

360 Degree Appraisal

Guidance Notes

This guide is to help you understand why and how to complete the 360 Degree Appraisal form. If you need any further support after reading this guide or during the process of completing the appraisal, please contact Blue Edge Training.

What are the benefits of a 360 Degree Appraisal?

A 360 Degree Appraisal is a development tool designed to support individuals in understanding the impact they are having in their current role and identifying strengths and areas for development in the future. Receiving feedback from a range of people through a structured, formal process enables people to reflect on their strengths and areas for development. A 360 Degree Appraisal is one of the most effective ways to do this, as it captures views from a range of perspectives.

This typically includes Directors, Managers, Peers, and Direct reports, and may include Stakeholders who know the appraisee in a working capacity but do not work in the same organisation. The strength of this approach is that these varied views can be combined to form a practical overview to discuss with the appraisee, so they can develop both business and personal action plans to improve and develop their skills.

A 360 degree feedback appraisal is also an excellent method for comparing how the appraisee sees themselves and how others see them, so that they can focus on developing an action plan which will have a real impact on areas of importance.

An effective 360 Degree Appraisal:

- Focuses on strengths and areas for improvement in a positive way
- Leads to the setting of organisational and personal goals
- Encourages and promotes self-awareness and development
- Builds an individual's confidence
- Reinforces useful behaviour and identifies unhelpful behaviour
- Encourages more open relationships and better working practices

What is the 360 Degree Appraisal form?

The 360 Degree Appraisal form has been designed to gather information against a range of competencies and typically includes leadership, strategy, communication and interpersonal skills.

Each competence asks you to rate the appraisee from 'Rarely demonstrates' to 'Consistently demonstrates' this ability. These ratings cover both the 'frequency' of use of the competence and the 'skill' to which they use this competence – you should consider both when rating. 'Unable to rate' is also available if you cannot use any other categories.

At the end of each section, you can leave comments supporting your rating. This is optional, but it is very useful if you comment on how someone can become more effective. Your comments will be included in the report and seen as they are written, but they will not be attributed to any individual and, in this sense, remain confidential.

Please note that although your rankings and comments remain anonymous/confidential, the appraisee will know everybody who has completed their appraisal.

It is important that you do not get too bogged down in the meaning of the definitions. Overall, if you use the same criteria to select your rating, a pattern of areas of strength and areas for development will still emerge. Remember, there is no right or wrong rating; it is just an honest, constructive viewpoint from your position in working with or for the appraisee.

Guide to ratings - 360 Degree Appraisal form

Rating statement	Definition of rating
Unable to rate, not applicable	This rating should only be used if you are not able to use any of the other categories. This might be because you have no experience of this person in the context of the competence, or your working relationship is quite new.
Rarely demonstrates this ability	You may have seen the appraisee demonstrate this competence infrequently or on the odd occasion, but it has been largely ineffective.
Occasionally demonstrates this ability	The appraisee demonstrates this competence from time to time but less often than you think they should. They might also need to be more effective when demonstrating this competence.
Often demonstrates this ability	The appraisee demonstrates this competence most of the time. Sometimes the appraisee misses opportunities which would make them more effective if they used this competence.
Consistently demonstrates this ability	The appraisee clearly demonstrates this competence the vast majority of the time and people recognise this and try to emulate them.

How do I complete the 360 Degree Appraisal form?

As an appraiser, your assessment and examples given to support your rating (particularly where improvement can be made) will provide the appraisee with valuable information about themselves, so that they are able to develop a development plan.

When completing the 360 Degree Appraisal form, try to follow the guidance below:

- Find a quiet area where you can think – about half an hour should be enough time.
- Read the competence and the ratings, and base your ratings on your overall experience of that person, not on a one-off occasion. Think “On balance, this would be a fair and honest view.”
- Base your ratings on your experience, not on others or what you might have heard – consider a person’s actions, not just their words.
- Try to compare your ratings as a whole so that they reflect where an individual’s strengths lie and where their areas of improvement should be.
- Try not to let a specific area of strength or weakness affect all the ratings.
- Be as frank and honest as possible so the person receiving feedback can get the most out of it.
- If you find a particular rating difficult to assess, move on and go back to it afterwards.
- If you need help in understanding a competence, talk to Blue Edge Training or a colleague about how they would interpret the competence, and avoid talking about the rating you might give.
- After completing the appraisal form, please submit it, and it will go directly to Blue Edge Training.

What happens next?

Once all the 360 Degree Appraisal forms have been received, we will collate the responses and produce a feedback report. This report will be fed back to the appraisee on a one-to-one basis. We will then help the appraisee to develop an action plan, focused on areas where they need to develop their skills and areas to continue the development of their strengths. This action plan will be both personal and organisationally focused.

Remember that all 360 Degree Appraisal forms will remain confidential, and the appraisee will not have access to these.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Blue Edge Training.

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