



Feedback that fuels **success**.™

Frequently Asked Questions

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There are many questions that may arise during implementation of 360 degree feedback programs. To prepare you to address questions with confidence, please refer to this list of frequently asked questions. If you have questions that are not covered here, please contact your 3D Group Project Manager or email inquiry@3DGroup.net.

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General

What is 360 degree feedback?

360 degree feedback is unlike any other people development strategy in practice today. In a 360 degree feedback program, an employee is given feedback via surveys distributed to his or her co-workers, customers, supervisor, and direct reports. These surveys contain questions about the employee's behavior at work. Open-ended comments are requested to add richness and detail to the numerical ratings. The data collected is then analyzed and presented in a feedback report. Qualified coaches are often available to confidentially discuss the report and assist feedback recipients with skill improvement and development planning. Some organizations use feedback for development purposes only, but other organizations also integrate the results into succession planning, performance management, or promotional systems.

What is the purpose of a 360 degree feedback assessment?

The purpose varies by organization. Some organizations implement 360 degree feedback for developmental purposes, whereas others use the process for administrative decisions. Regardless, the assessment is a means of comparing how feedback recipients perceive themselves on job-related competencies with how others view them on these competencies. The feedback is useful for identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses. Knowing the areas of the job that the feedback recipient excels in and where he/she has room to develop can help the feedback recipient efficiently focus developmental efforts.

What are leadership competencies?

Competencies are standard sets of skills and characteristics required by leaders in organizations. Examples of competencies include Integrity, Communication Skills, and Business Focus.

What are the benefits of 360 degree feedback degree feedback?

Research has demonstrated that 360s result in:

- Reduced employee turnover
- Increased communication among team members
- Greater efficiency and collaboration
- Data-driven training and development programs
- Stronger bottom-line

Should 360 degree feedback be linked to performance appraisals?

360 degree feedback and performance appraisals can complement each other; but when 360 scores are used to make compensation decisions, it loses its power as a development tool. When compensation is related to outcomes from a 360 degree assessment, individuals will be reluctant to provide low ratings. Instead, people quickly adopt a, "I'll give you a high rating if you give me a high rating" strategy. This introduces undesirable rating bias and can ultimately decrease employee morale. Conversely, when it is clear that the 360 degree assessment will be used only for developmental purposes, the feedback it generates is viewed as constructive. Instead of directly linking the 360 results to compensation we recommend using the development goals identified by the 360 degree feedback process to inform the goals in the participant's performance review.

How can the validity and reliability of the 360 degree feedback survey be verified?

Ask for our Technical Reports demonstrating the validity and reliability, as well as norms, of our Corporate Leader, Executive, Individual Contributor, and Organizational Leader surveys.

How important are national norms?

Although each organization may have a different culture and set of values, core competencies important for most managerial jobs are relevant across organizations and industries. For example, effective communication is important for all managers. For this reason, 3D Group provides information on national norms in our 360 degree feedback reports. 3D Group can also generate company norms for your client upon request. Norms can be used to gauge how effectively a manager is functioning relative to other managers at a similar organizational level. While norms are informative, they should not be used as the sole criterion by which individual performance is assessed. Factors such as background, situation, and organizational climate should also be considered.

Why are rating scales anchored Never – About Half the Time – Always?

The construct of interest in 360 degree feedback is the behavior of the feedback recipient. Sometimes 360 degree surveys use a “Strongly Disagree/Strongly Agree” scale. Interpretation of these scales is problematic, in the sense that scores constitute the average to which raters agree with several statements, rather than the frequency with which a manager engages in certain behaviors. Since the focus is on employee behavior, not rater agreement, 3D Group uses a scale that is explicitly tied to behavior.

How much communication is suggested within the organization prior to implementing a 360 degree program?

Generally speaking, more communication yields better results. A memo from a senior person in the company informing everyone involved in the 360 degree feedback program and asking for their cooperation is an effective way to begin communications. The memo should inform participants that they will soon receive specific instructions on how to participate. The memo should describe the purpose and also stress the importance of participating in the program, as well as several benefits of participation. 3D Group can share communication templates for you to use as a starting point.

How can the participants be supported after they receive their feedback report?

Receiving the 360 degree feedback report, particularly if it is the first report, can be an emotional and humbling experience. To increase the chances that these reactions on the part of the participant translate into developmental actions, 3D Group can provide an Interpretation Guide with every feedback report. This guide leads feedback recipients through the process of understanding their report and helps them make effective use of the information. Although the Interpretation Guide is a good start, feedback recipients generally benefit from one-on-one or group coaching, in which a 360 degree feedback expert walks them through their report and highlights their strengths and developmental opportunities. Research has consistently demonstrated that coaching provided by 360 degree feedback experts is associated with the most successful 360 degree feedback programs.

Rater Selection

What is the URL for the Rater Selection website?

The URL for the Rater Selection website is <https://secure.3dgroupsurveys.com/sms.jsp>.

How many raters can be/must be selected?

3D Group recommends that the feedback recipient (self), as well as his/her boss, be entered as raters. For information from peers and direct reports (or other groups besides “boss”) to be displayed in the feedback report, a minimum of three raters in per category must complete the survey. It is usually advantageous to include more than 3 raters per category in case some raters do not complete the survey. Up to 35 raters are allowed for each participant, although we can accommodate more upon request.

How should raters be chosen?

There are several considerations when selecting raters to give feedback:

- Length of time the person has known the feedback recipient (minimum is generally six months)
- Amount of contact the person has had with feedback recipient professionally in the last six months
- The extent to which the person understands the full nature of what the feedback recipient does
- The likelihood the person will provide honest, constructive feedback (even if negative)

How should the relationship for each rater be selected?

There are four typical relationship categories in 360 degree feedback. They are as follows:

- Self: This is the feedback recipient
- Boss: This is the direct manager or supervisor
- Peers: These constitute people who work at the same level as the feedback recipient in the organization
- Direct Reports: These are the people who report directly to the feedback recipient

There is an option to add categories and customize the titles. See “Modify Rater Groups” on the Job Order form.

How do we remind participants to select their raters?

The 3D Group Project Manager is responsible for sending out reminders. Based upon the agreement and timeline created with 3D Group, reminders are sent to participants who have not yet completed rater selection.

What if the wrong rater email is entered?

If there is reason to believe the rater email was entered incorrectly, just notify your 3D Group Project Manager and they will make sure the proper information is imputed into the system.

What if a rater is entered as a Peer instead of a Direct Report?

The survey questions are the same for each rating category, so there is no chance a rater will complete the wrong survey. An incorrectly categorized rater will impact the feedback report, however. If there is reason to believe any of the relationships for any of the raters are entered incorrectly, please forward the information to the 3D Group Project Manager who will make sure the rater is included in the proper category for the feedback report.

Why should a minimum of three raters complete the survey for the peer and direct report categories?

The reason for this policy is to protect the anonymity of the ratings. By requiring three raters for these categories, raters can feel more comfortable providing honest feedback. The more honest the feedback, the more beneficial the entire process is.

Why is a 'self' rating included?

As part of the 360 degree feedback process, a survey about the feedback recipient him/herself is typically included. This is an important part of the process because in the feedback report the feedback recipient will be able to recognize discrepancies between how he/she views him/herself and how others view him/her. These differences can help identify developmental priorities.

Surveys

What is the URL for the survey website?

The URL for the web-based survey is <https://secure.3dgroupsurveys.com/sms.jsp>.

How long does the survey take to complete?

Most raters report that the 3D Group surveys take 10-15 minutes, depending upon the length of written comments.

What is the format of the survey questions?

The questions are rated on a simple 5-point or 4-point scale (depending on the survey), with space for two open-ended comments at the end. This may vary if you have a custom survey.

Can raters edit their responses after they completed the survey?

Responses can be re-entered and edited until the due date. Check with the available timeline to confirm any important dates.

What if a rater does not know the participant well enough to provide feedback?

If a rater feels they are not adequately knowledgeable about the participant and their role, the rater can decline the invitation to provide feedback for a participant by clicking the "Decline" button in the task list. However, chances are the rater can provide useful information for some areas of the person's job. For every item on the survey, a "Not Applicable/Do Not Know" option exists, which may be selected if the rater feels they cannot provide meaningful feedback.

How can raters be certain the responses will remain confidential?

Confidentiality of responses is important to the success of the 360 degree feedback process. To ensure confidentiality, raters receive a password directly from 3D Group. This way, only 3D Group has access to the codes and rater information. Once raters complete the survey, the information is saved on a secure server. Only the

survey responses are included in the file that 3D Group uses to run feedback reports. If a rater group (with the exception of Self and Boss) has fewer than three respondents, the information is removed from the report. Finally, the open-ended comments are arranged alphabetically or by rater group to eliminate the ability to decipher which rater provided a particular comment.

How do we remind raters to complete their surveys?

The 3D Group Project Manager is responsible for sending out reminders. Based upon the agreement with the Project Manager, reminders are sent to raters who still have surveys remaining in their task list.

Reports

Who gets a copy of the feedback report?

An electronic copy is typically given to the Right Management Project Manager. Upon Right Management's request, we can also deliver reports directly to participants or another party.

How long does it take to get the 360 degree feedback reports?

Generally reports are available within 3 to 4 days after the survey-completion period has ended. 3D Group will work with the Right Management Project Manager to create a project-specific timeline with exact due dates. Special circumstances may require extensions or rush orders, in which case your 3D Group Project Manager will work with the Right Management Project Manager to reach a mutually agreeable timeframe.

Fewer than 3 peers (or direct reports) completed the survey. Why does it does not show up on the report?

In order for information to appear for these categories, a minimum of three raters must complete the survey. This policy is to protect the anonymity of the raters. By requiring three raters for these categories, this helps raters feel more comfortable providing honest feedback. The exception to this rule is for self and boss ratings, in which no minimum is required to show results.

Technical Questions

What level of security is in place?

All information on our server is encrypted for security using SSL. Most internet sites use HTTP which transmits information in clear text so anyone can read it. The 3D Group site uses HTTPS, which defines a method for encrypting any information so only the recipient can read it. To further secure our site, each password and ID is uniquely created with both letter and number characters.

3D Group complies with the U.S. and E.U. Safe Harbor Framework and the U.S. and Swiss Safe Harbor Framework for privacy protection as set forth by the U.S. Department of Commerce regarding the collection, use, and retention of personal information from European Union member countries and Switzerland.

<http://www.3dgroup.net/privacy-policy.html>

Can I view response and completion rates?

The Right Management Project Manager and client contact can be provided with an administrator access code, password, and link to the administrator URL, <https://secure.3dgroupsurveys.com/smsadmin/login.jsp>. This website allows the authorized persons to login and view the current completion status and other reports.

What should be done in instances where someone loses their password?

Each rater will receive an email inviting them to take the survey. Included in the email is their survey password. If the invitation email is no longer available, the rater can request that the password be resent by going to the survey URL, entering their email in the Password Retrieval section and clicking on the Recover Password button. The rater will be sent an email with their user name and password included.

When the survey URL is clicked, there is an error message. What can be done?

If there is an error message, usually the URL has been entered incorrectly. It also may be that the rater is not presently connected to the Internet, or does not have Internet access. Alternatively, it could be that the email program is configured such that it does not launch the web-browser. Try to copy and paste the URL into the Location/Address Field on the browser. The URL for the survey website is <https://secure.3dgroupsurveys.com/sms.jsp>. Check with the internal tech support to make sure access to the Internet is unimpeded by firewall or other security protocols.

When attempting to login, the message says the password is invalid. What should be done?

The password for the survey login website is located in the email inviting the rater to take the survey. This password is case-sensitive; try copying and pasting the exact password from the email on the survey login website.

What happens to the data after the 360 degree assessment is over?

3D Group stores the data in a secure archive. Like payroll records and other sensitive information, only authorized 3D Group staff has access to this information. Some clients opt to keep records of the reports with HR or other authorized staff.

Other technical questions

Answers to questions about logging into the website can be found on survey login site by clicking on the help button in the top right corner of the computer screen. Once a rater has logged in to the site, the help button can be accessed to answer questions related to providing ratings. (For example, "If a survey is 'Overdue' can I still finish it?")