The Pitfalls of 360 Degree Feedback

360 degree feedback has great potential and can positively impact employee morale and productivity. However, it often fails at the most fundamental level –the right survey questions, the right panel of raters, the right tool for the right execution, and the right way of measuring success. The following items, extracted from [1]Dr. John Sullivan's 'most impactful problem areas' of 360 degree feedback may help you to avoid these common pitfalls.

[1] Dr. John Suvllivan's 'most impactful problem areas'- https://www.ere.net/the-top-40-problems-with-360-degree-employee-feedback-processes-part-2-of-2/

Ask the right questions

The right questions are not generic ones publically available on the internet, but the ones developed with an understanding of your organization, its vision and goals, the competencies it desires in its employees that will help achieve those goals, and the importance of the roles and responsibilities in the organizational context. The right questions and the right type of content is the basis of reliable and valid 360 degree feedback questions.

Choose the right raters

While the thought behind the 360 feedback process is to include the right mix and quantity of raters, not many understand its importance. The right mix includes raters who know the employee in a professional setting. Deep personal relationships can cloud judgment when giving feedback. Also, the mix should not include too many or too few raters. In both cases, the process would fail to provide a 360 degree view of the employee and might have contradictory or unsubstantial feedback.

Measure success the right way

Success metrics are often flawed. It is the prerogative of the organization to determine how the 360 degree feedback's success is defined. Is success only defined by completing the 360 feedback exercise, or does it also factor in the developmental goals set out at the end of each feedback? Then it is an ongoing process of employee development and the resultant increase in productivity.

Select the right tool

360 degree feedback can easily turn into an HR nightmare if not undertaken with the right set of tools. A bad tool or process can make it an administrative overload, defeating its objectives and turning it into a formality. But a good tool can make the process seamless and ensure a higher completion rate.

Conclusion

A poorly executed 360 degree feedback process can do more damage than good to your organization. Organizations must consider these pitfalls and ensure a thorough approach toward 360 degree feedback.

As your organization contemplates how to navigate performance management in the virtual era, 360 performance feedback can operate as a simple, yet effective solution to providing individuals with the guidance they need to move forward in their careers.
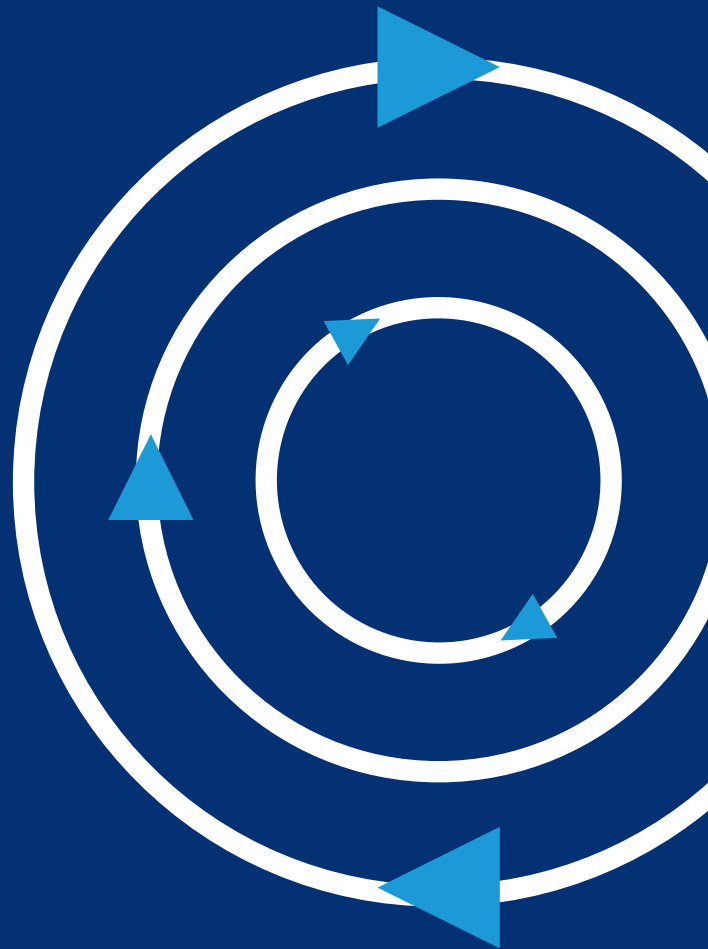
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