

# 360 leadership assessment

How 360 leadership assessment can help  
develop 360 leaders

welcome to brighter



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# Introduction

A 360 leadership assessment is a 360 feedback process that helps holistically assess professionals in leadership roles. The goal of 360 leadership assessment is to provide leaders with insights into their performance, potential, and areas of improvement.

360-degree leadership tool is an essential tool for development and can help increase self-awareness among leaders. Moreover, it is a type of multi-rater feedback where multiple sources participate. Hence, the leaders understand how their colleagues, direct reports, clients, and other associates perceive them.



Gathering 360-degree feedback for the leadership has several advantages. First, an unbiased and insightful 360 leadership assessment can help promote a culture of feedback. Besides, it offers a voice to all employees and helps promote the idea that their voice matters whether or not they agree with their leaders.

This blog deep dives into the nuances of 360-degree leadership assessment and highlights the best 360 leadership assessment tools. You will also discover all about 360 leaders and ways in which 360 feedback helps develop them.

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# Chapter 1: What is a 360 leadership assessment?

360 leadership assessment is a type of multi-rater review that helps evaluate and develop professionals in leadership roles. It helps leaders gain insights into their strengths, potential, and areas of improvement, promoting self-awareness and laying the groundwork for streamlined development plans.

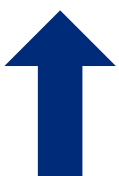
Just like other 360 degree assessments, 360-degree feedback for leadership gathers ratings from multiple sources. Therefore, all employees across all levels in an organization get a platform to share their perspectives and perception of the leader being evaluated.

This holistic approach creates a sense of justice and equality in the professional space. Therefore, to gain the maximum benefit from a 360 leadership development survey, the leaders must approach the process with a positive, objective, non-defensive attitude.

## What is the importance of 360 degree feedback for leadership assessment?

Feedback from multiple sources has a more powerful impact on people than feedback from a single source. It is also important to remember that feedback can be positive as well as negative. And both kinds are essential for sustainable growth. On the one hand, positive traits can be duplicated and widely adopted because they work. And on the other hand, negative traits can be worked upon and improved.

In fact, no organizational action has more power for motivating employee behavior change than feedback from credible work associates. That, precisely, is the idea behind inclusive leadership 360 feedback. Just like other professionals, leaders too need regular and honest critique. The holistic approach of 360 leadership diagnostic ensures the same. However, that is not the sole reason why a 360 leadership feedback survey is relevant in modern workplaces.





**Online and interview-based 360-degree reviews can be extremely valuable tools. They bring together insights from a range of coworkers, often illuminate an executive's blind spots, and give colleagues a way to weigh in on and support the individual's development.**

## **John Behr**

Getting the Most Out of  
360-Degree Reviews, HBR



## **Holistic feedback helps nurture 360 leadership**

Evaluating leadership skills via 360 feedback can be a powerful mechanism to cultivate a healthy mindset of being open to criticism. Therefore, 360-degree leadership assessment doubles up as a self-improvement tool for the leaders being assessed. As leaders are also a part of the assessment process, they can compare similarities and differences in how they perceive themselves, and how their reports perceive them. All of it further helps build an understanding of the type of leader they are and the type of leader they aspire to be. Using the gaps in perception, leaders can then work towards making changes and adjustments to improve. These are the traits of a 360 leader- a concept we will elaborate on in the next chapter.



- When leaders adopt the right principles, they inspire the rest of the teams to follow suit. Eventually, it leads to a workforce driven by a healthy team spirit instead of unquestioningly following the dictates of those at the top.
- The information gathered through 360-degree feedback leadership assessment taps the collective wisdom of people from within the leaders' own circle of influence. It is simply more reliable, honest, and valid than traditional assessments.
- Giving feedback to a senior official or the boss, also known as upward feedback, can be tricky. However, if offered correctly and thoughtfully, the insights help the boss and the working relationship. A multi-rater 360-degree leadership assessment tool serves the purpose quite perfectly.
- Encouraging a healthy culture of open and honest feedback that includes all employees and leaders can play a vital role in eliminating office politics, discrimination, and biases in an organization.

Leaders can make the best use of the assessment results by assuming that the feedback is reasonably fair and accurate because it is a multi-rater, 360-degree mechanism. The leaders must know that others are highlighting the good and the bad only to help them grow. And this understanding is the first step towards changing behaviors that have been identified as detracting from the leader's overall effectiveness. When actions are changed, the leader can more effectively lead others by earning their respect, trust, and loyalty.

## 360 leadership assessment is a structured investment in nurturing company values

It is all about transforming leaders to promote the right values and nurture the right culture in the company. So, your company's vision is to be a safe space for professional critique, 360 leadership assessment is one of the best investments that will help you realize it.

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# Chapter 2:

## What is the meaning of 360-degree leadership?

360-degree leadership or 360 leadership refers to leadership principles that are out-of-the-box, inspiring, free of biases, and open to criticism. It is an empowering upgrade to conventionally rigid leadership patterns because it focuses on people instead of business. It is all about nurturing work relationships that are rooted in team spirit and collective success. 360 leaders have the skill, ability, and willingness to inspire people at every level of an organization.



**The bullet points should be one in one line. Perhaps you can have this is one separate page and list the bullets one at a time. This is very cluttered and may confuse the reader.**

**John C. Maxwell**

The 360 Degree Leader



## What are the attributes of a 360-degree leader?

Every organization needs 360-degree leaders. They are professionals who possess adaptability, discernment, perspective, communication, security, resourcefulness, maturity, endurance, and the assurance that they can always be counted on by colleagues, mentees, clients, and associates.

360-degree leaders make optimum use of the opportunity and potential to become high-impact professionals. In the book *The 360 Degree Leader*, author John Maxwell elaborates on three key attributes of a 360-degree leader. Those attributes involve their ability to:



### Lead up

Leading up is the process of influencing a leader. It includes lightening the leader's load by being willing to help in ways others won't. Simultaneously, it is also about knowing when to push forward and when to back off.



### Lead across

Leaders at the mid-level can help peers achieve positive results, encourage the best ideas, and garner mutual respect. Therefore, such leaders must develop and maintain credibility and continually exert influence.



### Lead down

Leaders at the top who lead down help people realize their potential, become strong role models, and encourage others to become part of a higher purpose. This involves walking through the halls, transferring the vision, and rewarding for results.



## In addition, 360 leaders should be able to:

- Manage their time and productivity efficiently.
- Manage their emotions in stressful workplace circumstances.
- Perform tasks that may be out of their job description but require their expertise.
- Accept and handle challenges well.
- Develop good relationships across the business.
- Nurture a culture that helps avoid office politics.
- Admit faults and not take rejection personally.
- Encourage ideas from colleagues, superiors, as well as direct reports.
- Inspire team members to develop their own capabilities, productivity, and happiness.



## Why do we need 360 leaders?

360 leaders are the most valuable leaders for any company today. Their contribution to an organization is not limited to personal responsibility. Instead, they become a mentor for teams and a crucial driving force for professionals across hierarchies.

Having 360 leaders in a company propels the business toward 360-degree growth in more ways than one. They possess the apt attitude and aptitude to build a wholesome work environment that is accepting, open, creative, and free of office politics. As 360 leaders are also the champions of company culture and vision, people look up to them. Hence, they also play a vital role in employee motivation.

## How do you become a 360-degree leader?

The first step toward becoming a 360-degree leader is to let go of any prejudices one may have in a senior position. There are several other challenges that a leader or aspiring 360 leader needs to overcome. For example, there can be the pressure of wearing many hats in a leadership role—besides, a reluctance for assessment. However, to become a 360-degree leader, professionals need to be able to accept feedback holistically and be willing to accept that they, too, may have areas of improvement. The idea is to learn and work on those areas of improvement constantly.



**To become a 360-Degree Leader, you will have to pay a price. You will have to get out of your comfort zone and do things you've never done before. You will have to keep learning and growing when you don't feel like it. You will have to repeatedly put others ahead of yourself. And if you desire to be a really good leader, you will have to do these things without fanfare or complaint.**

## John C. Maxwell

The 360 Degree Leader



One of the effective ways for leaders to grow into 360 leaders is by receiving 360-degree feedback about their performance, productivity, and behavior at the workplace. Constant feedback not only helps analyze individuals' capacity as leaders but also helps boost their overall effectiveness.

A holistic 360-degree leadership assessment is an excellent tool to evaluate if potential leaders have the qualities mentioned above. Moreover, the assessment reports can be used as the basis for formulating L&D plans to develop the 360 leadership attributes in professionals.

# Chapter 3: The role of 360 leadership assessment in developing 360 leaders

360 leadership assessment works to provide talent management solutions in both Leadership and Training & Development. Hence, using the best 360 leadership assessment tools can help when an organization is:

**Prioritizing the development of its leaders' managerial competencies, skills and behaviors.**

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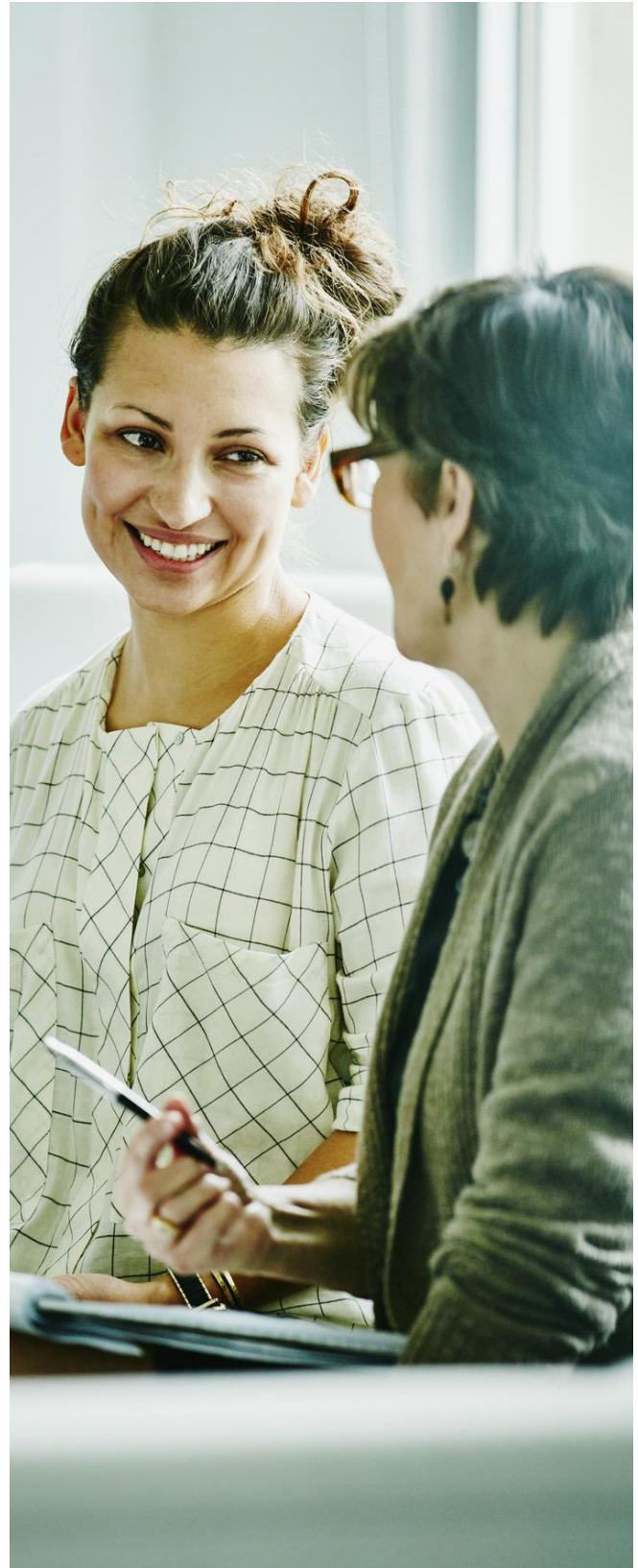
**Looking to identify talent and potential 360 leaders in its current workforce.**

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**Planning to implement 360 leadership development programs.**

A well-rounded support system, the leadership 360 feedback may well be the ideal way to get an idea of the bigger picture of how team members are interacting and the leader best suited for that team. It also helps motivate employees to reach their full potential and better understand the workforce's 360 leadership potential.

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## Benefits of 360 leadership assessment

Organizations enjoy undeniable benefits when they adopt a 360 feedback approach for their leaders. As we will see in Chapter 4, an impactful 360 leadership assessment strategy can help nurture an environment where constructive and open feedback is accepted and appreciated. But, more importantly, regularly assessing leaders through a multi-rater mechanism has the following advantages.



**It helps leaders gain multiple perspectives**

360 leadership assessments are an excellent medium to create self-awareness among leaders. To begin with, the holistic approach of this type of assessment resolves the conundrum of having no one to evaluate leaders. Furthermore, leaders are able to get a well-rounded, broad view of their management practices. Comparing feedback from multiple sources with their perceptions helps identify blind spots and work on them. Eventually, it becomes the starting point of a journey toward improving working relationships and optimizing leadership.



**It is a tool to customize development**

One of the key benefits of 360 evaluations for leaders is that they form the basis for customized, individual development plans. That enables leaders to take control of their career paths because tailored training and development are the basis for continuous improvement.



**It initiates conversations about enhancing leadership skills and behaviors**

360 feedback for leaders can be a powerful tool for transformation and improvement. A 360-degree leadership assessment can be beneficial for leaders to focus on learning skills and modifying behaviors to maximize their impact.



**It helps create a culture of learning**

When support for 360-degree feedback is demonstrated from top-down, it displays a firm commitment from senior administration to workplace learning. As a result, the entire workforce feels encouraged to invest in its knowledge and growth. Eventually, motivation levels rise, and there is a higher degree of achievement across the organization.

## Reasons to conduct 360 leadership assessment

When the results of a 360-leadership assessment are accepted with humility, respect, and a willingness to grow, it can have a wonderful ripple effect. Colleagues and subordinates of the leaders take the cue and strive for continuous improvement. It leads to a highly contagious positivity in outlook and professionalism.

## 360 leadership assessment also:

### Makes leaders more efficient and capable of becoming 360 leaders

With the information and perspective gained from a 360 assessment, leaders can be more innovative in their learning efforts. They also become capable of prioritizing what areas they need to focus on to reach their maximum potential and grow into 360-degree leaders.

### Establish benchmarks for continuous growth

The key to becoming a 360 leader is the constant motivation to grow as a leader, which can happen only when realistic benchmarks help the leaders gauge their progress over time. Comprehensive results from a successful 360 feedback exercise help establish those benchmarks.

### Double up as a demonstration of team spirit and equity

As stated earlier, one of the qualities of 360 leaders is that they encourage the growth of every individual in the workforce. That also means respecting all opinions and voices. Hence, when leaders open up to honest critique from multiple sources, they prove their openness to hearing all voices. Eventually, such a healthy exchange of ideas blooms into an inspiring force for organizational success.



# Chapter 4: How to execute an impactful 360 leadership assessment strategy

The first step toward building an efficient and sustainable 360 leadership assessment strategy is to have a clear vision of your company's goals. More importantly, you need to be ready to make changes at a fundamental level for 360-degree feedback and leadership development.

In the NY Times bestseller *No Rules Rules*, Netflix founder Reed Hastings along with author Erin Meyer outline the feedback approach that revolutionized the work culture at Netflix- Of a regular, open, and non-anonymous critique.



**I saw that openly voicing opinions and feedback, instead of whispering behind one another's backs reduced the backstabbing and politics and allowed us to be faster. The more people heard what they could do better, the better everyone got at their jobs, the better we performed as a company. That is when we coined the expression - 'Only say about someone what you will say to their face.'**

**In most situations, both social and professional, people who consistently say what they really think are quickly isolated, even banished. But at Netflix, we embrace them. We work hard to get people to give each other constructive feedback — up, down, and across the organisation — on a continual basis.**



Of course, immediate removal of anonymity from 360-degree leadership assessment might not work for all scenarios.

Therefore, the goal should be to take measured steps toward encouraging leaders to open up about feedback from multiple sources. It is also crucial to learn about leadership styles prevalent in your company and their effects on the collective workplace morale. Such insights can be beneficial for creating not just a 360 leadership assessment template but also a future-ready 360 leadership training plan.

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# What is the procedure to conduct 360 leadership feedback?

The approach to conducting 360 leadership feedback can be segregated into four stages: Assessment design, assessment execution, analysis of the results, and taking action based on those results. Under each stage, there are steps such as:



All these steps are discussed in detail below.

## Step 1: Assessment design

### Competency frameworks and asking leadership- focused 360 feedback questions

It is essential to choose a 360 leadership assessment that is in line with the roles and responsibilities of leaders in your organization. A great way to ensure that the 360-degree feedback leadership questions hit the key areas is to opt for a customized competency-based survey. The latter works by combining a specific set of core competencies to focus on the most important growth opportunities, leaving out the areas that are less relevant for your leaders and your organization.



#### Questions for 360 leadership feedback could be directed at evaluating:

- The leaders' conflict management skills and problem-solving abilities
- Their composure under pressure
- How effective they are in motivating others
- Their readiness to ask for input, ideas, and advice
- The way they communicate and offer feedback
- Their strengths and areas of improvement
- How inclusive, free from bias, and progressive they are

### Choosing the best 360 leadership assessment tool

The best 360 leadership assessment tools are those that have a user-friendly interface, include actionable 360 leadership summary reports and custom question banks for you to choose. It is a good idea to look at 360 leadership assessment examples and compare the features of the top 360 assessment tools to find the right fit for your organization.



#### A robust 360-degree leadership assessment tool should be:

- Quick and easy to use to ensure high survey completion rates
- Secure and mobile-friendly so feedback can be shared on-the-go
- Customizable and inclusive to suit various leadership profiles
- Designed to include individual development plans for leaders
- Inclusive of automated features like autosave responses, automatic reminders, auto emails
- Available online and adaptable to fluctuating bandwidths

## Step 2: Assessment execution



### Selecting the respondents

To execute the survey for a 360-degree assessment of leaders, organizations should first decide who will give the feedback. It is always better to focus on individuals who have experience working with and collaborating with the leaders who are being assessed. That is what ensures a bias-free, just feedback session.



### Sending the invites

It is crucial to set up multiple emails/reminders/ invites and follow up with the participants to encourage them to share their ratings. Every stakeholder needs to understand the objective and outcome of the exercise for it to offer meaningful results.

## Step 3: Analysis of the results

The third stage of the 360 leadership feedback process is all about:

- a. Collating the results.
- b. Analyzing the reports at an individual and department level to create actionable developmental plans.

This part of the undertaking can drive the maximum ROI for the 360 leadership feedback process because it helps identify gaps in perception across the leaders' self-assessment, managers, peers and others.

The reports should have a detailed competency summary, open-ended feedback, a personal development plan, and other powerful insights. Based on the latter, it becomes easier to identify and develop several 360-degree leaders.

## Step 4: Taking action

The outcome of the entire exercise of the 360 leadership assessment is used to facilitate a decision-making process. The actionable reports help take steps toward implementing changes in the form of:

- Enhancing strengths and hidden strengths
- Popularizing ideals that are inspiring and appreciated by most raters
- Setting developmental goals based on any negative traits highlighted in the reports
- Making decisions about the next step in individual 360 leadership
- Analyzing training needs and blind spots for 360 leadership development
- Deciding leadership appraisals and new responsibilities  
And more!



# Mercer | Mettl's 360 View for leadership assessment

Mercer | Mettl's 360 View offers a holistic, quick, and compact mechanism for 360 leadership assessment. As one of the most employee-friendly 360 leadership assessment tools, it seamlessly integrates with an organization's workflow and helps overcome major challenges such as lack of transparency in feedback, procrastination, and skipping the negatives. On the contrary, the tool helps streamline the entire leadership assessment process.

## Elimination of operational hassles

360 View ensures quick setup, effortless execution, and automation at all stages of the 360 leadership assessment process. It is designed to make the process easy for all stakeholders.

What's in it for HRs?	What's in it for employees?
 <p><b>Organized dashboard</b> A clean dashboard that gives insight into the progress of each survey and participant.</p>	 <p><b>Improvement plan</b> The plan enlists holistic development areas that employees can adopt to become more skilled.</p>
 <p><b>Comprehensive reports</b> The reports serve as a parameter for identifying training gaps, the scope of improvement, and determining performance appraisal.</p>	 <p><b>Self-nomination</b> Participants can nominate their feedback providers and get the list reviewed and approved by their manager.</p>
 <p><b>E-mail failure prompt</b> If there is a bounce or e-mail delivery failure, HRs are immediately informed to ensure the survey is completed on time.</p>	 <p><b>Autosave responses</b> In case of power failure or lack of time, candidates can fill the survey in multiple sittings without the fear of losing previous data.</p>

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# Custom 360 feedback questions for leadership

Organizations can reap the benefits of 360 degree feedback for leadership roles with the help of custom 360 leadership assessment questions and rating systems.

## Sample questions for 360 degree leadership assessment

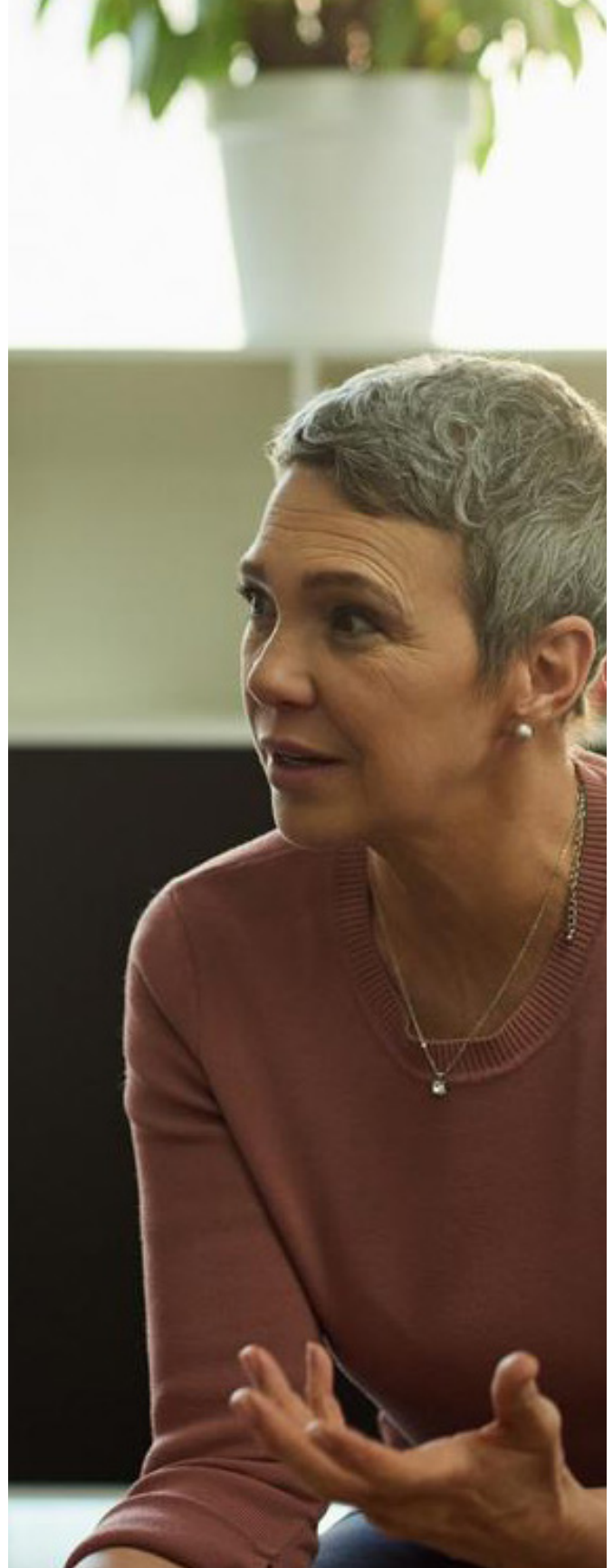
How often does the leader listen to team members in an unbiased way to resolve conflicts?

- a. Almost always
- b. Frequently
- c. Sometimes
- d. Never

How often is the leader successful in persuading others to reach winning solutions?

- a. Almost always
- b. Frequently
- c. Sometimes
- d. Never

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# Conclusion

360-degree leadership assessment is an inclusive and sustainable process that helps organizations hold critical conversations across hierarchies. It offers a powerful opportunity for leaders to inspire positive change in the company and encouraging a healthy exchange of ideas, opinions, possibilities, and feedback in all forms. As leaders begin to grow a refined, progressive mindset, they help nurture the same principles in their surroundings.

Eventually, regular 360 feedback for the leadership sets them on the path to becoming 360-degree leaders.



# About us

At Mercer | Mettl, our mission is to enable organizations to make better people decisions across two key areas: acquisition and development. Since our inception in 2010, we have partnered with more than 4,000 corporates, 31 sector skills councils/government departments and 15+ educational institutions across more than 90 countries.

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## Robust Information Security System



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