



Paying for Outcomes:
How to hire high-performing managers

ANCOR
2022

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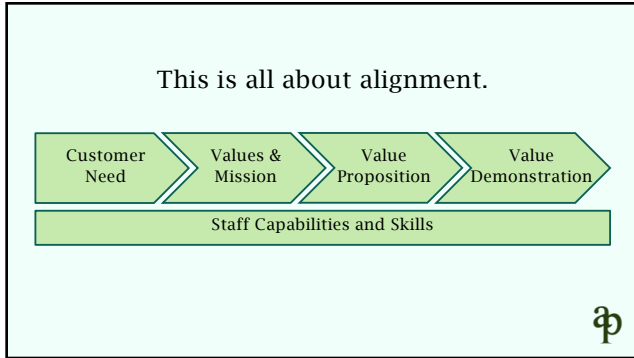
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It's tough to make predictions,
especially about the future.

~Yogi Berra



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How do we usually hire a key management position?

What we intend:

To take stock of our organizational needs
 To identify a candidate who will fit and enhance the team
 To identify high-caliber future leadership

We do this by generalizing: We want to break free of the everyday focus on the trees and try to think about the forest.

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The focal points of our process becomes:

- Job descriptions
- General skills like written and oral communication skills
- “Where do you see yourself in five years?”

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These aims are not misguided.
 How we try to get to them is misguided.
 Don't hire generalists. Hire specialists.

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How?
 By using Outcomes and Key Results, or
OKR

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OKRs were:

- Developed in the tech industry (Intel and Google)
- Widely used in start-ups (pushed by VC firms)
- Popular in social entrepreneur organizations

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OKRs:

- Clearly define goals and paths to reach them
- Create and hone focus
- Deter mission creep
- Create continuity and alignment between teams/divisions



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O is for Outcome.

Outcome answers the big question:
"What are we going to get done?"

Examples:

- Launch employment services
- Expand services into a new region of the state
- Transition ICF to Waiver services



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O is for Outcome.

They can be very broad or very focused, but they must be concrete.

- To boldly go where no one has gone before? Too vague.
- To establish a sustainable colony on Mars? Perfect.



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KR is for Key Results

Key Results ask: "How will we accomplish the outcome?
What are the milestone results along the way?"

example

Expand services into the south region of the state

- Establish services in the region
- Hire manager located in the region
- Achieve ____ growth milestone
- Open office in region



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Characteristics of OKRs

- What-and-how, not just what
- Compact time span: monthly or quarterly, not annually
- Public, transparent, and interconnected with other OKRs
- Focused, targeted, measurable—not vague
- Powered from the inside—not top-down
- Aggressive and a bit risky—What we aspire to do, not a safe estimate of what *might* get done



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The power of OKRs

- They create focus and commitment to priorities, prevent mission creep.
- They create alignment and strengthen work between groups
- They create public accountability that is easily tracked
- They create aspiration and push us beyond what is reasonably attainable



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Using OKRs in hiring

1. Develop the tools
- OKR
 - skills list
 - list of character traits

Example: an agency's growth plan. We're hiring to implement that plan.



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OKR

Outcome: Expand services into the south region of the state

Key Results

- Establish residential services in the region (first waiver site)
- Achieve ____ growth milestone
- Open office in region
- Expand services range in region



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Skills List

Develop a list of skills a person needs to work the OKR

- People Skills: make a quick positive impression, able to motivate
- Critical thinking skills: able to solve problems and create efficiencies



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Develop a list of skills, continued

- Analytical skills: able to grasp and develop significant metrics
- Organizational skills: able to develop a sound structure and systems from the ground up (that fit your culture)
- Proactive and persistent



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Character Traits List

Develop a list of characteristics a person needs to thrive in your organization’s culture so you can judge their “fit”.

- Flexible/adaptable
- Calm under pressure
- Open to new ideas (and criticism)
- Creative/innovative
- Positive/enthusiastic



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Using OKRs in hiring

2. Advertise and screen applicants

Use the skills list in your posting and in your screening.

Tip: Ask applicants to address the skills list in their cover letters referencing their resume. Then seek to confirm these skills through a written interview.



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Using OKRs in hiring

- 3. First written interview in two parts Explore skills capabilities
Explore character strengths
- 4. First Interview Use to narrow field by match to skill list, with acceptable character fit.

Tip: Try the Values in Action survey as 2nd part of a written interview (viacharacter.org) .



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Using OKRs in hiring

- 5. Second written interview Provide the OKR and ask candidates to brainstorm strategies.
- 6. Second Interview First half, they present their ideas. Second half, confirm character fit.

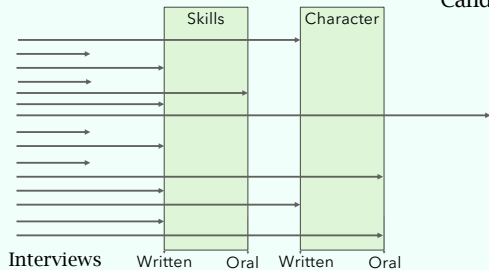
Tip: Have multiple interviewer but be sure to make candidate feel comfortable.



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Applicants

Final Candidate



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Once hired

Once hired the new manager has their job description with all the general expectations, but more importantly they have their OKR and the work they've already put into it.

The first meeting with their boss is based on the work the candidate presented in their interview.



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Once hired

Their work on their OKR...

- Performance against the OKR
- Management of adaptation and evolution of their OKR

...becomes the basis for their evaluation.



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Once hired

Within a year or so you have developed a growth specialist because you hired someone with experience and skills in creating growth.

Elsewhere you might have developed a quality improvement specialist.

Since OKRs can overlap and impact each other, these two specializations are complimentary.



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The best way to predict your future is to create it.

~Peter Drucker



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Great books

Doerr, John. (2018). **Measure What matters**. Portfolio/Penguin, New York, NY.

Smart, Geoff and Randy Street (2008) **Who: The A Method for Hiring**. Ballantine Books, New York, NY.

Coyle, Daniel (2018) **The Culture Code: The Secrets of highly Successful Groups**. Bantam Books, New York, NY.

Rock, David. (2009) **Your Brain At Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distractions, regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day**. Harper Business, New York, NY.



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