

360° Feedback in Management Development

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Leadership and management quality can no longer afford to wait and measure their success after the fact by the results achieved. Controlling the quality of management is just as important as quality assurance and controls in a company's service areas. When considered as part of business processes management cannot be exempted from quality control.

The usual management development programs follow the principle of the "goldfish pond" and/or personal promotion through company management. The quality of development is generally difficult to measure and is left up to the personal opinions of decision makers in the company; a procedure which no company would accept if it was a matter of product development and introduction of new products on the market.

To make management development and thus the quality of management more controllable, a data collection system for studying the market on which the manager moves is a key component in management development.

Objectives of 360° Feedback

The feedback system helps make the objectives and the achievement of the development objectives more transparent. Managers generally accept the feedback system as a means of quality assessment.

Managers plan their development and appropriate measures for achieving their development objectives on the basis of the feedback system.

The feedback system allows managers to independently control their own development .

- It covers their various levels of activity
- The feedback system allows for easy controlling through coordinated metrics and graphical representation.
- It can also be employed as a control instrument.

The elements of development in 360° Feedback

Development of the feedback system

The criteria and the structure of the 360° Feedback process is developed and coordinated with the decision makers in cooperation with strategic management, HR development and junior managers. The system ideally limits itself to a few agreed development criteria that are polled at all feedback levels and can be illustrated in easily understandable and comparable evaluations and charts with the help of IT support.

Regarding existing feedback tools such as employee and customer surveys, it is being determined whether these elements can be incorporated - modified if appropriate - into the feedback system in order to avoid unnecessary duplicate feedback.

360° Feedback levels

The 360° Feedback system includes the following:

Leadership feedback

Regular feedback from supervisors according to specified criteria. Leadership feedback is evaluated in reflection discussions with their own supervisors and objectives for development in the work process are derived.

Team feedback

Feedback from the employees in the working group. Feedback is discussed with the mentor, supervisor and finally with the team and measures are derived in a process of cooperation.

Colleague feedback

The feedback from colleagues on the same level is discussed with a colleague selected by the manager; recommendations are agreed then and further discussed with the supervisor.

Customer feedback

Two, max. three long-standing customers chosen by the manager in consultation with the supervisor are included in the feedback system. The manager is enabled to lead the feedback discussions with the customer. He or she reconciles the results with his or her supervisors.

Elements of 360° Feedback development

The feedback system is the basis for assessing management quality. The development of quality in management should be regarded as a process.

The process is characterized by the following elements:

1. Management audit

On the basis of the developed feedback system, managers start off by going through a management audit in which they are given the first basic feedback on all specified dimensions of development. The management audit can include the following elements:

- a structured interview,
- PC simulation with results presentation,
- and interactive business game elements for
- leadership, divisional and corporate management.

2. Development plan

Based on the results of management audit, the development steps and measures as well as the execution and scheduling of the comprehensive feedback process in the 360° system are planned.

3. Mentors

As support in the development process and to reflect on the feedback, every manager looks for a mentor who they trust to support and discuss the reflection process with the help of the feedback system, but who is not personally involved in the feedback system as a feedback provider. The manager is free to decide whether or not to submit the collected feedback data to his or her mentor. The principle of mentorship is that of external support in a spirit of trust. The manager also selects a colleague on the same hierarchical level as a reflection partner for the colleague feedbacks. In this case the reflection partner is also integrated into the system.

4. Exchange groups

Managers, accompanied by internal HR development, form an exchange group that meets regularly to discuss and reflect on mutual experiences and prepare customer feedbacks. The group is meant as support for managers and the discussion of the usefulness of the 360° Feedback process and the resulting measures and meets approximately every six months.

5. Support from supervisor

In quarterly meetings, the results of all the feedbacks will be discussed, reflected on with the supervisor and objectives for development in the work process agreed.



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The 360° Feedback procedure at a glance

Execution

Project planning phase

- Coordination in the company
- Consideration of available feedback tools
- Framework guidelines for the feedback system
- Involvement of managers and supervisors
- Mentor selection
- Preparing management audit
- IT concept and implementation, if needed

Management audit

- Execution
- First comprehensive feedback
- Development planning
- First meetings with mentor
- Beginning of the exchange group
- Stocktaking with the supervisor

First 360° Feedback

- Leadership style analysis
- Customer feedback
- Team feedback
- Colleague feedback

Evaluation phase

- Preparation of data for the managers
- Reflection with the supervisor
- Meetings with mentor
- Concretization of development planning in exchange group

Development phase

- Implementation of measures
- Exchange groups
- Stocktaking with the supervisor
- Meetings with mentor

Second 360° Feedback

- Leadership style analysis
- Customer feedback
- Team feedback
- Colleague feedback