

EOS AND OKRS: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

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INTRODUCTION

EOS vs. OKRs: What's the difference?

Although their mechanics differ, the objectives and key results (OKRs) framework and the [Entrepreneurial Operating System](#) (EOS) are ideologically similar. While OKRs are universal and EOS is tailored to entrepreneurs - vision, cohesion, and teamwork are the cornerstones for both goal management systems. Both frameworks can be used together to build, sustain, and scale a business.

Still, there are differences between EOS and OKR goal-setting techniques. In this resource, we'll explain what they are as we answer these questions:

- What is the Entrepreneurial Operating System?
- What are the main differences between EOS and OKRs?
- How can OKRs complement EOS?
- If I have more questions where can I send them?

What is EOS?

A Lean strategy is a commitment to identifying targets to help ensure a smoother workflow, which means less time wasted.

For example, say you're a manager for airplane safety maintenance. Having a labeled procedure with specific milestones can increase productivity and decrease the high-level costs associated with wasted time—like making sure flights leave on time.

What is the main difference between Lean and OKRs?

The Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) began with Gino Wickman, a 21-year-old entrepreneur at the time, who owned his family business. After successfully leading and transforming the company, he sold it and joined forces with other business owners and leaders to begin the Detroit chapter of the Entrepreneurs' Organization. Joining this network inspired Wickman to dive into the science of business. He founded EOS to guide leadership teams and entrepreneurs to help them achieve their personal visions for their businesses.

EOS is made up of:

- The EOS Model® which encourages entrepreneurs to grow their business with an innate focus on six principles in their business model: vision, people, data, issues, process, traction
- THE EOS process® hones in on pairing the proper tools in the correct order to strengthen businesses according to the core components in the EOS model
- The EOS Toolbox® is a set of resources entrepreneurs can use to accomplish the "vision" and "traction" elements of the EOS model. The five foundational tools of EOS are: the Vision/Traction Organizer®, an accountability chart, "Rocks", a constrained set of goals that must be accomplished in the quarter, Meeting Pulse, and Scorecard.

What are the main differences between EOS and OKRs?

EOS and OKRs differ in 3 key areas:

- **Approach:** Operating system vs. framework. EOS is designed to be a complete business "operating system" with unique tools such as L10 meetings (weekly sessions for company leadership to centralize focus on outstanding problems) or "Implementers" (trained EOS consultants).

These tools provide additional in-depth business instruction in the areas of people and processes. Although objectives and key results do not offer a counterpart to some of the elements within the EOS toolbox, they have the unique ability to supplement an operating system or framework or serve as a stand-alone goal management strategy.

- **Timeframes.** OKRs offer a more flexible time frame. Objectives can be defined quarterly, annually, monthly, and more. Almost every core element of the EOS process however, has a defined time table with quarterly and annual sessions (Traction) and a ten-year target. The successful achievement of an objective must provide clear value related to the mission.
- **Audience.** While both frameworks can be used across industries, EOS primarily works to serve business leaders and entrepreneurs. The EOS process has a deep-seated focus on business models. However, OKRs are universal - they work well for not only entrepreneurs, but [software engineers](#), [non-profit leaders](#), and [freelancers](#) as well. In addition to organizational and team goals, OKRs can also be adopted for personal goals.

How can OKRs complement EOS?

Both frameworks rely on goal prioritization and time bound metrics. Therefore, because of these overlapping core elements and because OKRs are malleable and lightweight, they can be easily implemented within broader frameworks, including EOS. The main questions both frameworks compel teams to answer are:

- What is the mission/overall objective?
- How will it be accomplished?
- When will it be accomplished?

There are many opportunities for leadership teams to combine both frameworks to execute goals and priorities. For example, one element in the EOS framework is "Rocks." Rocks are a defined set of objectives that reflect the team's 3–7 most important priorities with a quarterly focus. Similar to OKRs, less is more. Therefore, Rocks can be formatted using the OKR formula: 5-7 objectives and 3-4 measurable and time bound key results. Charting OKRs will better align the goals and streamline the process of reviewing them.

"An effective goal-setting system starts with disciplined thinking at the top, with leaders who invest the time and energy to choose what counts," says "Measure What Matters" author John Doerr.

With so many layers and elements in the Entrepreneurial Operating System, there are many opportunities for OKRs to be folded into the framework. As companies, industries, and teams evolve and grow - it will take dedication, creativity, and strategic goal-setting to organize priorities. No framework is one-size-fits-all. They can certainly be tailored and even blended to fit the unique needs of your company or organization.

If I have more questions where can I send them?

We love to get and respond to questions. If you have anything OKR-related to ask, send us a message at hello@whatmatters.com.



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