



# **Relaunching an OKR program with focus on alignment and results**





## About Shippo

As free and fast shipping becomes the norm, better access to shipping is a competitive advantage for many businesses. Shippo empowers retailers, e-commerce platforms, marketplaces, and logistics providers with the building blocks they need to succeed with shipping.

Shippo customers can connect to multiple shipping carriers around the world using their API and dashboard to get shipping rates, print labels, automate international documents, track shipments, and facilitate returns. Their passionate, hardworking team helps their customers process millions of shipments each month.

Shannon Lincoln, VP of Finance at Shippo is their OKR Ambassador. She approached Perdox and asked us to help refine and expand their OKR program.



### Company

Shippo



### Industry

Technology



### Goal

Re-launch OKR across Shippo and increase engagement of all employees



### Results

Improve OKR Program, better team alignment and a focus on results





## CHALLENGE

### Restarting OKR with Perdoo

When Perdoo first started working with Shippo, their rapid growth was cause for celebration. However, growing fast can throw up some unique challenges. One of the challenges Shippo faced was achieving alignment.

Shippo already had an OKR program that had moved through a couple of iterations by the time Shannon joined the company.

“The team had previously tried OKR software but then moved back to managing OKR in a spreadsheet”

OKR was an exercise amongst the leadership team, rather than involving the entire company in the process of creating and achieving business goals.

Having used Perdoo at another company, Shannon thought Perdoo’s software and approach to OKR could help OKR become embedded in Shippo’s culture.

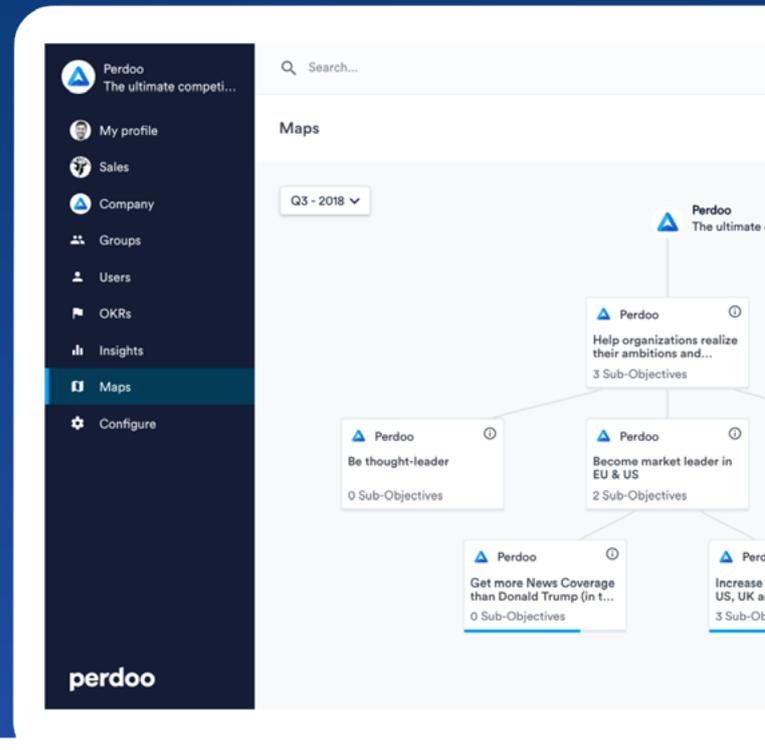
“My goal was to get everyone focused on results and pointed in the same direction”

## SOLUTION

### From outputs to outcomes

Working together with a Perdoo Coach, Shannon created a rollout and training plan starting with the Leadership team. The focus of the training was to shift thinking from measuring outputs to measuring outcomes. This focus on outcomes is an important step toward achieving alignment.

“When our OKRs were output focused, we could have successfully completed all our Key Results without actually moving the company forward,” said Shannon.



“Now, if we hit our OKRs, we should throw a party, because our OKRs measure impact instead of activity.”



#### Top-down rollout

Once executives were trained and had embraced the OKR program, OKR was introduced to the rest of the organization. For some departments, like Sales, it was easy to frame goals in terms of outcomes. For other departments, like Product, it required more work to translate goals into outcomes.



#### Perdoo Coaching

The Perdoo Coach sat down with the Product team and used a Socratic questioning approach to uncover the underlying outcomes that the Product team wanted to achieve with their roadmap. This helped the team shift their thinking from measuring outputs (e.g. number of features launched), to outcomes (e.g. increased engagement across users), and enabled them to focus on the work that matters most.

## RESULT

### An aligned team focused on results

The top-down rollout of OKR with Perdoo went well. “I was very impressed with how receptive our employees were. We had a few ex-Google employees who had worked with OKR before and personally experienced the benefits,” said Shannon. “but even employees who had never used OKR were excited.”

Despite the initial positive response from many, there was also a healthy dose of skepticism, especially since Shippo had tried OKR before. The concern was whether Perdoo’s approach would be any different than what they had tried before.

“What most people thought was missing from previous attempts was buy-in across the organization,” said Shannon. Addressing this early on in the implementation process by engaging leadership and encouraging them to drive adoption throughout the company helped to overcome this challenge.

#### Starting with the end in mind

Shippo’s first quarter working with OKR was a marked improvement from previous attempts. The Perdoo approach, starting with the mission & vision and strategy before creating Company OKRs, provided the clarity and focus the OKR program needed. Several departments immediately started to see an impact: better focus and alignment because of a clear path to success.

#### Tuning the OKR Program

“Over time and with proper guidance, you’ll learn a lot about how to tweak OKR for your organization. We learned, for instance, how to identify interdepartmental dependencies upfront and ensure that everyone is on the same page about

priorities for shared resources, like recruiting,” said Shannon.

As part of the Q4 2018 planning process, the leadership team invested time in gathering information necessary to evaluate the potential impact of various OKRs and make informed decisions about the priorities for this quarter.

“This quarter, we’ve been much better about measuring baseline metrics when we create our OKRs so that we have the data we need to evaluate the impact of our initiatives at the end of the quarter,” Shannon explained.

#### Focus is saying No to things

With OKRs in focus, employees feel they have permission to say No to things that aren’t a priority. “The upfront work around prioritization and inter-departmental alignment has already been done, so employees can focus on executing the related work that rather than constantly debating priorities”, said Shannon.





One piece of advice from Shannon to others looking to start OKR, “Take your time upfront to introduce the concept of OKR and get everyone bought into the new way of thinking before rolling it out. OKR is a significant change that affects the entire organization and successful adoption won’t happen overnight.”

“Even when we announced OKR, people who’d not worked with them before were saying ‘It’s great that we’re doing this’”



**Shannon Lincoln**  
VP of Finance

## What’s next for Shippo?

The future for Shippo is exciting. The amount of organic traffic to their website is a testament to the demand for their product and the feedback from users who write in with their own unsolicited success stories is an inspiration for Shannon and everyone at Shippo.

At Perdoo, we’re proud to play our small part in Shippo’s success.

# Ready to get started?

To learn more about Perdoo, and how we can help you connect strategy with execution and achieve company-wide alignment, visit:

[perdoo.com/get-a-demo](https://perdoo.com/get-a-demo)



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