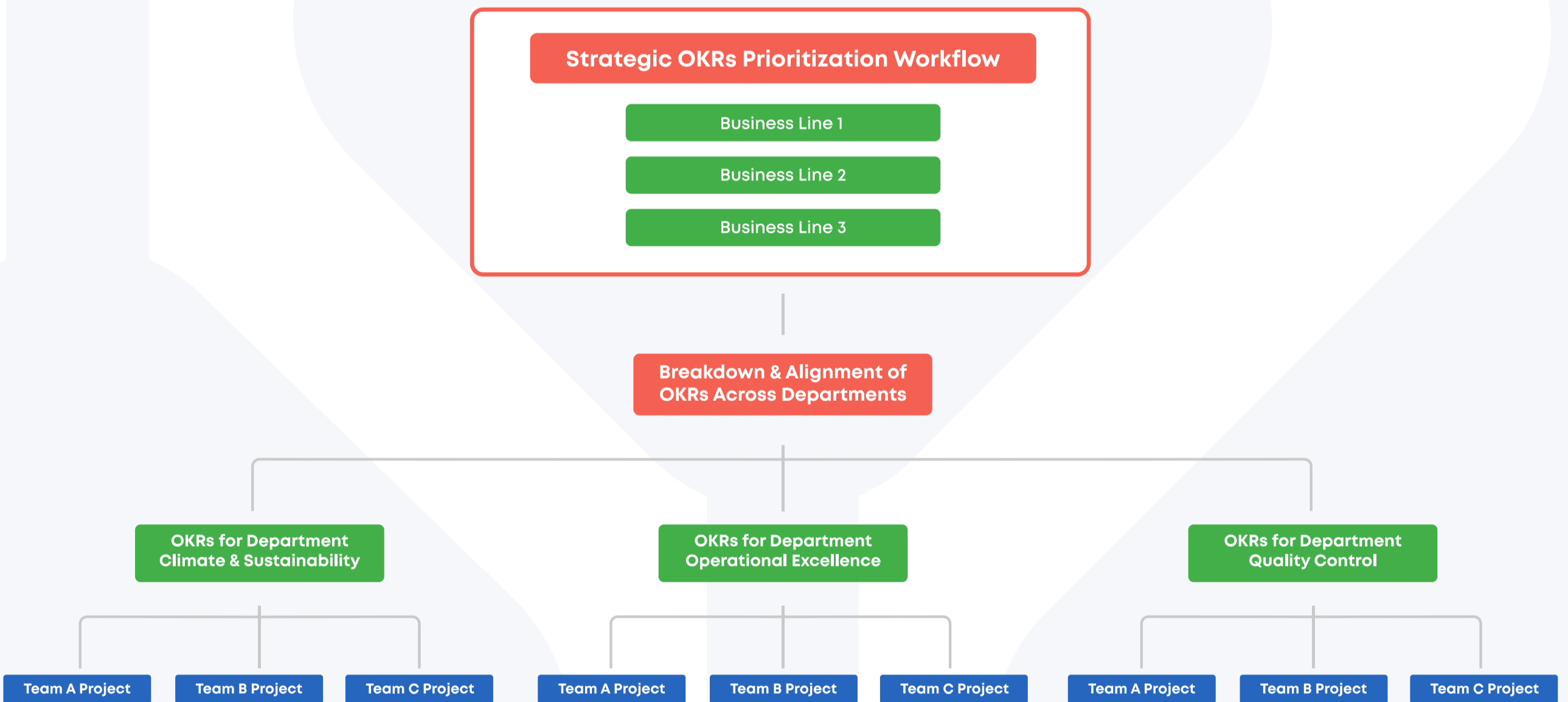


OKRs from the Trenches:

How Enterprises Save Time & Money with Integrated Strategy Execution?

Global Objectives & Key Results Management



Why Large Organizations Need OKRs?

Most strategies fail—not because they are flawed, but because they are poorly executed. In fact, studies show that 67% of well-formulated strategies fail due to poor execution. While organizations invest significant time and resources in crafting ambitious plans, they often lack the mechanisms to align teams and translate these strategies into measurable outcomes.

A recent **Harvard Business Review study** underscores this challenge: strategic alignment in organizations is far less effective than leaders believe. While many executives assume their workforce is unified around company goals, the reality tells a different story.

*Recent research reveals that **93% of employees don't understand their company's strategy**, creating a staggering disconnect between vision and execution.*

This lack of alignment doesn't just hurt collaboration—it's extraordinarily costly. Poor communication within organizations leads to misunderstandings, wasted efforts, and missed opportunities, costing businesses an estimated **\$1.2 trillion annually, according to another study.**

The Path Forward: Strategy Execution That Works

To navigate this turbulent environment, large organizations must become more responsive and connected by bridging the gap between strategy and execution. No wonder that this is where Objectives & Key Results come into play.

What Are OKRs?

OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) are a simple yet transformative framework that drives alignment, focus, and measurable outcomes within organizations. The structure consists of two components:

- **Objectives:** What do you want to achieve? Objectives are ambitious, actionable, and designed to inspire teams.
- **Key Results:** How do you measure your success? Key Results are specific, measurable milestones that track progress toward the Objective.

Example

Objective: Drive exceptional business growth and market expansion by the end of Q4

Key Results:

1. Close \$1 million in new sales by the end of Q4.
2. Increase the average deal size by 20% compared to Q3.
3. Expand the customer base by acquiring 50 new clients.

Setting Effective OKRs

Organizations can get started with the OKR framework by creating Strategic, Tactical, and Operational OKRs. This hierarchical approach aligns high-level company goals with team-level objectives, creating a clear connection between strategy and day-to-day execution. In the following sections, we'll explore how large enterprises deploy OKRs at scale, demonstrating how this methodology drives cost savings and operational efficiency in real-world scenarios.

Implementing OKRs at Scale – Successful Examples from the Energy & Financial Sectors

How The Largest Scandinavian Gas & Oil Company Buys Back Hundreds of People Hours Through Strategic Alignment?

The first use case for OKRs implementation at scale comes from a Fortune 500 Energy company. Just like most traditional enterprises, they suffered from **almost non-existent visibility** across their large network of team dependencies, leading to a **lack of understanding who is working on what** and **poor communication**.

Strategy Execution Challenges

- Struggling to understand how different departments align their work to strategic OKRs and how project progress contributes to organizational goals.
- Reported **just 1% visibility of their work**, failing to properly prioritize incoming demand and plan it for execution on time.
- Struggled to communicate changing strategic priorities across the enterprise, leading to delayed reaction from their large network of teams.
- Reported **HUNDREDS OF LOST HOURS** as a result of teams working on strategic priorities that had become obsolete.
- Wanted to **REDUCE COSTS & WORK CHAOS** by unifying all legacy tools into a single strategic execution environment.

Streamlining Strategy Execution at Scale

To alleviate those challenges, the Energy corporation started looking for a solution to visualize the entire strategy execution going from the strategic OKRs all the way down to the team's work items.

Strategy Execution Solution

- **Create a Digital Centralized Management Board**

The first step was to visualize strategic OKRs in a single, centralized location.

- **Establish a Prioritization Workflow**

To prioritize strategic OKRs, the management built a dedicated workflow for the analysis and approval of each OKR.

- **Develop a Breakdown Workflow**

After a strategic OKR is prioritized, it enters a “breakdown” workflow where the management assigns it to different departments.

- **Design a Unique Alignment Structure**

The company's Management board is unique, containing sub-boards for each department, enabling visibility across strategic priorities.

- **Assign OKRs Across Departments**

Top-level management assigns OKRs to different departments via the central Management board, ensuring alignment across the organization.

- **Enable Department-Level Execution**

Each department has its own Management board to connect teams responsible for the execution of the OKR for the department.

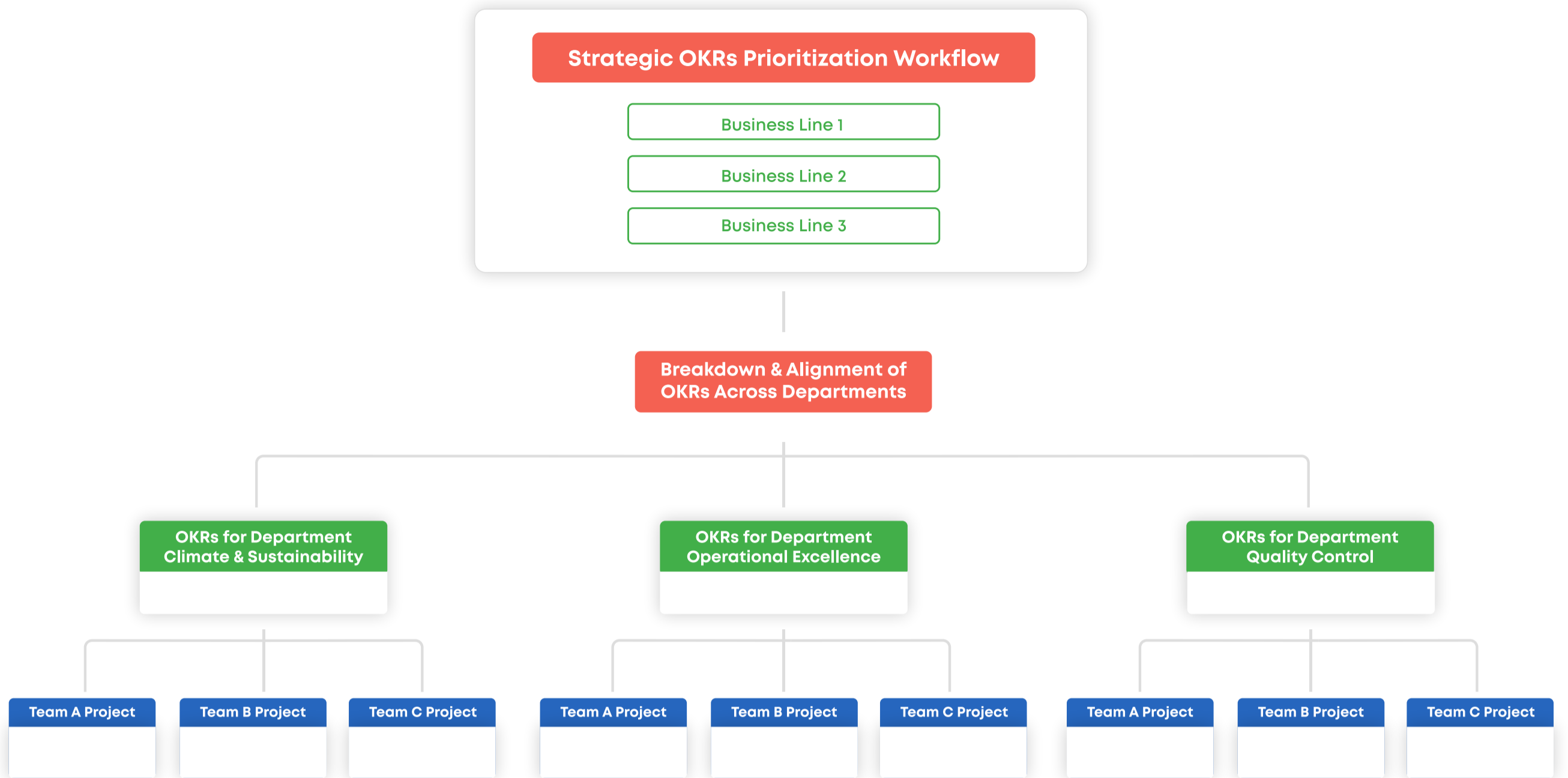
- **Plan & Breakdown into Work Activities**

The department's heads plan their OKRs and break them down into projects for each team.

- **See Updates in Real-Time**

With a robust software solution, everything within the hierarchy is linked, providing instant visibility into strategic OKRs and their progress at the team level.

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Key Results

80% More Visibility
across organizational strategy
and work activities

100+ Hours saved
due to the instant
communication of strategic
OKRs across departments
and teams

Better Capacity Planning
as the organization's
management has an overview of
the workload across departments
and teams.

How One of South America's Largest Banks Reduced Operational Costs by Nearly 50%?

The next story comes from the financial sector, featuring a Fortune Global 500 company in the highly regulated banking industry. This is a testament that with the proper deployment and tools, even enterprises in “sensitive” industries can embark on transformational journeys for saving money through operational efficiency and digitalization.

Strategy Execution Challenges

We sat down with the bank's Heads of Digital Transformation and Change Management offices to discuss their strategic challenges.

Here's what we identified as their main hurdles:

- **Lack of a result-driven culture.** Due to the complex organizational structure, teams were not aligned to the strategy and management **COULD NOT SEE HOW OPERATIONAL EFFORTS CONTRIBUTED TO STRATEGIC GOALS.**
- **Visibility into the STRATEGY BUT POOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXECUTION.** The bank was a clear representative of those 67% strategies that fail due to poor execution. While executives knew what they wanted to achieve, they couldn't communicate that information to the operational level.
- **The need to reduce expenses due to global economic challenges such as COVID-19 and others.** Using multiple legacy systems, the bank had a cost reduction initiative to consolidate strategy execution in a single platform.

Strategic-Tactical-Operational OKRs Implementation:

As pressing as these challenges were, so was the determination of the bank's upper-level management to tackle them. The situation in the financial institution was that KPIs were already used across management levels but the flow of information from the strategic to the operational level was done through meetings and word of mouth. That's why the bank decided to streamline their strategic execution through the following approach.

Strategy Execution Solution

- **Visualize Operations with Digital Workspaces**

The bank mapped their operations in dedicated digital workspaces.

- **Establish a Central Management Workspace**

To unify all of the bank's business lines, they built a Central Management Workspace.

- **Visualize OKRs for Each Business Line**

Within the Central Management Workspace, each business line created OKR boards to visualize their goals.

- **Create Workspaces for Teams**

Each business line also built their own workspace with project boards to visualize team operations.

- **Set Up Tactical & Operational OKRs**

The heads of each business line used the OKR boards to visualize TACTICAL OKRs for their line and OPERATIONAL OKRs for the contributing teams.

- **Break Down Operational OKRs into Projects**

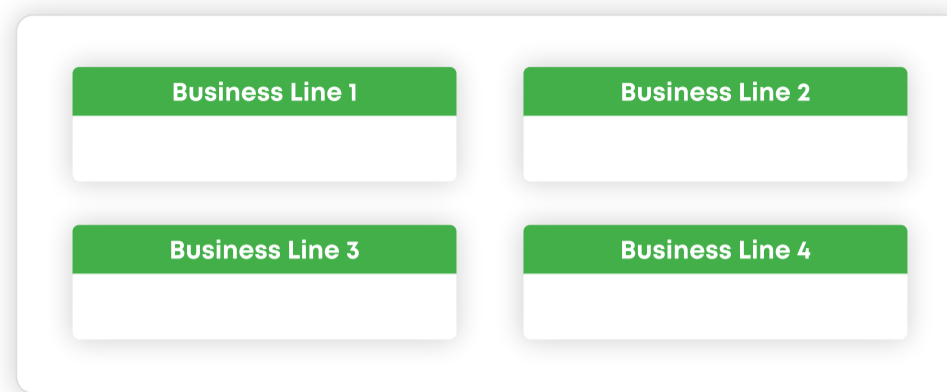
Each Business Line breaks down Operational OKRs into team projects using dedicated team boards within the Business Line workspace.

- **Link Strategic-Tactical-Operational OKRs**

By linking STRATEGIC, TACTICAL, and OPERATIONAL OKRs with team projects, the bank created a unified source of truth for strategic communication.

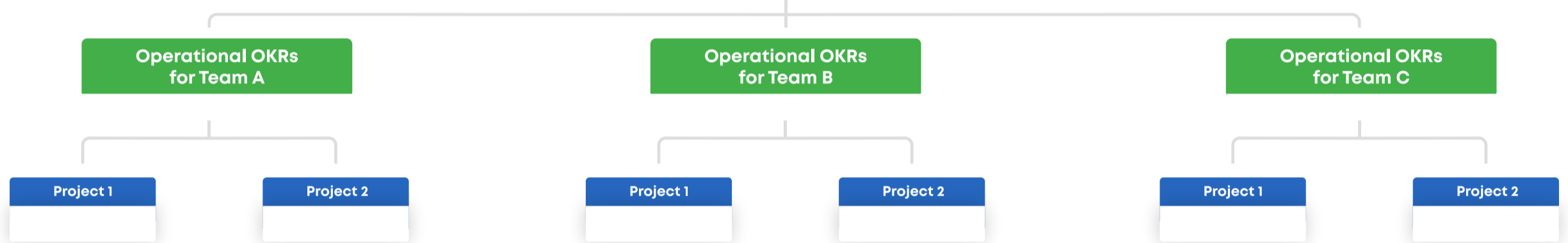
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Management Workspace for Strategic OKRs



Business Line 1 Management Board

Tactical OKRs Workflow



Key Results for Cost Reduction & Successful Strategy Execution

This approach of deploying OKRs across the entire financial institution brought the following results.

Key Results

Saved Nearly 50%

from operational costs by integrating strategy execution in a single environment

Output To Outcome

Transitioned from an output to an outcome-driven culture

Single Source Of Truth

Created a “single source of truth” for strategic alignment & communication across the organization

Best Practices for Implementing OKRs at Scale

The use cases we've featured above are just a couple of examples from our experience. In general, when implementing the Objectives & Key Results goal-setting framework, we've seen the best implementations from companies that apply the following best practices.

- ▶ **Align Leadership on Priorities**

Ensure leadership agrees on strategic goals. OKRs should reflect the company's mission and provide clear direction.

- ▶ **Define Clear Objectives and Key Results**

Create inspiring objectives with measurable, time-bound key results. Avoid vague or overly complex goals.

- ▶ **Adopt a Cascading Approach**

Scale OKRs by creating **Strategic, Tactical, and Operational OKRs**, linking company-wide goals to team efforts.

- ▶ **Promote Transparency**

Make OKRs visible across the organization to foster accountability and show how efforts align with broader objectives.

- ▶ **Limit OKRs to What Matters Most**

Focus on 3-5 objectives per business area/department/team with 3-5 key results each to maintain clarity and focus.

- ▶ **Review and Adapt Regularly**

Conduct frequent check-ins to track progress, address blockers, and adjust as needed.

- ▶ **Encourage Collaboration**

Break down silos by promoting cross-team communication and shared ownership of goals.

- ▶ **Use the Right Tools**

Leverage all-in-one work management platforms to track OKRs and ensure alignment at scale.

Start Your OKRs Journey with a Free Consultation from Businessmap

What is Businessmap?

Businessmap is a software platform that helps you align strategy with execution and implement OKRs at scale by bringing 3 tool categories into one:

- Strategy Execution & OKR Tools
- Project Portfolio Management Tools
- Process Management Tools

How we support you on your journey:

To serve the unique needs of your enterprise, we tailor our solutions and complement them with our multifaceted support system. Ensure lasting value and exceptional ROI with exceptional resources including:

- Support and Implementation Packages
- Video training portal
- Comprehensive knowledge base
- Customer Success Team
- Technical support with unbeatable response times
- New software releases every month
- Regular webinars and online workshops

What our customers say about us:



“Initially, I just want to track my deliverables, but mapping the workflow had a completely unintended, yet amazing effect: the team built a common understanding of how work gets done.”

Benoît Guillaud
Project Leader at GE Aviation



“The software has created a new environment centered around communication and transparency in a visually appealing way that we haven't seen before.”

Ben Jackman
Logistics Supervisor at BMW
Constructors



“Businessmap is an excellent tool for managing projects. It offers clear visibility into task progress and promotes seamless collaboration across multiple teams. By enabling efficient work tracking and visualizing workflows, it streamlines project management processes, leading to increased productivity and preventing overburden.”

Dr. Adalbert Huber
Vice President, R&D and QA
at Carl Schlenk AG

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