

## 7 THINGS TO AVOID WHEN IMPLEMENTING A 360 REVIEW PROCESS

Learning from the mistakes of others is a great way to get your own 360 degree feedback process to work well.

The following are the most common pitfalls we've seen, yet all of them are fairly easy to overcome.

- Mistake 1 - Implementing a 360 review process simply because it's "best practice" / "used by the best organisations" etc. 360 needs to be clearly linked to a key business / organisational goal or driver. Things like:
  - supporting middle and senior managers to take their performance to the next level
  - changing the management culture / embedding expected leadership, organisational behaviours, values etc.
  - ensuring leadership and management development programmes have a clearly defined agenda based on real needs
- Mistake 2 - Trying to use 360 for performance and development purposes at the same time. Whilst the basic concept of 360 feedback is similar whether it is used for development or performance evaluation, successfully implementing them requires very different approaches with regards to rating scales, competency alignment, responder subjectivity etc. Use it for either development or as part of the measurement cycle but not both at the same time.
- Mistake 3 - Using a generic questionnaire. Every organisation we have ever worked with has been unique, each having its own culture, aspirations, challenges, values, people etc. For a 360 feedback questionnaire to work it has to be 'fit for purpose' i.e. it needs to clearly define the organisation's expectations of its managers / leaders now and in the future. Generic 360 questionnaires are dead!
- Mistake 4 - Leaving participants to sink or swim. Without some form of coaching support, the majority of participants don't have the knowledge, skills and 'feedback maturity' to successfully convert their reports into meaningful action-focused development plans.
- Mistake 5 - Hoping that change will take place. Without having all / most of the following in place, it's likely that no significant benefits will ever be seen from a 360 programme:
  - the use of a post-360 action plan
  - involving line managers in monitoring improvement progress
  - insisting participants make personal development commitments to their team
  - the use of colleagues / peers to support development goals
  - hard measures – such as scheduling a repeat of the 360 process further down the line
- Mistake 6 - Running before you walk Build 'feedback maturity' over time. Building a 360 degree review culture is more likely to succeed if first time participants are given full control and ownership over the whole process – this



entails allowing participants to identify the people from whom they would like feedback and to decide who will see their 360 review report. Taking this approach reduces many of the concerns talked about by participants when they use a 360 review process for the first time. For many people this means they can enter the feedback exercise with an open and accepting mind, without feeling the need to self-justify or defend any critical feedback to others.

- Mistake 7 - Assuming that everyone 'gets it' Most people have their own interpretation of what 360 feedback is / is not with many assuming a negative reason lies behind its implementation (which is rarely the case). Communicating the reasons behind its use to all key stakeholders, in a way that motivates and engages people is easily done and a key ingredient to its successful use.

Lumus360 provide free consultancy on how to ensure your 360 feedback is a great success. Just call +44 (0)1291 3637380.

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