

## BEFORE

### *Preparing, Planning, Administering*

#### WHAT IS A 360° SURVEY?

The 360° Survey assesses your behavior on the job against a set of competencies required for success as a manager or leader. **COMPETENCIES** are defined as knowledge, skills, behaviors, and abilities; a set of competencies is a **COMPETENCY MODEL**.

The surveys are distributed and completed by people from all around you (360 degrees) – your supervisors, peers, and direct reports. And, of course, you provide your own self-assessment. The resulting multiple responses provide valuable insight and feedback on how others view your actual performance *on the job*.

Most performance development processes seek to define success, measure performance, and then find and fix gaps. The 360° Survey can provide you with information you need to proceed through the performance management and development process.

#### Step 1: Define Success

You can't be expected to succeed until you know how success is defined for *your* role within *your* organization. Interviews and research were conducted to isolate **COMPETENCIES** that are associated with leadership and management success.

#### Step 2: Measure Performance

This **SURVEY** was then developed to assess your competency in areas required for success. Survey responses are collected in two formats: via fixed-scale questions, and via open written comments.

#### Step 3: Find and Fix Gaps

The data synthesis and analysis reported in your 360° Feedback Report helps you see where you are already succeeding, and what you can do to be even more successful. It can guide your **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**.

Use it to establish your development plan with the help of your manager and/or coach.

#### WHY AM I DOING THIS?

Professional growth requires honest and constructive feedback. The 360° Survey was created to satisfy this requirement.

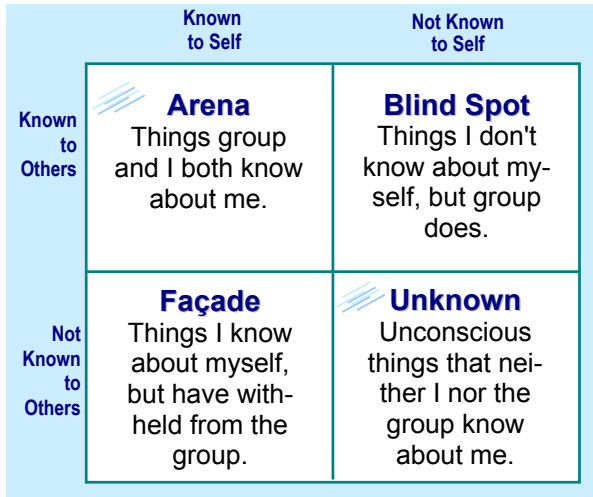
#### FEEDBACK

*Feedback* is defined as “verbal or nonverbal communication to a person or group, which provides information about how their behavior is affecting you or others, or the state of your here-and-now feelings and perceptions.”

It is through feedback that others learn how *we* see them, and we discover how others see us.

## THE JOHARI WINDOW MODEL

One tool used to learn more about feedback is the Johari Window. It illustrates the concept that we all share some things and hold other things to ourselves.



(Adapted and Used with Permission)

The information contained in these "panes" is dynamic, moving from one pane to another as the level of mutual trust and exchange of feedback varies.

Ideally, we want to broaden the **Arena**, the pane of our public self, characterized by free and open interaction. In this field, our behavior is aboveboard and open to others.

Consequently, people are less likely to misinterpret our behavior. When most of our feelings, perceptions and opinions are public, neither "we" nor "they" have to engage in game playing.

**The Goal**  
Expand your area of **Free and Open** interaction.

## CHOOSING & PREPARING RATERS

Choose individuals from among your peers and direct reports who have known and

worked with you for *at least* six months, and who will be open and honest in their responses.

It's a good idea to prepare your raters in a brief, one-to-one meeting. Request three minutes of their time. Then, in those three minutes:

- Assure them of the confidentiality of the process: responses of peers and direct reports are grouped together to preserve anonymity.
- Let them know how much you appreciate their honest, thoughtful responses.
- Ask them to use the full range of the rating scale for their responses. They'll be struggling against a universal inclination called *central tendency* that disposes appraisers to offer mid-point ratings. Use of the full scale provides a more robust result.
- Ask them not to guess. Their responses should reflect their own observations and experience, not rumor or hearsay. If they don't know, that's ok. There's a "**cannot access/not applicable**" response for just these circumstances.
- Show them an example of a specific and complete written response. The best feedback is specific, descriptive, and free of judgmental language.

*For example:*

**Less Useful** "Kelly doesn't care about anybody else in the group."

**Better** "Kelly talks excessively during meetings."

**Most Useful** "Kelly often interrupts others when they are speaking, preventing equal input from the rest of the group."

- Tell them that you will call them a few days before their responses are due to remind them of the approaching deadline. Remember to mark your calendar and follow-up.
- Thank them for the effort and energy they will be expending on your behalf.

## YOUR SUPERVISOR IS VITAL TO THIS PROCESS

Spend a little extra time with your supervisor. Bring him/her into the loop and ask for suggestions and support. Decide *before* the process begins how you will share the results with your boss.

## HOW LONG DOES THE PROCESS TAKE?

The actual time to complete a single survey is only about 30-45 minutes. However, each individual's total time investment varies greatly depending on their role. The entire survey process generally takes about 6-8 weeks, start to finish.

**Participants** should count on 2-3 hours of orientation meetings with supervisors and other raters, then another 3-4 hours of follow-up meetings and conferences, for a total of 5-7 hours.

**Raters** generally spend 1-1½ hours per survey: 30-45 minutes completing the survey, and another 30-45 minutes in follow-up.

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## AFTER

### *Understanding, Owning, Acting*

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*Each participant will receive a confidential, comprehensive reports prepared by OSI. Use of this external consulting firm ensures*

*the confidentiality so critical to the success of the process.*

## RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback is not everybody's idea of fun. Ideally, we would like to associate feedback with positive emotions like affirmation, renewal, relief, and acceptance. More often, the thought of receiving feedback evokes negative emotions like:

- ❖ Surprise
- ❖ Anger
- ❖ Denial
- ❖ Anxiety or Fear

## THE FEEDBACK MINDSET

Opening your mind to feedback is the first step in the internal adjustment to change. When approaching your survey results:

***Express Gratitude:*** Feedback is a gift. You initiated the 360° feedback process by asking a number of people to thoughtfully consider and rate your work performance. By complying with your wishes, your raters have given you something valuable: a glimpse of your professional self through their eyes. Thanking people for their feedback, and letting them know how and why it is useful will reinforce their willingness to engage with you in the future.

***Maintain Neutrality:*** When we feel attacked, we're likely either to defend or to blame ourselves. As we struggle to build a case for (or against) ourselves, much useful information gets lost. Prepare yourself to receive uncomfortable feedback by practicing neutral comments (to yourself or another) such as "I'll think about that." Accepted valid feedback and admit errors without engaging in negative self-talk or exagger-

ated put-downs. Then move forward. Learn also to accept *positive* feedback at face value. Most likely, the person praising you has no ulterior motive.

***Be Optimistic:*** You now have information that you didn't have before. With valid information, you can make better choices, set a more accurate course, and then maintain it over time.

***Affirm Yourself:*** The most important lesson you can draw from this process is to identify what you're doing right and build on it. Don't fight against who you are (in the context of your organization). Draw upon your strengths to compensate for or remedy any competency strengths you might lack.

## MAKING SENSE OF THE REPORT

A good way to orient yourself to the report is to informally summarize the overall findings and then link them to your professional and life goals.

Put the survey into context by answering these two questions:

1. What is your ultimate career ambition?
2. What are your current job/life challenges?

Then explore the feedback data:

<b>Expected Good News</b>	<b>Expected Bad News</b>
<b>Unexpected Good News</b>	<b>Unexpected Bad News</b>

## RATER ERRORS

You may be concerned about the accuracy and variability of ratings you receive. Research indicates that although 360° Surveys are *not* perfect, they are far more reliable and accurate than ratings from a single source, such as your boss. As with any rating instrument, certain rater errors could impact the accuracy of ratings. Some of these errors are:

### Halo Error

This is a tendency to rate someone higher or lower based on the perception that their ability (or lack of ability) on one question applies to all questions for that competency, or worse still, from one competency to all competencies. Some causes of the halo effect are:

***Similar to Me:*** Mike went to my school; he got a good education like I did, so Mike must naturally excel in all these dimensions (like I do).

***Generalizing One Proficiency To Others:*** Ellen is a great people person, so she's probably great in the other areas as well.

***Strong First Impression:*** A positive or negative first impression often biases ratings, especially if there's not a lot of other experience with that person.

### Central Tendency

This is the inclination to choose midpoint ratings, which results in an absence of significant variance in the analysis. Central tendency error is due to either 1) inadequate or indirect experience with the participant, or 2) a reluctance to offer extreme opinions.

### Insufficient Information

When raters lack sufficient experience with the participant, they can over-emphasize recent or vivid recollections of performance in a particular competency because they lack

the cumulative experience necessary for reliable assessment. Raters need several months' experience to evaluate many of the competencies in the leadership model. This is why you choose raters who have worked with you for as at least six months.

## DISPARITY BETWEEN RATERS

You may notice differences between the ratings given by different rater groups. For instance,

### 1. Disparity Between Self & Peers / Supervisors:

Sometimes a peer or supervisor just lacks sufficient data for a reliable evaluation. Other times, performance in the competency area isn't readily visible. For example, it may not be possible for a peer to accurately measure your coaching/counseling skills, especially if they rarely see you around your direct reports.

Frequently, gaps can be explained by actual differences in perceptions. (Sometimes it's said that peers rate your *reputation*, and this can be valuable in and of itself!)

### 2. Disparity Between Self & Direct Reports:

Fear of negative consequences, even in an anonymous process, can sometimes inflate ratings from direct reports. Other times, direct reports lack sufficient data or knowledge to judge particular competencies. Most times, though, rating differences reflect actual differences in perception.

There are no *right* or *wrong* ratings. They are all PERCEPTIONS of your competence. Only changes in understanding and subsequent behavior can alter those perceptions.

## INTERPRETING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

Your Feedback Report provides numerical and graphical representation of the data collected. Things to review in your Feedback Report include:

### Individual Competency Ratings

In this section, ratings for each question are reported according to rater groups.

### High Ten / Low Ten Summary

In this section, look for any category that occurs four or more times in either the top or bottom ten items. These can point to specific competency strengths or weaknesses that others perceive in you.

### Zero Response Items

This part of the report lists items for which at least half of the respondents rated either *0* or *Cannot Assess*. A rating of this type can result from a rater's:

- Lack of experience with you regarding a particular item
- Lack of understanding of the construct being measured
- Uncertainty of the standard of performance in a particular role.

For each specific item, try to determine why so many respondents were unable to evaluate your performance. For competencies that are particularly important to your role, you may wish to select a different group of raters who are more familiar with your behavior, abilities and attitudes and perform a re-evaluation.

### Written Comments

Written comments are solicited because they are a rich source of insight into your numerical scores. To protect the anonymity of the writer, all comments are transcribed by OSI.

## MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

The ideal outcomes for this process are to:

- Affirm your areas of strength and leverage them to maximize your effectiveness
- Understand your behavior through candid feedback
- Engage in learning to accelerate development.

It is important to recognize that change takes work and commitment. Your coach will help you maximize the benefits of your feedback.

The coach will help you:

- Interpret your feedback report
- Begin developmental planning
- Plan a strategy for discussing results with your boss, peers and staff
- Explore options for measuring progress.

### Self-Coaching

Ask yourself the following:

1. How does the report compare to other feedback I have received in the past? What are the biggest surprises? Have I resolved my questions about the feedback?
2. What is my motivation to change? What's in it for me, my team, my organization?
3. What are my top 2 or 3 developmental goals for the next 12-18 months? What vital actions must I take to address them? How will I keep my developmental goals a top priority?
4. When, how, and with whom will I make these changes? Which situations will I find most challenging?
5. Whose support will I seek? Who could provide ongoing feedback?
6. How will I record my progress, successes, setbacks, and lessons? How will I know when I am succeeding?

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*At this point you should feel comfortable in your understanding of the 360° Survey Process. If you still have questions, be sure to contact OSI at (858) 455-0923, or email [mail@orgsysinc.com](mailto:mail@orgsysinc.com).*