
Priority setting	49%
Accelerating growth rates	36%
Improving employee engagement	35%
Providing greater transparency	25%
Increasing innovation	18%
I don't know	0%
Other (please specify)	2%

Trends

While goal-setting trends remain relatively consistent across the respondent typology, subtle variations emerge between countries.

> Improving performance is a higher priority for companies headquartered in the UK, Germany, Switzerland, and Australia.

> Creating alignment with vision and strategy is a stronger motivator for companies headquartered in other European countries, the US, and Canada.

> The top motivator for the UAE is, uniquely, accelerating growth rates.

What the expert says

These figures confirm the critical challenges reported by companies across the globe. Industries are evolving at lightning speed, forcing organizations to hasten the pace of innovation. Therefore, it's strategic to set priorities on an ongoing basis to improve performance and drive growth.

Another critical challenge is employee engagement, which is a goal-setting motivation for 35% of respondents. Communicating high-level business goals throughout the organization enables leaders to ensure all employees are aligned and working to achieve the company's mission.

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors

Strategic Performance and OKRs
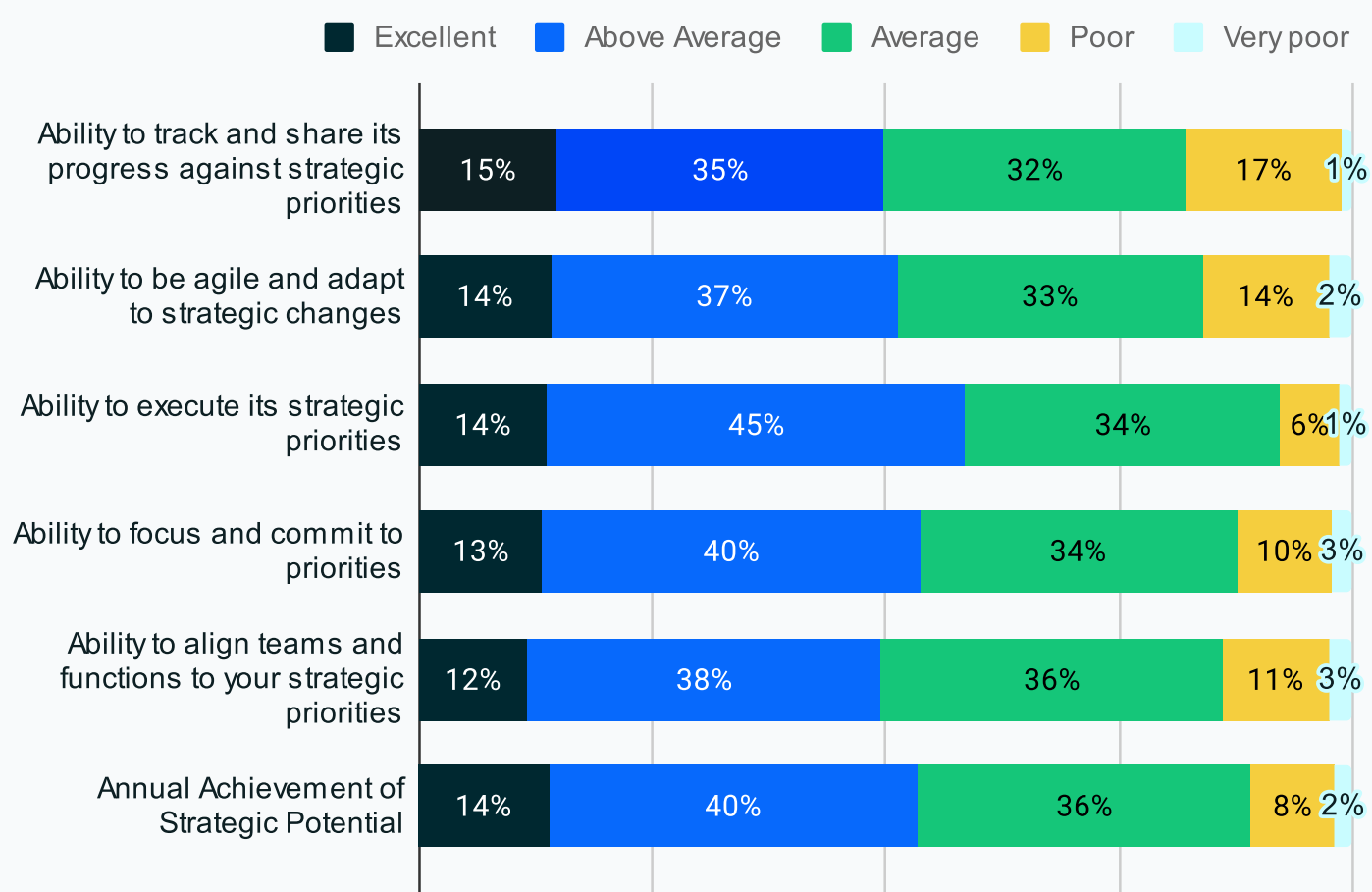
Strategic performance indicators

Key findings

We asked respondents how they rate their company when it comes to five strategic performance levers.

> More than 50% of leaders using OKRs believe they are at least "above average" when it comes to their ability to enact various strategic performance indicators. Of these, 14% believe they are "excellent."

This trend is similar across the respondent typology but shows significant differences depending on the years of experience with OKRs.

Overall performance rating

Legend: ■ Excellent   ■ Above Average   ■ Average   ■ Poor   ■ Very poor

Category	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Poor	Very poor
Ability to track and share its progress against strategic priorities	15%	35%	32%	17%	1%
Ability to be agile and adapt to strategic changes	14%	37%	33%	14%	2%
Ability to execute its strategic priorities	14%	45%	34%	6%	1%
Ability to focus and commit to priorities	13%	40%	34%	10%	3%
Ability to align teams and functions to your strategic priorities	12%	38%	36%	11%	3%
Annual Achievement of Strategic Potential	14%	40%	36%	8%	2%

Trends

There is a direct correlation between years of experience with OKRs and strategic performance indicators. Leaders with more experience using OKRs tend to evaluate themselves more positively across six strategic performance indicators.

Execution

17% of leaders with 3+ years of experience with OKRs evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to execute. **That's 5.7 times more than beginners.**

Track & Share Progress

57% of leaders with 3+ years of experience with OKRs evaluate themselves as excellent or above average in their ability to track and share progress. **That's 2.5 times more than beginners.**

Focus

18% of leaders with 3+ years of experience with OKRs evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to focus. **That's 6 times more than beginners.**

Agility & Adaptation

17% of leaders with 3+ years of experience with OKRs evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to be agile and adapt. **That's 3.4 times more than beginners.**

Alignment

54% of leaders with 3+ years of experience with OKRs evaluate themselves as excellent or above average in their ability to align teams. **That's 1.9 times more than beginners.**

Annual achievement

57% of leaders with 3+ years of experience with OKRs evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to achieve their strategic potential. **That's 1.2 times more than beginners.**

What the expert says

Organizations with significant experience using OKRs demonstrate a higher level of comfort across all areas that influence their strategic performance, surpassing their counterparts by significant margins. This finding confirms OKRs drive meaningful impact and return on investment for companies looking to improve their strategic execution. It also indicates that while companies experience immediate gains after implementing OKRs, the benefits do not diminish several years later. Changes don't happen overnight, but continuity and discipline pay off.
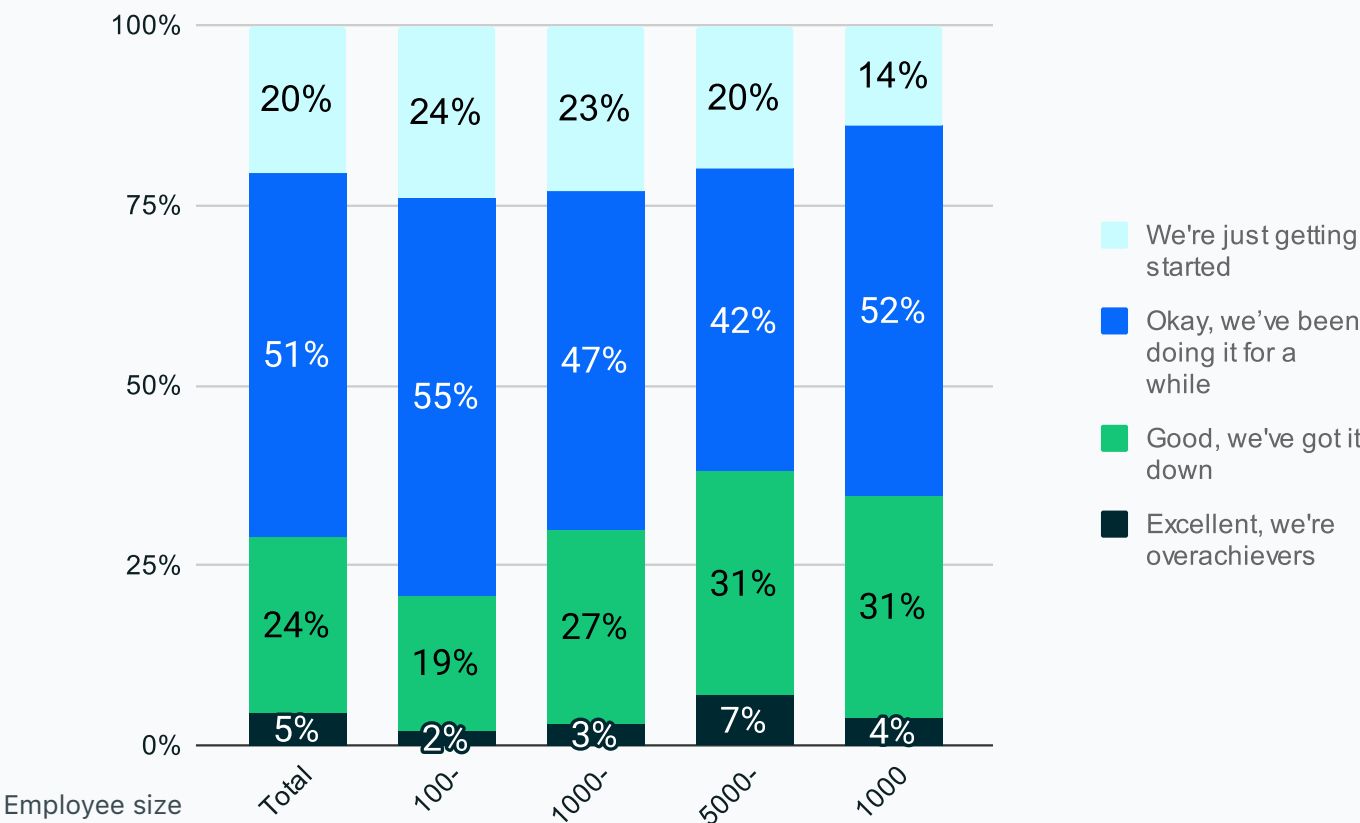
**Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors**

The OKR Overachievers

Key findings

One of the key questions we asked our respondents is how comfortable they feel using the OKR method. Their answers are heterogenous but very telling.

> Almost a quarter (24%) believe their organization is "good" at using OKRs, while only 5% selected the answer option "Excellent, we're overachievers."

> A fifth (20%) of organizations are just getting started with OKRs and just over half (51%) consider themselves "okay" at OKRs. In total, 71% of respondents — the vast majority — believe their organization has yet to master OKRs.

This trend is similar across the respondent typology with the exception of company size — the larger an organization is, the more comfortable it is with OKRs.

How knowledgeable is your organization when it comes to OKRs?

Employee size	Total	100-	1000-	5000-	1000
We're just getting started	20%	24%	23%	20%	14%
Okay, we've been doing it for a while	51%	55%	47%	42%	52%
Good, we've got it down	24%	19%	27%	31%	31%
Excellent, we're overachievers	5%	2%	3%	7%	4%

Trends

There is a clear, direct correlation between respondents' level of comfort with OKRs and their company's strategic performance indicators. Those who rated themselves OKR "overachievers" perform better across all metrics.

Execution

33% of overachievers evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to execute —10 times higher than beginners.

Track & share progress

43% of overachievers evaluate themselves as excellent or above average in their ability to track and share progress — seven times higher than beginners.

Focus

48% of overachievers evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to focus —16 times higher than beginners.

Agility & adaptation

62% of overachievers evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to be agile and adapt — 62 times higher than beginners.

Alignment

43% of overachievers evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to align teams — 14 times higher than beginners.

Annual achievement

33% of overachievers evaluate themselves as excellent in their ability to achieve their strategic potential — 12 times higher than beginners.

What the expert says

Becoming proficient in OKRs requires time and effort. But the leaders and organizations who prioritize mastering OKRs experience significant improvements in all areas of strategic execution — by impressive margins.

So, the question is: What does it take to become an OKR overachiever?

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors

For OKR overachievers and beginners, the differences in strategic performance indicators are vast. From here on, we'll highlight insights into overachievers' top tactics so your organization can benefit from their best practices.

OKRs in
Day-to-Day Practice
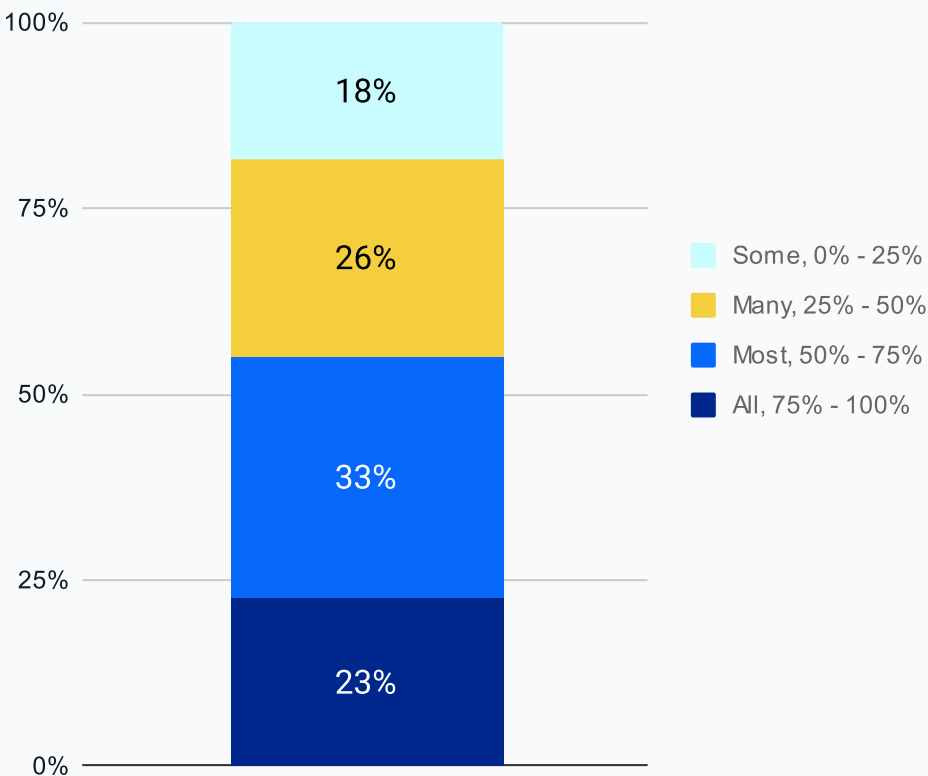
Who contributes to OKRs?

Key findings

We asked respondents how many people in their organization are involved with OKRs.

> **55% of organizations require 50-100% of their employees to own or contribute to at least one OKR.**

This trend is consistent across all countries and company sizes. The one exception? The organization's level of experience with OKRs.

Proportion of people who own or contribute to at least one OKR

Legend:
- Some, 0% - 25%
- Many, 25% - 50%
- Most, 50% - 75%
- All, 75% - 100%

Chart values (top to bottom): 18%, 26%, 33%, 23%

What do overachievers do?

The proportion of OKR contributors within a company is correlated with an organization's maturity level with OKRs. Two-thirds (67%) of overachievers assign OKRs to 75% or more of the organization, compared to just 3% of beginners.

What the expert says

These statistics validate the benefits of gradual OKR rollouts. The level of involvement of individual contributors is directly linked to their experience and familiarity with OKRs, which aligns with the recommended approach of implementing the method incrementally across teams, particularly in large organizations.

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Expert advice

Explore a step-by-step approach to implementing OKRs. The first crucial step is to ensure the active participation and proficiency of your company's leaders.

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors

Aligning OKRs with the right levels of the organization

Key findings

We asked respondents how they align OKRs to different levels of their organizations.

The majority of organizations set OKRs at multiple levels.

> 65% align OKRs with lines of business or division-level objectives.
> 59% set OKRs at the company-wide level.
> 53% assign OKRs at the functional teams level.

A minority of organizations set OKRs for cross-functional teams or individuals.

These trends are consistent across countries, organization sizes, and industries.

At what levels are OKRs set?

Company	59%
Lines of business or divisions	65%
Functional teams	53%
Cross-functional teams	33%
Individuals	26%
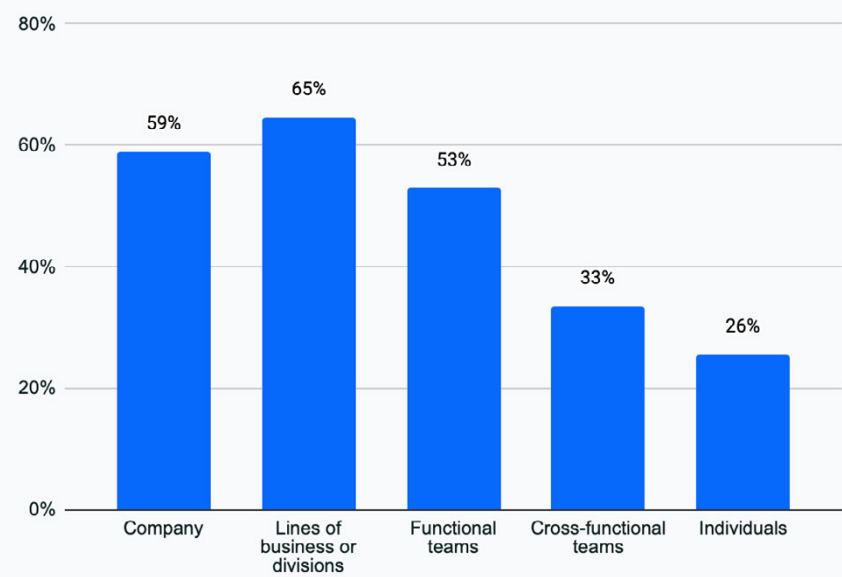
What do overachievers do?

Overachievers tend to involve more levels with OKRs. In particular, they more frequently set OKRs at the company level and cross-functional teams level than beginner counterparts.

What the expert says

Setting OKRs at the right levels is an important decision for leaders. Assigning OKRs to more levels of the organization has the benefit of involving more people with a company's strategic priorities in a qualitative and quantifiable way. But leaders have to proceed cautiously — involving more stakeholders in OKRs requires more work to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment throughout the organization. That's especially true when it becomes necessary to update or evolve OKRs.

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Expert advice

Company-level and team-level OKRs have the biggest impact, so this is where leaders in the early phases of OKR adoption should focus their attention. Organization-wide OKRs are important for setting overall business priorities, while team-level OKRs help connect day-to-day tasks to high-level strategy. Start with these two levels and progressively add more based on your company's motivation and need for alignment, focus, and engagement.

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors

Setting the right time frame for OKRs

Key findings

We asked respondents about their organization's cadence for setting, executing, and evaluating OKRs.
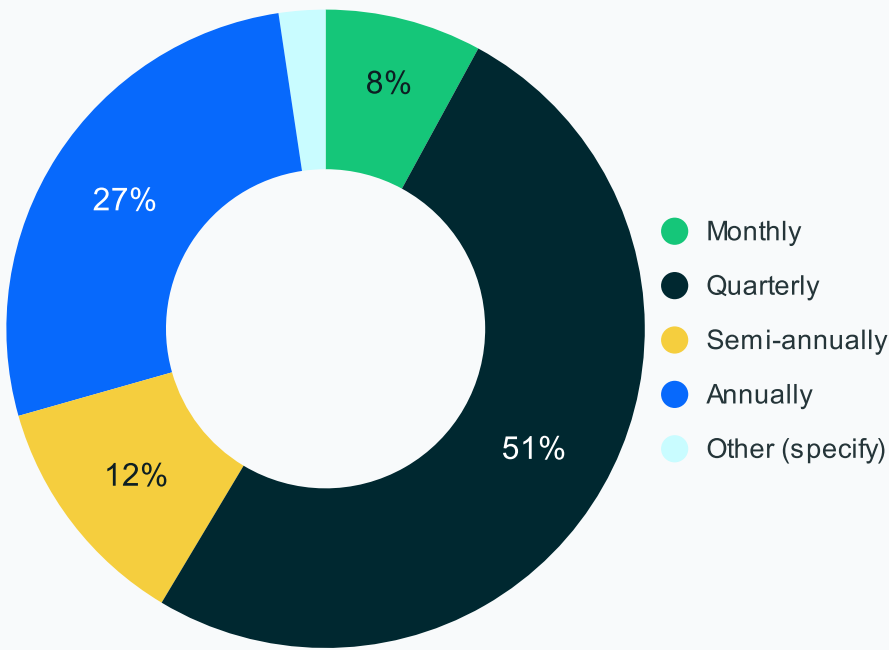
Over half (51%) of organizations have a quarterly OKR cycle, while a quarter (27%) establish OKRs on an annual basis.

This trend remains consistent across countries and industries, but differs among larger and smaller organizations.

Smaller organizations have more frequent OKR cycles. Over half of companies with less than 1,000 employees, 56% set OKRs on a quarterly cycle compared with 20% that use an annual cycle.

For companies with more than 1,000 employees, less than half (41–49%) use a quarterly cycle, while approximately a third (32–39%) use annual cycles.

Duration of OKR cycles

- 8% — Monthly
- 51% — Quarterly
- 12% — Semi-annually
- 27% — Annually
- Other (specify)

Legend:
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-annually
- Annually
- Other (specify)

What do overachievers do?

71%

(a significant majority) of overachievers set quarterly cycles for their ORKs. That's **1.5 times higher than** their beginner counterparts.

What the expert says

The timeline you use to measure OKRs plays a vital role in your success. Quarterly OKR cycles provide the opportunity to adjust your strategic execution four times a year. This approach strikes a favorable balance compared to shorter monthly cycles, which can impose time constraints, and longer annual cycles that may feel disconnected from day-to-day realities.

Some organizations leverage multiple OKR cycles simultaneously to harness the advantages of each. For instance, you can adopt an annual cycle for high-level company-wide or business-line objectives, while using quarterly cycles for more tactical OKRs at the team level.

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Expert advice

I recommend using a hybrid approach that aligns objectives to an annual cycle and key results to a quarterly timetable, ensuring you are executing against long-term goals while making short-term progress. As leaders and teams become more adept at using OKRs, you can layer on additional OKR cycles at other business levels to ensure focus, direction, alignment, and engagement.

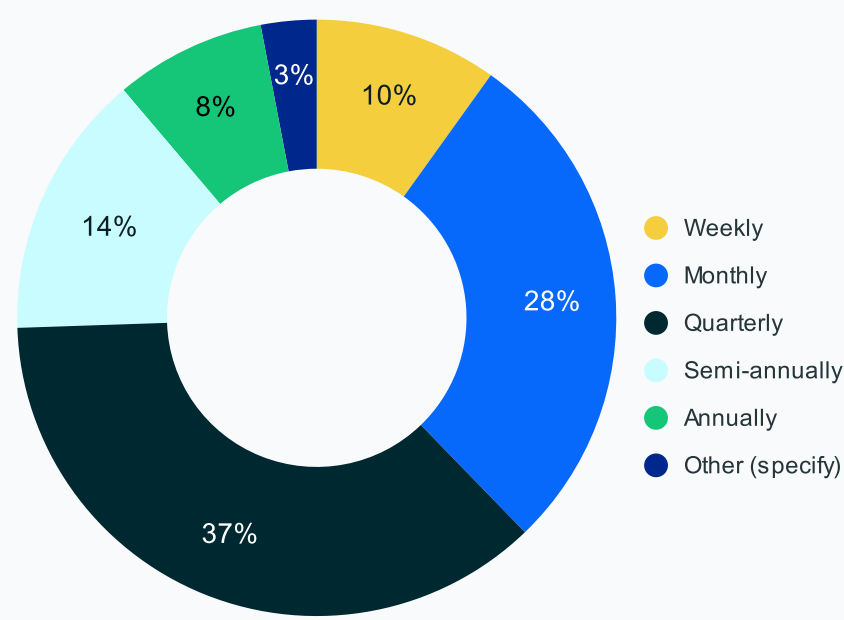**Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors**

Tracking OKR progress

Key findings

We asked respondents how often they review their OKRs in teams to evaluate progress.

> 37% review OKRs quarterly
> 28% review OKRs monthly
> 10% review OKRs weekly

This trend is similar across industries and company sizes, but varies based on geography. Countries in the "Rest of Europe" segment are more likely to review OKRs monthly (41%) than quarterly (33%).

Frequency of OKR progress check-ins

Legend:
- Weekly — 10%
- Monthly — 28%
- Quarterly — 37%
- Semi-annually — 14%
- Annually — 8%
- Other (specify) — 3%

What do overachievers do?

Overachievers evaluate their OKR progress frequently.

57%

of overachievers review their OKRs monthly or weekly, with 33% opting for weekly check-ins. That's 4.7 times higher than beginners.

What the expert says

The OKR check-in is a vital yet often overlooked necessity for OKR success. Frequent touch-bases help teams keep OKRs top-of-mind in their day-to-day operations. These check-ins provide a dedicated space for dialogue on progress, allowing for meaningful discussions. Quarterly check-ins are simply not enough. By conducting check-ins on a weekly basis, you unlock 52 opportunities to align, challenge, learn, and elevate your strategic execution game. This regular engagement enhances team collaboration and fosters continuous improvement in achieving objectives.

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Expert advice

Hold OKR check-ins as frequently as possible — weekly, if you can. A good way to start is by adding OKR status updates to existing team meetings. Ten to 15 minutes is all it takes to effectively communicate key updates.

Elie Casamitjana, OKRmentors

Linking OKRs to individual performance

Key findings

We asked respondents whether their organizations evaluate employees' performance based on OKR progress.

> 56% use OKRs to help inform employee performance evaluations.

> 17% use OKRs as the primary factor in evaluating performance.

> 27% do not link OKRs to performance at all.

This trend is similar across industries and company sizes but differs based on geography. Most organizations headquartered in the "DE & CH" (43%) and "Rest of Europe" (52%) segments do not link OKRs to employee performance, while 31% of organizations in the UAE use OKRs as a primary basis for evaluating individuals' job performance.

How do companies align OKRs to employee performance?

	Total	100-999 employees	1000-4999 employees	5000-9999 employees	10000+ employees
We use OKRs as a primary basis for evaluating employee performance	17%	17%	16%	16%	23%
We use OKRs to help inform employee performance evaluations	56%	55%	63%	64%	57%
We do not link OKRs to employee performance evaluations	27%	28%	21%	20%	20%
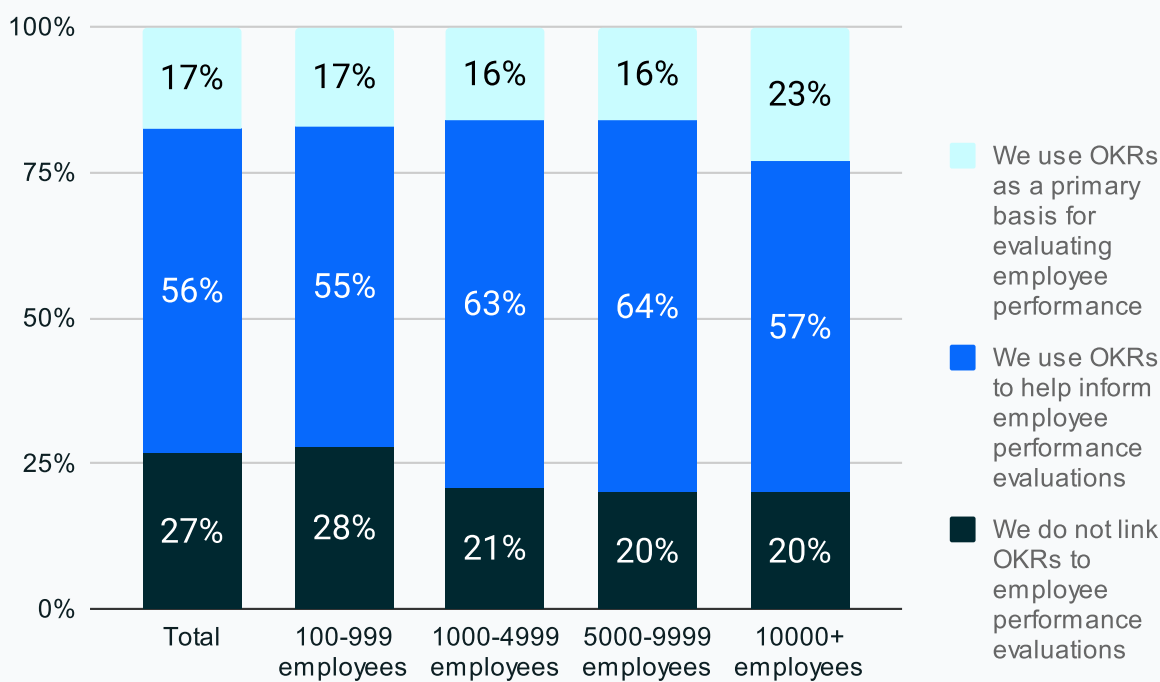
What do overachievers do?

76%

of overachievers link OKRs to employee performance evaluations in a direct or indirect manner. That's 1.4 times more than beginners. Of these, a third (33%) make OKRs a primary factor in performance evaluations.

What the expert says

OKRs serve as a valuable tool for fostering alignment within teams and organizations, ensuring clarity on which goals to pursue and providing a means to measure and track success. Furthermore, OKRs encourage teams to embrace ambition and strive for outcomes that may initially seem unattainable. Generally speaking, achieving 70% of your OKRs should be considered a satisfactory outcome.

However, when OKRs are linked to performance evaluations and financial incentives, employees become more cautious when setting metrics, resulting in less ambitious targets and ultimately, less ambitious outcomes.

OKRs are most effective when implemented at the team level, as they foster collaboration, alignment, and shared ambition among team members. By utilizing OKRs at this level, organizations can cultivate a culture of collective effort.

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Expert advice

Establishing a loose link between OKRs and individual performance evaluation can serve as a source of motivation for individuals. However, quantifying this link may inadvertently lead to a reduction in team ambition. To address this, you can evaluate the quality of an individual's contribution to the process and delivery of OKRs. This approach allows for meaningful discussions between team members and managers regarding the individual's involvement in strategic execution and their willingness to go the extra mile to achieve goals. By shifting the focus to qualitative assessments, you can create space to acknowledge individual efforts within the broader context of OKR achievement.

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors

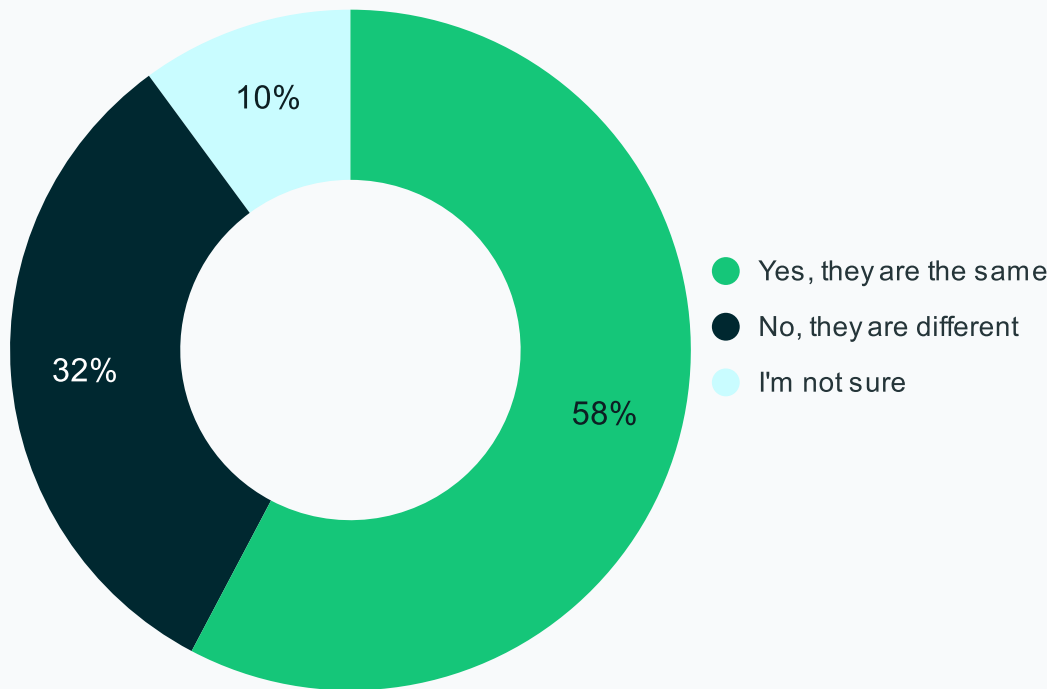# Linking OKRs to business and accounting cycles

Key findings

We asked respondents whether they align their OKR cycle with their business and accounting cycles.

> **58% say their OKR cycle coincides with business and accounting cycles.**

This trend is similar across geographies, industries, and company size.

Does your OKR cycle coincide with your business and accounting cycles?

10%

32%

58%

- Yes, they are the same
- No, they are different
- I'm not sure

What do overachievers do?

81%

of overachievers align their OKR cycles with their business and accounting cycles. That's 1.8 times higher than their beginner counterparts.

What the expert says

OKRs serve as a bridge between strategic objectives and day-to-day activities, which makes integration with other organizational processes crucial.

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Expert advice

To make OKRs work smoothly, integrate OKR cycles and practices as closely as possible with your organization's existing processes, tools, and operations. This applies especially when performance, planning, and priority management are involved.

Elie Casamitjana, OKRmentors

Making
OKRs work
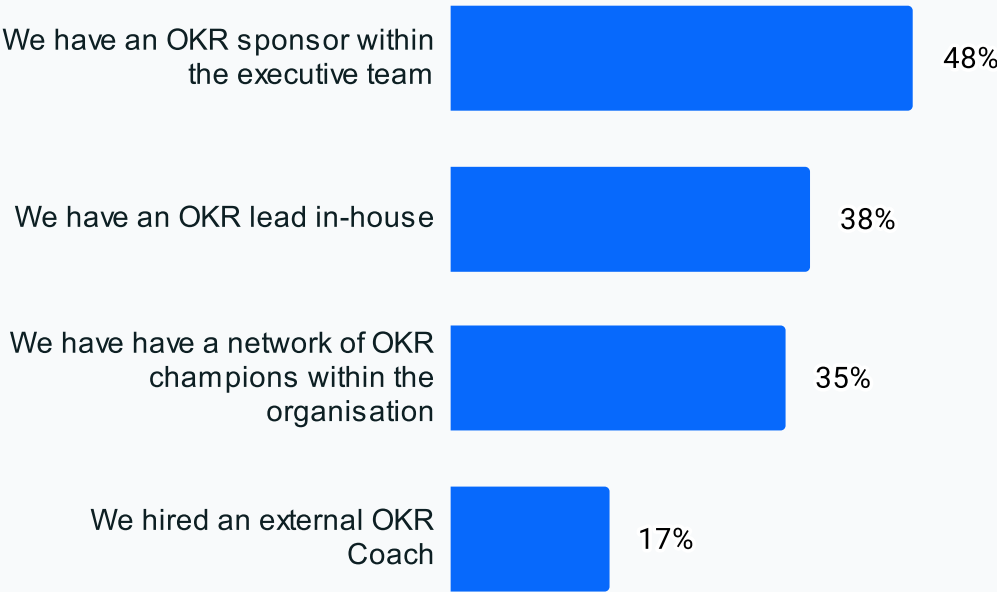
Who is responsible for OKRs?

Key findings

We asked respondents who is responsible for the success of OKR implementation in their organization.

The majority of organizations use a mix of roles:

> Nearly half (48%) assign an OKR sponsor within the executive team
> 38% have a dedicated OKR lead on staff
> 25% establish a network of OKR champions from across the organization
> 17% tap an external OKR coach

This trend does not vary across geographies, industries, and company size.

Who is responsible for the success of OKRs?

We have an OKR sponsor within the executive team — 48%

We have an OKR lead in-house — 38%

We have have a network of OKR champions within the organisation — 35%

We hired an external OKR Coach — 17%

What do overachievers do?

Overachievers tend to have larger teams involved with making OKRs work: OKR Lead (44%), Sponsor (44%) and Champion Network (46%). They involve champions and coaches 40% more often than their beginners counterparts.

What the expert says

The beauty of the OKR framework lies in its simplicity. However, implementing OKRs still represents a significant shift for organizations. Adopting OKRs transforms the way people prioritize, align, define success, and track progress — and ultimately drives cultural change within the organization.

One common mistake that organizations make when starting with OKRs is assuming that simply having team dashboards with OKR metrics will suffice, and the rest will fall into place naturally.

While it is important not to overcomplicate OKRs, it is crucial to recognize the profound impact they can have on an organization. This understanding highlights the need for appropriate resources to drive and support this change effectively.

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Expert advice

To ensure a successful OKR program, two key roles are needed. The first is the OKR lead, who is responsible for establishing the OKR process and works cross-functionally across the organization and with the executive team to ensure a streamlined rollout. The second role is the OKR sponsor, an executive tasked with elevating OKR outcomes within the executive team and helping the OKR lead to overcome challenges.

You can also strengthen OKR adoption by involving managers and individual team members in the process through a network of OKR champions. An experienced OKR coach can also be valuable in helping you to implement OKRs effectively, avoid mistakes, and find the best approach for your organization and teams.

Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors

Encouraging OKR adoption

Key findings

We asked respondents how their organization encourages the use and adoption of OKRs.

The majority of organizations use a mix of tactics to encourage use and adoption:

> 48% link OKRs to performance evaluations

> 47% hold leads accountable for adhering to OKR practices

> 41% make OKRs a mandatory practice

> 41% train teams and individuals on OKR best practices

This trend is similar across geographies, industries, and company size.

How is the use and adoption of OKRs encouraged?

We link OKRs to employee performance evaluations	48%
We hold manager and team leads accountable for the OKR process	47%
OKRs are a mandatory practice	41%
We train the teams and individuals on the practice of OKRs	41%
OKRs are shared and reviewed in large team and all-company sessions	32%
We use OKR champions and coaches to drive adoptoin	28%

What do overachievers do?

62%

of OKR overachievers see success by simply making OKRs a mandatory practice. But they don't stop there. Even more than the rest of the sample, overachievers use a mix of all the available tactics: linking OKRs to performance evaluations (52%), deploying OKR champions and coaches (48%), holding managers accountable (48%), and training teams and individuals (43%).

What the expert says

OKR adoption relies on teams and individuals being willing to participate. It is important to explain what OKRs are and why they are beneficial. Mid-level managers play a crucial role in linking leadership and teams, while a network of champions and OKR coaches can support adoption across business areas and departments. Making OKRs a general practice within the organization helps establish them as the shared language for strategic priorities, planning, and performance.

☆

Expert advice

It is crucial to explain to your teams why and how OKRs will benefit them in their day-to-day work, such as by providing more focus, alignment, and clearer direction. But it's equally important to celebrate wins. You can make OKRs engaging by creating a celebratory atmosphere and promoting them through internal marketing campaigns.

**Elie Casamitjana,
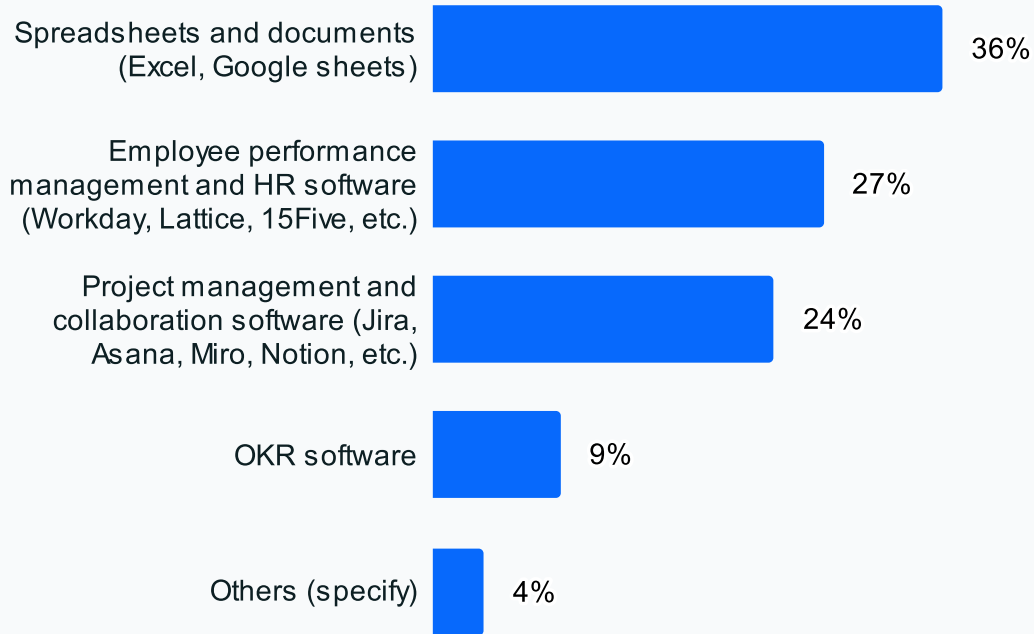OKRmentors**

Managing and tracking of OKRs

Key findings

We asked respondents how they manage and track OKRs.

> 36% use spreadsheets
> 27% use employee performance and HR software
> 24% use project management and collaboration software
> 9% use dedicated OKR software

This trend is consistent across geographies and industries but differs based on organization size.

Larger organizations, with 10,000 or more employees, are twice as likely to use OKR software as organizations with fewer than 1,000 employees. The same goes for organizations that hold weekly OKR check-ins — these companies are 2.7 times more likely than the average company to use OKR software.

Solutions used to manage and track OKRs

Category	Percentage
Spreadsheets and documents (Excel, Google sheets)	36%
Employee performance management and HR software (Workday, Lattice, 15Five, etc.)	27%
Project management and collaboration software (Jira, Asana, Miro, Notion, etc.)	24%
OKR software	9%
Others (specify)	4%

What do overachievers do?

High performers have diverse approaches to managing and tracking OKRs, which is largely consistent with the rest of the sample. The primary distinction is their higher usage of OKR software compared to other groups.

What the expert says

The easier it is for teams to engage with OKRs, the better. Integration with existing tools is important for a smooth adoption. Simple solutions work well for small teams, while specialized solutions enhance alignment and visibility as the companies grow.

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Expert advice

In the beginning, start simple and integrate OKRs with your existing stack of solutions. But don't underestimate the importance of easy reporting and tracking for teams and leaders. A streamlined solution can be a game-changer for mid-size and large organizations.
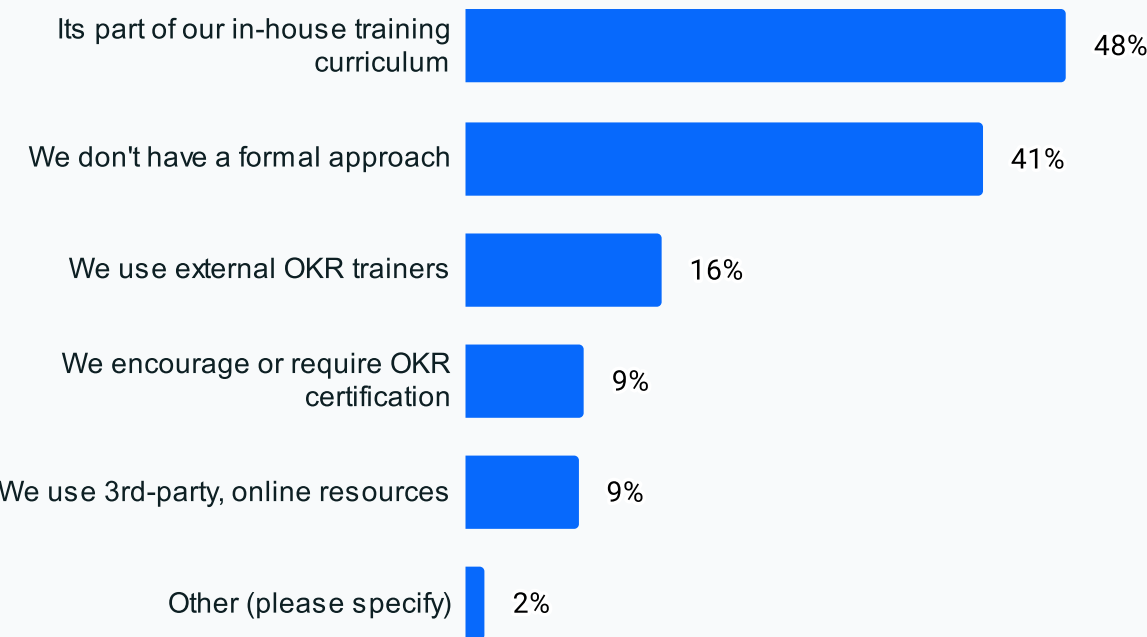
**Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors**

OKRs and training

Key findings

We asked respondents how they provide the training necessary to use OKRs successfully.

> 48% provide OKR training as part of their in-house training curriculum

> 41% don't have a formal approach to training

> 16% use external OKR trainers

This trend is similar across industries and company size, but there is one geographic exception: 40% of respondents in Germany and Switzerland engage external OKR trainers, a far higher percentage than any other group.

OKR training methods

Its part of our in-house training curriculum — 48%

We don't have a formal approach — 41%

We use external OKR trainers — 16%

We encourage or require OKR certification — 9%

We use 3rd-party, online resources — 9%

Other (please specify) — 2%

*This was a question where participants could choose multiple answers

What do overachievers do?

Organizations performing below the "excellent" level are twice as likely to not have a formal training program in place for OKRs. Conversely, 68% of overachievers have internal OKR training curriculums in place, compared with 46% of other organizations. Moreover, 27% encourage or require employees to become OKR certified — three times higher than other respondents.

What the expert says

Successful implementation of OKRs relies on two key factors: adoption and execution. Training plays a crucial role in achieving these objectives.

A best practice is to design a tailored training program for different audiences. This can be achieved through on-the-job learning or, ideally, through dedicated training and OKR coaching certification. Managers and OKR champions should receive training focused on crafting effective OKRs and facilitating OKR rituals. Meanwhile, employees should receive hands-on training that helps them understand the purpose and benefits of OKRs, as well as their role in the process.

While practice is ultimately the best teacher, having a strong foundation through training plays a significant role in the adoption and successful implementation of OKRs.

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Expert advice

Training should begin with your OKR lead, who can then disseminate information to the rest of the organization. To get them up to speed quickly, consider enrolling them in a certification or coaching program, and encourage them to join professional OKR networks for continuous learning.

Managers and OKR champions are also well-positioned to have a significant impact on OKRs at the team level. These employees may also benefit from a dedicated training course or certification program.

**Elie Casamitjana,
OKRmentors**

Conclusion and Key Takeaways

Our hope is that professionals involved in strategy, transformation, and change management find these insights, data points, and recommendations valuable.

One of the most compelling findings is the recognition of common challenges in strategic execution, including frequent strategy changes, lack of alignment and commitment, and disconnection from daily operations. Armed with this knowledge, you can take proactive steps to tackle these challenges head-on. By prioritizing effective communication, fostering alignment among stakeholders, and promoting transparency in strategy implementation, you can mitigate these challenges and create a more conducive environment for successful strategic execution.

Understanding the motivations for using OKRs, such as improving alignment, performance, and priority setting, allows you to align your efforts and resources accordingly and create a dynamic work environment focused on achieving results.

Evaluating organizations' strategic performance by OKR maturity level provides a benchmark for assessing your organization's progress. By identifying performance gaps and learning from overachievers, you can refine your approach to execution, alignment, progress tracking, agility, and annual achievement.

The findings also emphasize the importance of training and support for your successful OKR implementation. You can leverage these insights to implement best practices, develop robust training programs, provide resources, and foster organizational buy-in. We recommend linking OKRs to your internal processes and establishing clear roles and responsibilities for effective OKR implementation. By doing so, you can ensure a smooth and impactful integration of OKRs into your organization's operations.

Additionally, the report emphasizes the role of technology in OKR management and tracking. Depending on your organization's size and familiarity with OKRs, it may make sense to explore dedicated solutions to streamline the OKR process, enhance collaboration, and facilitate progress monitoring.

By leveraging the insights contained in this report, you can overcome common challenges, enhance strategic performance, and facilitate successful OKR implementation, ultimately driving positive change for your organization. We hope these insights will help your organization improve its strategic performance and provide tools to allow you to help your teams deliver their fullest potential.

Appendix

Methodology

Quantive and OKRmentors worked together to design a customer-centric survey. To do so, we involved our communities of customers and experts, asking them what matters most to them when it comes to strategic execution and OKRs. Additionally, we leveraged the support of professional third-party specializing in large-scale research. Together we drafted a survey set of 20 questions.
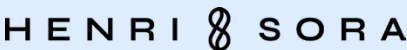
The survey required respondents to meet the following criteria:

✓ **Hold a manager level position or higher**

✓ **Currently use and be familiar with OKRs and modern agile business practices for performance improvement**

The survey was open to participants from all industries, organization sizes, and countries. However, we focused on organizations with 500 employees or more located in the US, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Finland, France, Norway, Sweden, UAE, and Australia.

The survey was distributed through a neutral third party panel as well as through the OKRmentors and Quantive communities. This report was also made possible by the network of OKR experts and consulting firms who helped to distribute the survey.

Participating OKR Experts

melon

talenco
LEAD YOUR ACCELERATION

station 10

PM²

a tribe called
GAM

cidpartners
integrating perspectives

STRATEGWHY

HENRI & SORA

In total, the survey generated more than 300,000 data points, which we analyzed to identify main insights and takeaways for professionals interested in strategic execution, strategic performance, and OKRs.

Glossary

OKR cycle

An OKR cycle refers to the predetermined time period during which OKRs are set, tracked, and evaluated. It typically represents a specific duration, such as a quarter or a year, within which teams or individuals work towards achieving their goals and measuring their progress.

OKR check-in

An OKR check-in is a regular meeting or update where individuals or teams discuss and review the progress of their OKRs. It serves as a forum for sharing updates, discussing challenges, and aligning efforts toward achieving the desired outcomes. Check-ins can occur at different frequencies, such as weekly, monthly, or quarterly, depending on the organization's preference.

OKR lead

An OKR lead, also known as an OKR manager or coordinator, is an individual responsible for overseeing the successful implementation of OKRs within a team, department, or organization. They provide guidance, support, and accountability to facilitate the effective execution of OKRs.

OKR sponsor

An OKR sponsor is a senior-level executive or leader within an organization who champions the use of OKRs and supports their implementation across various teams or departments. The OKR sponsor plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of goal-setting and driving organizational alignment. They provide strategic direction, allocate resources, and remove obstacles to enable the successful adoption and execution of OKRs.

OKR champions

OKR champions are individuals within an organization who advocate for the use of OKRs and actively promote their benefits and best practices. They play a vital role in facilitating OKR rituals within their scope, whether that's within a team or across multiple teams. OKR champions may serve as mentors, trainers, or coaches, helping teams and individuals navigate the OKR process, providing guidance, and sharing success stories and lessons learned.

Quantive®

Quantive helps organizations create greater strategic agility and excel at execution. Our products, Quantive Results, the leading strategy execution platform based on the objectives and key results (OKR) methodology, and Quantive Singularity, a strategic intelligence platform, enable our more than 2,000 customers to close the gap between strategy and execution and achieve their best possible. For more information, visit www.quantive.com.

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OKR mentors

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