



OKR INSTITUTE

THE LEADING GLOBAL OKR INSTITUTE

— CLIENT ANALYSIS BROCHURE · INDUSTRIAL & SUPPLY CHAIN

ALIGNING COMPLEX OPERATIONS THROUGH OKRS

A cross-client analysis of how we have helped industrial and supply-chain organisations, from a US manufacturer to global consumer-goods and logistics leaders, turn strategy into aligned, measurable execution, most often by equipping the middle-management layer where operations are actually run.

● Allura

● Henkel

● DB Schenker

● 20Cube

4

INDUSTRIAL & SUPPLY-
CHAIN CLIENTS

72k

PEOPLE AT DB SCHENKER,
THE LARGEST

121k+

PEOPLE ACROSS THE
COHORT

Prepared for internal
review
Confidential

OKRS FOR OPERATIONS THAT MUST RUN LIKE CLOCKWORK

Industrial and supply-chain businesses win or lose on execution across many sites, entities, and borders. Plans are seldom the problem; the hard part is aligning distributed teams and equipping the managers in the middle, the layer that actually converts strategy into daily operations, to set and track the outcomes that matter.

This report brings together four organisations. With **Allura**, a US manufacturer, we built a bespoke OKR framework and led the culture shift to adopt it. With **Henkel**, we trained middle managers across

European entities to draft OKRs aligned to global strategy. With **DB Schenker**, we equipped logistics middle management to implement OKRs and sustain them. And with **20Cube**, we demystified OKRs for leadership and set a practical roadmap for rollout.

Different as they are, all four rest on the same craft: **hands-on enablement, workshop-led translation of strategy into outcomes, real OKR drafting, and a disciplined cadence**, capability we build to last, not a template we hand over.

4

Organisations across manufacturing, industrial goods & logistics

72k

Employees at DB Schenker, the largest in the cohort

Middle

Management the pivotal layer in most of these engagements

100%

Context-led programmes tuned to each organisation's reality

HOW WE BUILD OKR CAPABILITY IN INDUSTRY & LOGISTICS

1 Context-led enablement

We ground leaders and managers in OKR principles and behaviours, tailored to each organisation's operations, entities, and structure.

2 Strategy-to-OKR translation

We facilitate workshops that convert strategic priorities into clear, outcome-based Objectives and measurable Key Results.

3 Alignment across the network

We connect team and entity OKRs to enterprise strategy, so execution across sites and borders reinforces the same goals.

4 Coaching, cadence & culture

We coach managers and leaders, embed a review rhythm, and adapt culture so OKRs become a living, self-owned system.

ALLURA USA

CLOSING THE STRATEGY-TO-OPERATIONS GAP

INDUSTRY
Manufacturing

BASE
United States

WORKFORCE
160 employees

OKR COACH
Dirk Schmellenkamp

Allura USA is a distinguished manufacturing-sector business. Our collaboration centred on crafting and deploying a sustainable OKR framework to overcome operational hurdles, sharpen strategic execution, and cultivate a culture of continuous growth and alignment across the organisation.

THE CHALLENGE WE FOUND

- 01 Operational & strategic disconnect.** A gap between Allura's overarching strategy and the operational targets set by teams was leading to disjointed effort. Teams were optimising locally while the company-level picture blurred, so good work did not always add up to strategic progress.
- 02 Inefficiencies in goal management.** Without a structured goal-setting and tracking mechanism, objectives were unclear and progress hard to gauge. Leaders had no single view of what was on track and what was slipping, which made prioritisation reactive.
- 03 Resistance to new methods.** The proposal to adopt a new goal-setting framework met scepticism, a real hurdle in the early phases. Long-tenured teams were understandably wary of replacing familiar routines with an unproven system.

WHY IT MATTERED

In manufacturing, a gap between strategy and the shop floor shows up directly in output, quality, and cost.

Closing it meant not just a framework, but winning teams over to a new way of working.

THE OBJECTIVE WE SET

Craft and deploy a sustainable OKR framework that closes Allura's strategy-to-operations gap, brings clarity and accountability to goals, and embeds a culture of continuous growth and alignment.

FOCUS AREAS

Alignment

Goal clarity

Culture shift

OUR APPROACH

01

Customised OKR framework

A bespoke framework built around Allura's specific strategic and operational needs, for genuine relevance and effectiveness.

02

Education at every level

Extensive training from executive leadership to front-line teams, building deep understanding and organisation-wide adoption.

03

Cultural transformation support

Coaching, workshops, and feedback loops to overcome resistance gradually and embed OKRs into the corporate culture.

THE RESULTS WE SAW TOGETHER

- **Strategic & operational alignment.** OKRs markedly improved the fit between strategic goals and day-to-day operations, streamlining effort toward shared objectives.
- **Clarity & accountability.** The framework brought a measurability to goals that had been missing, enabling precise tracking of progress and results.
- **A shift in culture.** Over time Allura's culture came to embrace transparency, continuous improvement, and collective success.
- **Scepticism to ownership.** Teams that first resisted the change came to understand and value the OKR framework.

OUR REFLECTION

Allura is a change-management story as much as an OKR one. The framework mattered, but the real work was winning over teams who were sceptical of a new method. Pairing a bespoke design with education at every level and patient coaching turned early resistance into ownership, and a strategy-operations gap into alignment.

HENKEL

ALIGNING MIDDLE MANAGEMENT TO GLOBAL STRATEGY

INDUSTRY
Consumer & industrial
products

REACH
European entities

WORKFORCE
48,000 employees

OKR COACH
Dirk Schmellenkamp

Henkel is a global leader in consumer goods and industrial technologies. We partnered with Henkel to train its leadership and middle managers across various European entities to draft OKRs, enhancing strategic alignment, improving execution efficiency, and ensuring team efforts matched Henkel's overarching company strategy.

THE CHALLENGE WE FOUND

- 01 Alignment across entities.** Ensuring OKRs drafted by middle managers in different European entities lined up with Henkel's global strategy was a significant challenge. Each entity planned in its own way, and those local plans did not always ladder up to the same enterprise goals.
- 02 Knowledge & skill gaps.** There was a notable lack of familiarity and expertise in drafting and implementing OKRs among middle managers. Without a shared method, the quality and ambition of goals varied widely from one team to the next.
- 03 Engagement & adoption.** Achieving broad adoption at the middle-management level, so OKRs became actionable team goals, needed a tailored approach. Buy-in had to be earned locally, not mandated from the centre.

WHY IT MATTERED

Across many European entities, middle management is where global strategy either becomes local action or stalls.

Equipping that layer was the most direct route to cohesive execution at scale.

THE OBJECTIVE WE SET

Train middle managers across Henkel's European entities to draft OKRs aligned with global strategy, enhancing strategic cohesion, execution efficiency, and engagement at the team level.

FOCUS AREAS

Middle management

Global alignment

Adoption

OUR APPROACH

01

Customised training programs

Targeted sessions for middle managers across European entities on OKR fundamentals, strategic alignment, and practical application.

02

Alignment workshops

Workshops aligning managers' OKRs with Henkel's global strategic objectives, ensuring cohesion and clarity across levels.

03

Continuous support & resources

Ongoing tools and support for drafting, implementing, and tracking OKRs, plus strategies to lift team engagement.

THE RESULTS WE SAW TOGETHER

- **Improved strategic cohesion.** Training and alignment workshops markedly improved cohesion across European entities, with managers' OKRs closely reflecting global goals.
- **Stronger expertise & execution.** Middle managers built a robust command of OKRs, leading to more effective execution of team-level goals tied to strategy.
- **Engagement & cultural adoption.** The initiative lifted engagement among managers and teams, feeding a culture of continuous improvement and focus.
- **A repeatable model.** A consistent way to align local execution to global strategy that Henkel can extend across entities.

OUR REFLECTION

Henkel is a scale-alignment story told through the middle. With entities spread across Europe, the fastest way to make global strategy real was to equip the managers translating it locally. Once they could draft and align OKRs with confidence, cohesion followed, and the model now travels from one entity to the next.

DB SCHENKER

EQUIPPING LOGISTICS MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

INDUSTRY
**Logistics &
transportation**

REACH
Global

WORKFORCE
72,000 employees

OKR COACH
Dirk Coetsee

DB Schenker is a global leader in logistics and transportation. Our collaboration focused on training the company's middle management to implement OKRs effectively, enhancing strategic execution, improving alignment across teams, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement across a large, distributed operation.

THE CHALLENGE WE FOUND

- 01 Understanding & buy-in.** Middle management lacked a full grasp of the OKR framework, which made buy-in and effective implementation harder. Managers needed to see the value clearly before committing their teams to a new way of working.
- 02 Alignment & coordination.** Aligning OKRs across different levels and departments of a large logistics network was a significant challenge. Dependencies between depots, functions, and regions made coordination genuinely complex.
- 03 Sustainability of adoption.** Establishing a system for durable adoption and ongoing management of OKRs in the middle-management layer was crucial, since without real ownership there, new routines tend to fade after launch.

WHY IT MATTERED

In logistics, coordination across teams and sites is the product, so alignment translates straight into service reliability.

Building capability in the middle layer was the way to make adoption stick beyond a launch.

THE OBJECTIVE WE SET

Train DB Schenker's middle management to implement OKRs effectively, improving strategic execution and cross-team alignment and embedding a sustainable culture of continuous improvement across the network.

FOCUS AREAS

Middle management

Coordination

Sustainability

OUR APPROACH

01

Customised training programs

Training built for logistics middle managers on OKR fundamentals and how to apply them in a large, distributed operation.

02

Cross-level alignment

Practical workshops aligning OKRs across levels and departments so teams pull toward the same strategic objectives.

03

Ongoing support & cadence

Continued support, troubleshooting, and a review rhythm to make adoption sustainable in the middle-management layer.

THE RESULTS WE SAW TOGETHER

- **Enhanced strategic execution.** Middle management's ability to implement and manage OKRs lifted strategic execution and operational efficiency.
- **Improved alignment & collaboration.** The initiative fostered greater alignment within and across teams, unifying the approach to strategic objectives.
- **A shift toward continuous improvement.** Training and ongoing support moved the culture toward continuous improvement, with managers driving the change.
- **Durable adoption.** Capability embedded in the middle layer positioned OKRs to endure well beyond the engagement.

OUR REFLECTION

DB Schenker echoes a pattern we see across logistics: the middle-management layer is where coordination is either won or lost. By building genuine understanding first, then aligning OKRs across levels and backing it with a steady cadence, we helped a 72,000-person network make adoption stick where it matters most.

20CUBE

DEMYSTIFYING OKRS FOR LEADERSHIP

INDUSTRY
Logistics

REACH
Global

WORKFORCE
1,000 employees

OKR COACH
Dirk Coetsee

20Cube is a logistics company. Our engagement addressed the initial barriers to OKR adoption through tailored, highly accessible sessions, giving the leadership team a clear understanding of the framework and a practical roadmap to enhance strategic alignment and focus across the organisation.

THE CHALLENGE WE FOUND

- 01 Complexity of OKR concepts.** Before the sessions the framework looked complex and hard to grasp, especially for those without prior experience. That perceived complexity risked stalling adoption before it had a chance to begin.
- 02 Alignment & focus.** Driving alignment and focus across teams was essential to executing strategic initiatives smoothly. Fast-moving freight operations leave little room for misaligned or competing priorities.
- 03 A strategy that fit.** 20Cube needed an implementation approach shaped to the dynamics of its leadership and organisational structure. A generic playbook would not have matched how its leaders actually decide and operate.

WHY IT MATTERED

Adoption stalls when a framework feels abstract; leaders adopt what they clearly understand.

Making OKRs accessible to the leadership team was the first, decisive step toward rollout.

THE OBJECTIVE WE SET

Demystify OKRs for 20Cube's leadership and provide a practical implementation roadmap, laying the foundation for greater alignment and focus across teams.

FOCUS AREAS

Demystification

Roadmap

Alignment

OUR APPROACH

01 Engaging, informative sessions

Highly engaging sessions, tailored for comprehensibility at every level of the organisation.

02 Demystification of OKRs

Complex concepts broken into simple, understandable components, making the method accessible to everyone.

03 Practical insights & roadmap

Hands-on insight into the methodology and a broad roadmap for rollout, with its likely impact spelled out.

04 A customised approach

Time spent understanding the leadership team beforehand let the coach tailor content to 20Cube's specific needs.

THE RESULTS WE SAW TOGETHER

- **A clear grasp of OKRs.** The sessions demystified OKRs for 20Cube's leadership, giving a firm understanding of the framework and its components.
- **Positioned for alignment.** With that understanding and a tailored roadmap, 20Cube was set to drive greater alignment and focus across its teams.
- **A roadmap to act on.** Practical insights and a broad roadmap gave 20Cube the tools to adopt and implement OKRs in line with its strategic goals.
- **Confidence to begin.** Leadership left ready to take the first concrete steps of rollout.

OUR REFLECTION

20Cube is a clarity-first story. Sometimes the biggest barrier to OKRs is simply that they feel complicated. By getting to know the leadership team and then translating the method into plain, practical terms, we turned apprehension into a confident starting point, and a roadmap the company could act on.

FOUR ENGAGEMENTS, ONE DISCIPLINE

CLIENT	PROFILE	CORE CHALLENGE	HOW WE HELPED
Allura	Manufacturing · USA · 160	Closing the strategy-to-operations gap	Bespoke framework + all-levels education + culture support
Henkel	Consumer & industrial products · Europe · 48,000	Aligning middle management to global strategy	Manager training + alignment workshops + ongoing support
DB Schenker	Logistics · global · 72,000	Sustainable adoption via middle management	Manager training + cross-level alignment + ongoing cadence
20Cube	Logistics · global · 1,000	Making OKRs clear enough to adopt	Demystifying sessions + practical roadmap + tailored approach

Three lessons we carry across the sector

01 · Win hearts, not just process

Allura's lesson: in manufacturing, adoption hinges on overcoming resistance, so culture work matters as much as the framework.

02 · Equip the middle

Henkel and DB Schenker's lesson: middle management is the layer that turns strategy into operations across sites and borders.

03 · Start with clarity

20Cube's lesson: when OKRs feel complex, demystifying them for leadership is the decisive first step to adoption.

BUILD YOUR OWN SUCCESS STORY

READY TO TURN YOUR OPERATIONS STRATEGY INTO ALIGNED EXECUTION?

From manufacturers to global consumer-goods and logistics leaders, we help industrial and supply-chain organisations equip their managers, align their teams, and embed OKRs that turn strategy into measurable execution. We would welcome the chance to do the same with you.

Contact us →

okrinstitute.org · okrinstitute.org/case-studies