

implementing a comprehensive review essay sample



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In the study of industrial psychology, the 360-degree Performance Appraisal is a form of feedback where information on a supervisor's performance is gathered from the supervisor and anyone else who has firsthand experience with the supervisor's performances. This includes, but is not limited to, their work peers, subordinates, managers, and customers. After all the information is collected, it is combined into overall ratings which the supervisor can compare to his or her own ratings. This allows the supervisor to see what areas they are perceived as deficient in and allows them to work on becoming a better supervisor. (Colquitt, 2013, p. 48-49)

So how can this type of review be used to improve job performance?

Obviously, it gives supervisors a tool to see their weak areas so they can become stronger in them. However, in my opinion, whether or not the system works depends on the situation. First, I believe it depends on the type of supervisor being evaluated. There have been many links made between a supervisor's personality/character traits and the effectiveness of the review process. For example, supervisors with high self-esteem were shown to have a better attitude towards the performance appraisal.

(Funderburg and Levy, 1997)

If you have a supervisor who does not believe in their own abilities from the beginning, they are going to be resentful and afraid of the process and this in turn could actually hinder job performance. Also, extroverted leaders were more likely to see negative feedback as valuable and had the desire to seek more information about the negative feedback. (Smither, London, and Richmond, 2005) If a company were to try and impose this review system on a heavily introverted supervisor, he or she may go along with the process

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but ultimately the results and time spent would be useless. This is because the supervisor will have no desire to pursue further knowledge on any negative feedback.

The second factor on the effectiveness of the 360-degree Performance Appraisal pertains to the audience that is evaluating the supervisor. It has been shown that participants in the appraisal who are cynical about the firm are more likely to resist the process (Atwater, Waldman, Atwater, and Cartier, 2000). If there is a lack of trust between participants and the firm itself, the process will never work. They will either completely resent it or not take it seriously since they do not believe the answers they give matter anyways. Raters also tend to give biased or inflated evaluations if they believe their answers are being used for administrative purposes. (Colquitt, 2013, p. 49) This point will be developed more in the next paragraph but it demonstrates the fact that the mindset of the audience participating in the review is a huge factor as to whether or not the appraisal can actually improve job performance.

There are many other dependencies for this type of feedback to work but the final main one is the state of the company. Because this process takes a significant amount of time, many managers find that it burdens them and hinders their work responsibilities. (Brutus and Derayeh, 2002) If a firm is in a time of crisis or a busy season, I believe conducting a 360-degree Performance Appraisal is counterproductive to improving job performance. However, if it is a slower part of the year and there is less work to do, implementing this system could make future busier seasons more efficient.

Also, as mentioned before, this review is sometimes used for administrative
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purposes rather than just developing talent. There are many problems with this but I believe they all connect back to what state the firm is in. If a company has a multi-year track record with this type of appraisal system and employees believe in it, then perhaps using it for administrative purposes can be useful. If raises and promotions come as a result of this system and nobody objects, it could most definitely increase job performance.

The overarching question still remains, “ How can we use the 360-degree Performance Appraisal for improving job performance?” My answer is we can use it by beginning with the implementation strategy. First, we must look to see if this system is a good fit with the supervisor. If the supervisor believes in the process and values a variety of positive and negative feedback, we then have to look at whom the participants are going to be in the review. If this audience can efficiently and honestly conduct such an appraisal, we then look at the state of the company. If the firm has appropriate time to allocate to the review and is using the results for the appropriate purposes, we now have a worthy process. At this point, the 360-degree Performance Appraisal can be used to improve job performance by strengthening the weak traits of the supervisors in a company.

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