

360° FEEDBACK ASSESSMENTS

What is a 360° Feedback Assessment?

A 360° feedback assessment is a method of systematically collecting data about an individual's performance from peers, direct reports, supervisors, partners, and other stakeholders in a confidential setting.

What does a 360° Feedback Assessment Provide?

The feedback received through a 360° assessment gives employees insight into how others perceive their skills and capabilities across a range of indicators for success. These first-hand observations help employees become more self-aware by providing quantitative and qualitative feedback.

A 360 instrument typically provides three key pieces of feedback: (OPM, 1997¹)

1. Identifying a starting point for development of new skills.
2. Measuring progress as the individual works on skills over time.
3. Understanding how others are impacted by our work approaches and behaviors.

360° Feedback Assessment vs Performance Appraisal:

A 360° feedback assessment is different from a performance appraisal. A performance appraisal measures how well an employee is meeting the expectations of their supervisor based on the employee's established performance plan. A 360° feedback assessment helps an employee identify critical behaviors for development.

How is a 360° Feedback Assessment implemented?

1. Most 360° assessments are administered through an on-line survey.
2. The individual receiving the 360° Feedback Assessment will select raters to complete the survey.
 - a. Raters should have at least one-year's experience working with the individual and the ability to provide feedback on observable behavior and skills.
 - b. Raters should know in advance about the request for feedback and be assured that feedback is anonymous (with the exception of the supervisor).
3. A suggested sample of raters should include:
 - a. Supervisor: at least 1
 - b. Peers: 3 – 6
 - c. Direct Reports: 4 – 6
 - d. Other: at least 3
4. The individual will also complete a self-rating on the same critical behaviors.
5. A reasonable time to complete the assessment is 30 days.

Leveraging the Feedback:

One of the primary purposes of a 360° assessment instrument is self-awareness. Follow these suggestions when reviewing your feedback:

1. To pull out the most important themes in your data, look for survey questions in which you are rated high/low by all or most raters. This may represent a strength/weakness.³
2. In addition to these themes, look for specific feedback that offers further insight.
3. Identify 2 to 3 themes that resonate with you, and create a list of actions you will take to address each theme.³
4. Working with a coach who is familiar with interpreting your feedback instrument can help you get the most out of the feedback provided.

The Role of a Coach:

According to consultant Charles Rogel, “34 percent of 360° feedback participants claim, when asked six months later, that they have made significant changes since receiving their feedback; while with coaching and goal setting, 94 percent report meaningful change.”⁴ A coach facilitates self-exploration and empowers action planning.

Pros and Cons of 360° Feedback Instruments:

Pros:

- Provides feedback to employees from a variety of sources.
- Identifies critical behaviors for development.
- Highlights areas within the environment that can hinder employee growth.
- Offers constructive feedback that identifies where to focus specific career development efforts.
- Provides insight on training needs.

Cons:

- Serves as only part of an overall employee development process.
- Causes organizational issues if implemented inappropriately.
- Can fail to add value if not effectively woven into existing individual development plan.
- Feedback is anonymous, so it may not be possible to address issues raised by a specific rater.
- Employee may overly focus on weaknesses and shortcomings, and neglect to leverage strengths.

Here are some examples of available 360° Feedback Assessment Instruments:

Instrument	Description	Cost	Used by NCTC?
Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)	Illuminates the effectiveness of leaders and their level of commitment, engagement, and satisfaction of those that follow. – Model, Inspire, Challenge, Enable, Encourage	\$90 per inventory + coach	Yes – Project Leader Academy
OPM Leadership 360°	Provides feedback on 105 behaviors based on the 28 government-wide leadership competencies that make up the 5 Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)	\$125 each + coach	Yes – Stepping up to Leadership
EchoSpan	Allows users to customize their 360° feedback instruments based on custom competencies from EchoSpan’s library or other proven models.	\$100 each + coach	Yes – Advanced Supervision
Trust Quotient	Uncovers the underlying elements of trust.	\$74 each + coach	Yes – Speed of Trust
Centers for Creative Leadership (CCL) Benchmarks	Addresses specific leadership issues of top-level executives.	\$250 each + coach	No
Everything DiSC 363	Leaders respond to a 79-item assessment and a leadership behavior section about how they tend to lead. Employees complete the same 79-item assessment and a leadership request that asks which leadership practices they prefer.	\$205 each + coach	No

Questions

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¹ “360-Degree Assessment: An Overview.” U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Sept. 1997, [www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/performance-management/performance-management-cycle/rating/360 assessment.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/performance-management/performance-management-cycle/rating/360%20assessment.pdf). Accessed May 9, 2019

² Heathfield Susan, M. “What is a 360 Review in the Workplace?”, The Balance Careers, Updated Dec. 30, 2018. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-is-a-360-review-1917541>. Accessed May 7, 2019.

³ Jackson, Eric and Jackson, Tim. “How to Get the Most out of your 360 Survey Feedback”, Forbes, Oct. 21, 2012. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericjackson/2012/10/01/how-to-get-the-most-out-of-your-360-survey-feedback/#2f23da3b1dda>. Accessed May 7, 2019.

⁴ Rogel, Charles. “360 Feedback Coaching.” *DecisionWise*, DecisionWise, 14 Feb. 2018. www.decision-wise.com/360-degree-feedback/coaching/. Accessed May 9, 2019.

⁵ Heathfield, Susan M. “360 Degree Feedback: See the Good, the Bad and the Ugly,” The Balance Careers, Updated February 14, 2019. Accessed May 7, 2019.