

A photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California, taken at dusk. The bridge's iconic orange-red towers and suspension cables are silhouetted against a sky with soft, wispy clouds. The water of the bay is visible in the lower left, and the bridge's approach spans across the middle ground.

How to Run Great OKR Meetings

A guide to engage and empower your teams to achieve their best

RESEARCH

DETECON
CONSULTING

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BACKGROUND

OKRs revolve around the goals of the team and the organization. To achieve these goals, regular collaboration and discussion is needed in order to progress towards OKRs. With this comes excessive amounts of wasted time, translating into wasted resources, energy and motivation. Approximately 67% of meetings are considered to be failures. Let's say you're in a company of 500 employees, these failed meetings result in a total burn rate of \$2.7m per quarter. If that 67% was reduced to just 50%, your company would be on track to net a gain of \$691k per quarter.



There needs to be improvement in how OKR meetings are run. Across the 3 stages of any OKR meetings; preparation, the meeting itself and the post-mortem, we have collated the best practices observed from our clients that have helped them reduce their meeting burn rate, and boost productivity dramatically

PREPARATION

Preparation is the most crucial stage of the OKR meeting. It sets the precedent for the entire meeting. OKRs should be updated prior to the meeting, so that you are looking at the most real-time and up-to-date progress.

Updating OKRs can be a tedious process. The load should be distributed across team members so that it gets done. We've found that sending a pre-email before the meeting or setting a reminder in everyone's calendar to update their OKRs before the meeting is extremely effective. It should be noted that those who do not update their KR's before the meeting shouldn't be shunned or vindicated. Naturally, those who do not update their OKRs prior to the meeting will quickly realize the benefit in updating them prior to the meeting so that they can contribute actively to the conversation.

When OKRs are being updated prior to the meeting, make sure to ask yourself:

- Am I satisfied with my or my team's progress on this OKR?
- Is this OKR still relevant to the strategic position we want to be in at the end of the quarter?
- Are there any blockers or issues with my or my team's progress on any particular OKR?

PRINCIPLES

Make them regular/weekly

Keep them short and focused. 30 mins max.

Extra or non-value adding discussions should be taken offline

THE MEETING

PRINCIPLES

- Keep notes in the meeting
- Don't go overtime – people start to lose focus
- Ensure everyone has a chance to speak
- Bring humor into the meeting

Our general belief for running OKR meetings is to **meet to make decisions, not for status updates**. This meeting is where the real productivity occurs, and the wheels of the plane start to take off. OKRs should be the nucleus of the meeting, with action items being produced coming off the back of these OKR discussions.

There are two general outcomes that should be achieved at the conclusion of the OKR meeting:

- Solve any blockers or ambiguities that may be stopping team members from advancing in their progress for a KR
- Set a short-term plan for next week – “Which initiatives are in the pipeline for next week that will help move the dial on our KRs?”. This should be more low-level, action plan focused, rather than high-level strategy.

SAMPLE AGENDA

Faffing around (2 mins)

- We all know what this means or have experienced it.

Important updates from leadership OKRs (3 mins)

- Leader or manager should cascade any important updates from the executive leadership team down to their own team.

OKR progress & achievement update (7 minutes)

- Go through and discuss progress made on OKRs, and celebrate considerable achievements.

Blockers on current progress (10 minutes)

- Discuss anything that is blocking team members from achieving their OKRs, and how the rest of the team can help in solving it. Set action items to follow this.

Review of this week's initiatives from the overarching pipeline (5 minutes)

- Discuss the key focus initiatives for this week, and what is needed from the team to start them.

Review action items and takeaways (3 minutes)

- Go over and confirm action items from the meeting. Ensure that a person is assigned to each, and that they filter into the following week's OKR meeting as well.



POST-MORTEM

This is a shorter one. Here, you can thank everyone for their time, and summarize action items. From our previous OKR rollouts, we've observed that it's easy for organizations to fall into the 'set and forget' trap of setting action items, and quickly forgetting that they exist. Whatever action items that are set in the OKR meeting must have a person's name attached to it, it must be published or written down somewhere that is accessible by all, and it must be placed into the agenda for the next OKR meeting to ensure follow-up and accountability.



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Philipp leads Detecon's global OKR practice with more than 20 experienced OKR consultants in America, Asia and Europe. As an expert in strategy execution, he and his team help leaders around the globe to fulfill their vision, align their organization around their strategic priorities and enable team members in every level of the organization to make entrepreneurial, autonomous decisions. Originally from Germany, he moved to San Francisco in 2014. He holds a M Sc. from Humboldt University Berlin and a Diploma in Economics from University of Kassel.

ABOUT DETECON

Detecon USA provides innovation, growth and digital technology advise to a range of clients from startups to global enterprises. Our core expertise includes growth advisory based on OKRs, innovation empowerment and connectivity services. We assist our clients to harness the latest technologies, agile frameworks and business models to drive step change performance improvements. Detecon Inc. is part of the Detecon Group.

The **Detecon Group** is a 1,100 person strong innovation-consulting powerhouse of Deutsche Telekom and T-Mobile and pioneer in digital strategy advisory. Detecon supports companies from all domains to adapt their business models and operational processes to the competitive conditions and customer requirements of the digitalized, globalized economy with state-of-the-art communication and information technology.

OKR ADVISORY

Detecon initially adopted OKRs as a way to drive better project outcomes in the innovation initiatives that Telekom and T-Mobile undertakes. Detecon also understood that to drive OKR success, we needed to select an OKR software platform.

From this experience, Detecon was approached by several of its existing external clients, which required OKR advice for their innovation initiatives, and Detecon founded its own OKRs practice, specifically dedicated to clients seeking to grow and transform their businesses.

We have now established Detecon's OKR Advisory Offerings in all of Detecon's global offices, where dedicated Detecon's Certified OKR Consultants regularly advise on OKR initiatives.

Our strength is particularly strong in rolling out OKR initiatives in global enterprises where they require global co-ordination of the rollout. However, we are able to develop solutions tailored for all organizations.

GET IN TOUCH



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