

Seven Critical Questions To Ask When Looking For 360 Appraisal Tools

*You can postpone making a selection on the best **360 appraisal tools** for ages, but what does that really achieve? It's just a stalling tactic that buys very little and may cost a large amount. The smarter approach is to carefully analyse your alternatives and single out the one that has the most advantages going for it.*

One of the key criticisms of 360 degree feedback is that it doesn't actually achieve anything. The questions can cover many different factors and competencies, and a lot of data will be collected. It is then hard to draw conclusions from the data and take action on the results. During a 360 feedback session, there is a strong tendency for participants to only focus on the negative messages, such that the positive data almost disappears from view. The key technique that assists this "letting in" is listening along with encouraging them to speak about their reactions and current thoughts or feelings. Only then will they have space to process anything more. You can team up with others in your industry to share ideas and even share a tool or benchmark. You can certainly ask for advice and input. Experts outside HR can also be your partners. Find someone who you feel you can trust and use them to assist you in selling and training in the 360 degree feedback. Business psychologists will likely be able to assist, as will OD consultants and some coaches and trainers. Business schools and local universities can also be useful to you as they might be venturing into some relevant research and be able to support and/or contribute to you and your managers. Most people look at 360 degree feedback data and assume that the highest rated questions must represent the individual's strengths and then also assume the lowest ratings are the weaknesses that need fixing. These are some big assumptions. Unfortunately this is a little oversimplistic to apply to most 360 degree feedback surveys. A core element of 360-degree feedback is confidentiality. Reviewers need to be able to deliver open, honest feedback without the concern that a close colleague or friend might be hurt or angered by the feedback. Incorporating 360-degree feedback into your organization should take time, thought, and proper organization, and the outcomes you expect should be linked to your strategic business goals. If your business is ready, here's how to get it prepared for 360-degree feedback processes.



Since 360-degree feedback processes are currently usually anonymous, people receiving feedback have no recourse if they want to further understand the feedback. They have no one to ask for clarification about unclear comments or for

more information about particular ratings and their basis. Thus, developing 360 process coaches is important. Supervisors, HR staff people, interested managers, and others are taught to assist people to understand their feedback and trained to help people develop action plans based on the feedback. For many interventions, the goal is to make improvements at the individual level; the measurement of impact stops there. However, other interventions are implemented for the purpose of creating organizational change. Organization-level change raises additional issues of change measurement, over and above those at the individual level. Among these are (1) what it means to aggregate individual-level scores into a group score and (2) understanding the role of factors other than individual-level change in organization-level change. Your manager can't help fix problems they are unaware of, so bringing issues to their attention is the first step to resolution. Constructive feedback can provide structure to how we improve our relationships, and if the relationship is not salvageable it provides a clear history of our side of the story. If there is anything that causes you problems to work with your manager you should be able to discuss it with your manager, if not face to face then in a feedback survey. A grounded understanding of what is so, of what is currently real, is a critical bedrock of transformation. Transformation or development based on a false understanding of reality tends not to go too well. Looking into [what is 360 degree feedback](#) can be a time consuming process.

Culture Shock

The whole process of 360 degree response works very well and serves its purpose. It generates hormones and feelings and thoughts and a whole pattern of behaviour deep rooted in the past. It will feel automatic and as if there is no control. The tiny amount of brain power we have in our cognitive centre⁵⁹ does not get a look in at this stage, not for a while, yet this is the processing required to make real sense of the data and to get clear what to do. Feedback results in a 360 degree review can be presented as raw scores, through different rating types (calculated on the basis of the number of raters or the total number ratings, as the case may be) or standardized scores combined with or show separate from subjective comments gleaned from answers to open-ended questions in the feedback form. An important step to success is clearly defining the purpose of 360 feedback and making sure people understand why you are doing it. Communicate the purpose of 360 feedback to all employees, the benefits to stakeholders and how the results will be used. Prepare individuals to receive feedback, and provide feedback training to reviewers. Encourage reviewers to leave constructive comments. We suggest offering two different report formats for those participating in a 360 degree review; a single page summary report for an 'at a glance' view, and a detailed report for deeper analysis. A summary report would normally contain a summary of key strengths, development areas, and perception gaps, which are where either others rated you higher than you did yourself or vice versa. Some organizations provide employees with recommendations for career development, leadership development, or other performance improvement actions. These processes, still in their infancy, tend to read like paragraphs pulled from a leadership textbook. Other organizations support development plans with materials that itemize developmental actions for a wide

variety of behavioral areas. Keeping up with the latest developments regarding [360 degree feedback system](#) is a pre-cursor to Increased employee motivation and building the link between performance and rewards.

Organizations that use customer feedback regularly to support quality initiatives often find that 360 degree feedback systems are a logical next step. And where some managers already use informal feedback methods, formalizing the process makes sense. Organizations that use multirater processes, such as selection panels and committees for selection and placement decisions, often find employees view 360 degree feedback as a natural extension to current practice. Funding for 360 degree feedback can be an issue. It can be delivered at no cost. This is likely to be a process involving email, spreadsheet or Word documents with manual collating of data. You can create a macro spreadsheet to gather data more cleverly. Anyone who exercises some form of leadership, particularly if they lead a team of people is suitable for 360 degree feedback. It is not appropriate for someone who is carrying out a technical role primarily as an individual contributor. The model is based on the premise that successful outcomes are achieved through people and enabled through leaders who are self-aware and values-driven. When done well performance management uses a range of techniques to achieve the best outcome. When developing behavioral skills as part of a performance management process, 360-degree feedback is an ideal tool. Behavioral skills are things like communication, teamwork and leadership. They are more difficult to evaluate than technical skills that can be easily tested and demonstrated. When it comes to 360-degree feedback, one size does not fit all. You need to design this form of review process specifically and tailor it to your workforce. Additionally, the questions you ask need to be targeted towards the data you hope to receive. Nonetheless, a keen understanding of [360 appraisal](#) can be seen to be a multifaceted challenge in any workplace.

Co-operative Enquiry

Not even the most holistic multi-rater initiatives, such as the 360 degree review, can succeed without the involvement of key decision-makers in a company. And the senior management's support is indispensable. It is an excellent idea to ask these key stakeholders to agree to join the pilot group. It is crucial to set the proper tone as they share their experiences and feedback with every stakeholder in the organization. Norm (or benchmark) data can be shown early on in the 360 degree appraisal - whether this is organisation-specific or an external set of comparative norm data. You need to consider inclusion of this data carefully and check acceptability as organisations vary in this respect. 360s works because it takes subjectivity (mostly) out of the equation. It's not just one person providing a review; instead, it's a group, all looking at an employee from a horizontal, vertical, and diagonal perspective. This helps remove any biases that may influence a review. If you are one of the reviewers in a 360 review, remember that your feedback doesn't have to focus on weaknesses. I can't stress this point strongly enough: You are actually helping more when you focus on your colleague's strengths. 360 degree feedback may be about broad overarching issues like governance, aligning vision

and purpose, financial acumen and business outlook, technical and functional skills, accountability, problem-solving, engaging and responding to stakeholders or thought leadership – as the requirement might be. Developing the leadership pipeline with regard to [360 degree feedback](#) helps clarify key organisational messages.

New data can give you a fresh perspective, as you may be viewing the organisation using new distinctions or models. A fresh perspective can lead to a whole new way of thinking. In an organisational setting 360 degree feedback provides an opportunity that is quite unique. If you are asked to give feedback for a manager, it means they want to know your view, it can imply respect and interest, and indicate that they care about you and your opinions. When you give your ratings and your open feedback you are expressing yourself, probably a step (or even two!) beyond the level you have ever gone before. Most 360 degree feedback projects deliberately make it safe for reviewers, including the individuals themselves, to express themselves fully, although there are degrees of anonymity as noted earlier and there will be a natural level of comfortable confidentiality in this situation for every culture. Full expression may be considered dangerous or wrong, particularly in the predominantly Asian cultures where there are strong norms for what is OK to say and what is not OK. Self-knowledge is often regarded as the single most important factor in the practice of leadership and critical to life/job success. The power of 360 degree feedback is that it provides a reality check. Proactively inviting feedback from people you work with helps you understand the range of perceptions others have of you and how your behaviours affect them. It will be critical to engage senior leader champions for a successful 360 development program. Take the time to educate and reiterate the importance of feedback and how it helps to address future skill needs of the organisation as well as provide development to employees. Supporting the big vision encompassing [360 feedback software](#) will lead to untold career development initiatives.

Common Pitfalls

The 360 degree feedback process yields specific and quantitative information for each employee to use in making intelligent career decisions. When work associates are assured that they will remain anonymous, they are willing to provide insight they might not reveal in a face-to-face meeting. The 360 degree review can focus too much on an employee's weaknesses and not enough on their strengths, which can be pretty discouraging. It's okay to highlight areas for improvement, but remember to focus on strengths and how that strengths can be leveraged more on the team. Once the 360 degree data has been processed there is this key step of "being OK with all of this". If the data is generally positive this may not be hard (although sometimes the data is so much more positive than fits the self-identity that this is not guaranteed), but if there are negative bits then this can feel impossible. Of course you do not like key others not being impressed, how could you!? Find further details about 360 appraisal tools in this [NHS](#) link.

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