



# **WRITE GREAT KEY RESULTS**

*How to achieve your goals with clear and measurable results*

# KEY RESULTS

OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) are a framework that appears quite simple on the surface, but to fully reap their benefits, attention points are necessary both during their definition and implementation.

One of these is **defining Key Results** that have the power to describe how we measure the success we want to achieve and, at the same time, are true results and not initiatives.

Let's start from the term that informs us about the profound nature of this component.

As you may know, "Key Result" stands for "*Risultato Chiave*." Therefore, **it should be the outcome of our actions, the final target we aim to achieve.**

Another context where the term "*result*" assumes a crucial meaning is in sports.

The **result** is the **final verdict** of the competition, which can be a win, a draw, or a loss.

Every sport provides a method to quantify the result.

*For example*, after a football match, we know the final score, which could be 4-2 or 1-0 in our favor. Conversely, in a tennis match, the result can be represented by a score such as 2-0 (6-4 / 6-3), indicating the sets and associated scores.



Similarly, this applies to KRs that play a similar role in the organizational context, **measuring the results achieved in each sector of the organization.**

Each domain has its own key performance indicators, corresponding to the metrics considered priorities for that specific area.

*For example:*

- In Marketing, it could be the leads generated.
- For Sales, it could be the number of customers acquired or the revenue generated.
- In Operational processes, it could be the lead time or the cycle time.

*In **sports**, the result is the outcome of a series of actions taken during the game: how we played, how much we ran, how well we executed our shots, how many attempts we made, how often we attacked on the right or left side, and so on.*



The same applies to **OKRs**.

**The result we achieve depends on the actions** (we call them initiatives) **we take during the period and also on how we adapt to what happens "on the field."**

All this analogy serves to highlight an important aspect to keep in mind when writing KRs: when defining them, it's necessary to reflect on the actual value we aim to generate and on the metric that will allow us to track it.



The first question is, therefore:

***"What tells me that I am achieving/have achieved the Objective?"***

Following this are:


- Which metric best represents my idea of success relative to the Objective and in line with my strategy?
- What target can I define for that metric for the period for which I am writing the KR?

Let's take a personal example:


**O**  **Being the best version of myself**

This Objective could lead to several related Key Results based on my strategy and the timeframe in which I am pursuing it.

For example, we could have:


**K R**  *Reducing the 10 km travel time from 59 minutes to 55.  
(if my focus is related to my athletic performance).*

or

**KR**  *Achieving 100 citations of my articles from others in  
my professional field (if my focus is more on  
growth/recognition).*

- What emerges here is the **link** between the Objective and the Key Results I choose to define my OKR, and how the same Objective can lead to different KRs based on the focus (strategy and priorities) I have.
- Another aspect that emerges is how the KRs are **indeed results to be achieved that allow ROOM for many initiatives** (actions, projects, activities) that I can undertake to reach them.

If, indeed, in the first case my KR had been:

**KR**  *Running 3 times a week for 10 km*

I wouldn't have left any room.

Let's explain this better: with such a KR, once I've checked that I'm running 3 times a week for 10 km, there's nothing else I can do.

But would this guarantee that I have achieved the Objective (being the best version of myself)?

Maybe yes, maybe no.



*The Key Result I defined does not provide a clear representation of the success (outcome) I need to achieve to be the best version of myself.*

Instead, defining a clear **result gives me both the opportunity to know for certain if I have achieved my Objective** (thanks to a clear definition of what this means through the KR), and to take specific actions to achieve it.



If running 3 times a week for 10 km doesn't lead me in the direction I would like, I can start going to the gym, I can change my diet, or I can vary my running style, perhaps by doing intervals, etc.

# IN SUMMARY

The fundamental elements for defining an excellent KR are:

-  It should be tied to the Objective and represent how, according to my strategy and priorities for the period, I define "success".
-  It should be a result and not an activity, meaning it clearly tells me the outcome of the game.

Based on these 2 elements, after defining my KRs, I can perform 2 checks:

-  I project myself to the end of the period and ask if I can objectively say that I have achieved the Objective once the KR target values have been reached.
-  I ask myself if the defined KR allows enough room for alternative or complementary actions that can be taken to achieve it.

If both of these conditions are met, I can reasonably say that the KRs I have defined are of good quality and aligned with my strategy.