

MULTI-RATER 360-DEGREE FEEDBACK

employee assessment & performance improvement

An exceedingly popular and powerful means for managers and employees to get information on their performance is the multi-rater 360-degree feedback instrument. Used independently, or as part of a management development program, multi-rater 360-degree feedback can enhance self-awareness by highlighting what supervisors, peers, subordinates, and customers see as an individual's strengths and development needs. It is an exceptionally effective tool for change. No other organizational action strategy has more power for motivating employee behavior change than candid feedback from work associates. Multi-source assessment creates accountability and service to all stakeholders: supervisor, external and internal customers, including coworkers and direct reports. In recognition of the importance of human capital, organizations are spending billions of dollars to enhance human performance using multi-rater 360-degree feedback tools.

All of the available evidence suggests that the greatest power residing in multi-rater feedback is in development. However, its' use in performance appraisals is increasing. A wide range of tasks are important in organizations, and some of them may be informed by the use of multi-rater feedback, including selection, performance appraisal, compensation, promotions, team assignments, transfers, downsizing, and succession planning.

The objective of a multi-rater 360-degree feedback process is to improve the competencies, skills, and behaviors of a single person or group of individuals. Competencies have been called the DNA of organizations because they are the essence of a company's competitive advantage. Organizational core competencies are those qualities that distinguish an organization's products or services from those of its' competitors and

establish value in the minds of its customers. A customized set of competencies for a specific position is developed and individuals are assessed on how well they demonstrate the desired competencies. Individuals are evaluated both on how they do the job and the results or outcomes achieved. Using 360-degree feedback instruments, employees can compare their own perceptions of their skills, abilities, and styles with the perceptions of others.

Multi-rater 360-degree feedback is a powerful process for developing people, renewing organizations, supporting a cultural change, team

building, promotion and succession planning, management development, building learning cultures, and implementing strategic initiatives.

Organizations are flattening hierarchies by eliminating unnecessary layers of management and putting increased emphasis on empowerment, teamwork, continuous learning, individual development, and self-management. The Multi-Rater Model aligns with the organizations strategic vision to create opportunities for personal and career development and for aligning individual performance expectations with corporate values. As organizations change their culture to align with their vision and values, multi-source feedback becomes a powerful method to communicate the new competencies required by the new values.

Multi-rater 360-degree feedback has many well-documented benefits:

- Defines corporate competencies. Identifies the critical factors that link job requirements with business objectives.
- Increases the focus on customer service.
- Creates a high-involvement workforce.
- Detects barriers to success.
- Gives employees, managers, and teams a clear understanding of personal strengths and areas for development.
- Increases employee retention
- Produces positive cultural change.
- Employees view feedback from different perspectives as fair, accurate, believable, and motivational
- The flexibility of the process makes it meaningful for people at all levels of the organization.
- Multi-rater feedback enhances the effectiveness of individual and team development, continuous improvement, cultural diversity, change management, executive coaching, and other company initiatives.

The multi-rater 360-degree feedback process typically consists of the following steps:

1. Develop core-competencies for position.
2. Select survey instrument that reflects organization's vision of success, values, and culture. Customize instrument to communicate competencies for effective performance.
3. Select feedback team. Feedback recipient chooses his/her own raters including colleagues, supervisor, direct reports, and customers.
4. Conduct targeted competency interview with feedback recipient. Administer 360- degree feedback instrument.

5. Train feedback raters on how to provide feedback to others. Administer 360-degree feedback instrument. Interview 6-8 individual raters face-to-face. Assure raters of absolute confidentiality of their responses.
6. Collect evaluations.
7. Score instruments. Conduct data interpretation & analysis.
8. Generate computer-assisted Feedback Report.
9. Coach feedback recipient on how to receive feedback.
10. Present the Developmental Feedback Report and identify strengths and improvement goals with feedback recipient.
11. Design and facilitate sharing and clarifying session with feedback recipient and raters.
12. Create Developmental Plan that clarifies preferred learning techniques, developmental targets, and effective strategies for change.
13. Design Planning Guide to include:
 - A clear, written statement of the specific developmental goal
 - The standards to be used for measuring when the target has been reached
 - The change strategies that will be incorporated into the plan
 - The action steps and learning techniques that correspond to each change strategy
 - The people who will be resources in the implementation or monitoring of the plan
14. Incorporate Executive Coaching sessions focused on insight, motivation, problem solving, skill acquisition, career development, and performance improvement.
15. Re-administer feedback instruments in 6-12 months to measure behavior change.

While creating a high-involvement culture, multi-rater 360-degree feedback provides a proactive system that aligns employees' behavior with organizational expectations. It promotes the corporate vision, improves employee interpersonal communication, and provides the constructive feedback most employees strongly desire.

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