



## **How to Get Short-term Buy-in and Long-term Support for 360-degree Feedback Surveys!**

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Many organizations implement 360-degree feedback surveys in conjunction with annual performance reviews to provide managers with another perspective on an employee's performance and potential. Executive coaches and consultants use 360 surveys (in addition to many other tools) to help clients gain self-awareness and insight into areas of strength and areas for development.

If you incorporate the following best practices into your next 360 survey initiative, you will garner short term buy-in and long-term support for this effective assessment tool.

### **Key elements of a successful 360 survey initiative:**

1. Ensure a culture of trust exists in the organization – a prerequisite for introducing 360 surveys.
2. Introduce 360 surveys initially for development purposes only. Once employees endorse the tool, 360's can then be used for assessing performance.
3. Get management involved early to explain the context and agenda for implementing 360's and how the program aligns with the organization's talent strategies.

4. Conduct clear, open and regular communication with participants of a 360 survey especially with regard to sharing of results and next steps.
5. Develop a customized survey using questions that are clear, unambiguous and neutral, and that align with the individual's role and responsibilities.
6. Review the first draft of the survey with a sample of management and staff to test for any ambiguity.
7. Select raters for each survey participant who have worked with or for the individual for at least 4 months, preferably 6 months or longer.
8. Give raters sufficient time (10-14 days) to complete the surveys (consider that some raters may have multiple surveys to complete).
9. Use a password protected, online survey system to ensure anonymity – an experienced third party consultant also provides an added level of objectivity.
10. Provide follow-up coaching to help survey subjects interpret their results and implement changes into their work practices. External consultants and coaches can be contracted to debrief results and provide ongoing support.

When 360 surveys are carried out in a professional, systematic manner from start to finish, they yield valuable insight for the individual and a significant return on investment for the organization.

If, previously, you were skeptical about introducing 360-degree feedback surveys into your organization, I hope this article has changed your mind 180 degrees!

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