



## Avoid the Top Thirteen 360 Degree Feedback Mistakes

The top mistakes that can sink your ability to effectively measure and build leadership qualities with 360 Degree Feedback:

MISTAKE 1: Subjects and raters do not receive enough communication up front.

**WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: All involved MUST understand WHY you're doing 360 feedback and HOW the information will be used.**

MISTAKE 2: Surveys results are used in place of or with performance appraisals. 360 feedback results are considered when determining raises and promotions.

**WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: Results should be used for development purposes only. Tying results to pay, kills the ability to get honest feedback and creates all sorts of mis-trust. Don't let this big error sink you!**

MISTAKE 3: Subjects and Raters do not receive instructions on how to give positive and helpful feedback.

**WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: Instructions should be provided verbally and in writing and are as simple as:**

'Do not rate higher or lower than deserved.'

'When writing comments, describe both positive and constructive aspects.'

'The best comments are very specific and include examples.'

'Avoid emotional comments, whether positive or constructive.'

MISTAKE 4: Not using a secure online system to ensure anonymity of raters.

**WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: If raters do not feel assured that the feedback they offer is confidential, they'll not share their true perspective.** If this happens, leaders miss an opportunity to address any 'festering' issues.

MISTAKE 5: The survey you're using is canned and not tailored to you and your company's needs.

**WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: If the items being measured are not specifically important to your team and company now, the feedback's not pertinent and probably will not be acted upon.** Use a survey you can tailor.

MISTAKE 6: The selected raters do not really see the leader in action on a regularly basis.

**WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: This will create feedback that is 'light', potentially inaccurate and overall, not very helpful.**



MISTAKE 7: You have less than three raters for each category, for example only two peers or only two direct reports.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: This makes your ability to assure confidentiality an issue. **Have three or more raters in each relationship area, as often as possible.**

MISTAKE 8: You have **too many items** for people to rate on the survey.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: More than 40 items and your raters get fatigued. This causes the quality of the feedback to decline dramatically.

MISTAKE 9: The survey does not provide specific and actionable development recommendations for lowest scoring areas.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: People need help making change - if they knew how they'd be doing it already. Make sure you get and give **specific and actionable development recommendations.**

MISTAKE 10: Leaders/Subjects only focus on their weaknesses and the Subject leaves the review session discouraged and feels threatened.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: **All development plans should include equal focus on leveraging strengths and closing development gaps.** This process, when done right, is encouraging and helpful. Leaders feel sure, more confident about what they offer and they now have insight into how they can specifically improve.

MISTAKE 11: Subjects are allowed to pick more than 2 development areas to focus on.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: **People can only change one thing at a time, successfully.** Have each leader pick one or two high impact development areas he/she can 'attack' for improvement.

MISTAKE 12: Subjects do not get back to their Rater/Team with a summary of their results and their action plan.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: **Raters hate it** when they take time to give feedback and don't hear back. This breeds resentment and causes the leader's team to judge the leader more harshly in the future.

MISTAKE 13: There's no follow up with the leaders/subjects who were surveyed.

WHY IT MATTERS/HOW TO FIX THIS: If you don't have follow up development discussions and no there is benchmarking process to measure improvement, the 360 Feedback project becomes just another 'flavor of the month' exercise. **Follow up is crucial.** Many 360 tools provide the ability to re-assess in 8-12 months, comparing the new scores to previous scores. This helps the leader stay focused and accountable to improvement.

360 Degree Feedback Tools [www.pricelessprofessional.com/360feedbacktools](http://www.pricelessprofessional.com/360feedbacktools)

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