



Building OKRs into Performance Appraisals

Learn how to boost accountability and alignment with an integrated approach to your performance programs.

Looking to drive more accountability and alignment with your performance appraisals? Many Reflektive customers incorporate [OKRs](#) into performance reviews to better align employee work with the needs of the organization. Why? Per [Gallup](#), only about 50% of employees know what is expected of them at work. Communication and alignment become even more challenging in a remote work environment. By developing impactful goals and discussing them frequently, employees can ensure that their workstreams are relevant to organizational objectives.

What's more, having concrete goals to discuss during reviews instills equity with more objective assessments of performance. So what's the best way to get started? This quick guide helps you boost alignment, accountability, and productivity by integrating OKRs into your performance appraisals.

Phase 1: OKR Development

Enable employees for goal-setting success
with the following best practices.





Rollout

Take a phased approach to goal-setting to improve organizational alignment. Executives and leaders should set company-level OKRs first. Then, departments and teams create goals that support these broader organizational objectives. Finally, employees develop OKRs that ladder up to their departmental goals.



Training

Prior to setting individual OKRs, schedule training sessions so employees know what good OKRs look like, and how to create OKRs in their technology tool. Reflektive customers can leverage content from our training sessions, [support center](#), and knowledgeable customer success team!



Motivation

Encourage employees to find the right balance of ambition and feasibility in their OKRs so that they're motivated to hit their milestones. It's helpful for your company to set expectations around goal completion, e.g. should managers expect employees to complete 70% or 100% of their key results?



Specificity

Employee key results should be quantifiable and time-bound. Quantifiable results help ensure that employee performance is objectively measured. Additionally, a firm deadline creates a sense of urgency for team members.



Manager Buy-In

Ensure that employees are setting the right OKRs by having them discuss proposed goals in their next [1:1 meeting](#). Managers can suggest revisions to help employees better align with company goals, or make the key results more actionable.



Transparency

Employees should have visibility into their colleagues' OKRs, as this helps team members better support their peers. Those who have visibility into other teams' goals are [81% more likely](#) to agree that there is good cross-functional alignment, and [161% more likely](#) to feel excited when they learn about a new team project!

Phase 2: OKR Updates

Support ongoing conversations to drive OKR completion and make updates as needed.





1:1 Meetings

Use recurring manager-employee [1:1 meetings](#) to foster discussion of OKRs. Managers and team members should discuss OKRs monthly or more frequently to address roadblocks and revise their OKRs as needed.



Team Meetings

Weekly or monthly team meetings provide a great opportunity to share status updates on OKRs. Ensure that everyone updates their OKRs beforehand, and comes prepared to discuss progress and areas of opportunity.

Phase 3: Review Form Development

To drive structured feedback on employee performance, add OKR-related questions into your review form. Reflektive customers can also pull real-time OKRs into their review forms!



We recommend including 1-3 questions on OKRs for employees as well as managers.

Employee Questions

- What key results did you accomplish?
- What goals were you unable to achieve?
- How will you tackle goals differently in the future?
- Have your objectives changed or should they change?
- What help do you need to make better progress toward your goals?

Manager Questions

- Share what went well, and areas for improvement, regarding the employee's OKR completion.
- Provide 1-2 pieces of feedback that could help this employee make better progress towards their goals.
- What additional skills does this employee need to complete their objectives?
- How else can this employee contribute to the success of the team?

Phase 4: Review Follow-Up

Use insights from the review cycle to drive improved performance and productivity.





Peer Feedback

After their manager reviews are completed, encourage employees to gather [feedback](#) from other colleagues to round out their insights. [Kittelson](#) advocates that their employees sync with mentors or coaches after their goals and performance discussion -- this has contributed to 94% favorability around goal-setting, and 80% favorability on peer feedback!



Employee Goal Revisions

With feedback from managers and peers, team members can feel empowered to update and/or modify their OKRs. Changes can be made to better support company-wide objectives, or assist with new team goals too.



Review Form Improvements

After the cycle, set up a meeting with HR peers and other stakeholders to debrief and plan improvements for the next review period. [HoganTaylor's](#) debrief meeting covers the most impactful review questions, as well as trends in employee developmental needs.