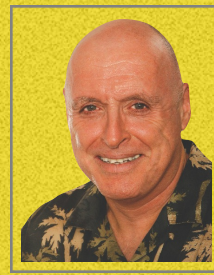


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1723 Doing a 360 Degree Evaluation Right

Yesterday, we began talking about the 360-degree evaluation. Over 70% of companies are said to use them, a number that seems high to me but I'll roll with it. We got into a survey that logged a great deal of concern from participants, who said that they weren't comfortable with 360s, and they gave a lot of reasons. We'll do a brief recap and then talk about the right way to handle this particular employee survey tool, and why you should use it. I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's next on The Extra Point.

Through a survey of 1,000 U.S. workers, conducted by polling firm LiveCareer, we learned that 71% of companies use 360-degree evaluations for employee feedback. We also learned that the majority of them said they don't trust the process.

About half thought the 360 is influenced by personal biases or grudges. Almost 80% felt the tool was often used to settle scores.

I know about the 360-degree eval for a long time and I like the basic premise behind it. The subject of the survey, say Ann Marie, receives feedback from her supervisor, her peers, and the people who report to her. Sometimes, customers and vendors get a chance to chip in their comments.

I see the value in something like this, versus a traditional eval, where it's only the supervisor chiming in. If I'm truly interested in seeking improvement, why wouldn't I want more feedback, rather than less?

Yet, we need to factor in the comments from people surveyed by LiveCareer. Those opinions can help guide us in how to set up our own 360s.

The first thing we want for any employee survey is to get buy-in from those being polled, to ensure support and participation. This is easier if they understand how the survey will be conducted, and what you plan to do after you get the results back.

In other words, do you have a plan behind all this not for just making corrections as needed, but also for team and individual development?

You want this because it tells participants that there's potentially something in it for them, it's not just something else they have to do, and they're not sure why.

To me, the thought of getting feedback from multiple people is enticing. That being said, it wouldn't hurt to know that some training or other development also might come from it.

The second issue is to remove any thought that the individual won't be treated fairly. Do you remember Ann Marie? She's had a couple of run-ins with Bill, one of her teammates, and she's worried that if Bill is a part of the 360, that he'll deliver a bunch of negativity and drag down her score.

This kind of thing happens. If you're aware of conflict between Ann Marie and another worker, invite somebody else to participate.

The next part is followup. I'll want to sit down with the employee to go over the results, and see how they feel about it. What did they learn?

Did Ann Marie have any specific areas highlighted that can be improved with training or mentoring? The followup would continue to monitor the employee's progress.

There's one more thing we haven't talked about today or yesterday, but we've mentioned it in the past. It's that the majority of workers, both front line workers and managers, don't like the way performance reviews are generally done. Well, the 360 offers a change.

Remember this, the large number of survey takers who registered serious concerns about the 360 didn't do so because they didn't like the process. They had problems with it because they felt they hadn't been treated fairly — an issue we've discussed and which you can avoid. (Con't.)

Is the 360-degree evaluation right for your company? If you make the effort to set it up properly, I think you can get value from it.

Go online, read up on it, talk about the process and potential benefits, and then decide.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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