Communication requirements to support a 360 feedback program

Communication during the design and development of the 360 feedback program

CEO or manager of the unit to be surveyed – keep in constant communication with the senior managers with a stake in the process to:

1. Ensure they understand why it is being conducted and the precise benefits it will deliver.
2. Build into the process any of their special requirements eg. particular behaviours they want tested, the timing of the process – to ensure it doesn't conflict with other events they have planned, etc.
3. Get them to send a personal statement of their endorsement for the process and the need for everyone to participate promptly.

All participants – require access to information about:

1. Whether the process relates to their personal and/or professional development and/or is linked to any incentive/bonus scheme.
2. The pros and cons of 360 feedback in general.
3. Why this 360 is being conducted.
4. The diagnostic to be used – its content and why this has been selected. You should consider giving participants input into the content to improve their buy-in.
5. The process that will be used to conduct the process from end-to-end.

Note: *Many participants will know enough about 360 feedback not to want much of this information. So make it available on a voluntary basis eg. on the intranet.*

The HR unit – if HR is not running the 360 feedback process themselves, they should be communicated with in order to:

1. Ensure all company requirements are being met eg. industrial relations, awards, etc.
2. Take their professional advice on how to run the process to get the best outcomes.

Staff in the business unit – all staff in the unit should be communicated with in order to:

1. Let them know the process will be happening and that some will be asked to provide feedback on their manager, peers or staff.
2. Provide them with access to information about 360s in general if they are interested.

Communication while running the360 feedback program

All participants – hold a face to face briefing if possible to explain:

1. The process in detail ie. exactly what will be happening in what order and who will be involved.
2. How their raters are being selected ie. either by participants themselves of by someone who is doing this on their behalf. Explain why this option has been chosen.
3. The security and confidentiality behind the process.
4. Exactly how the results will be used eg. for personal/professional development and/or incentive/bonus calculation.
5. That they should not try to influence any of the raters in any way.
6. The diagnostic content and why it has been selected.
7. What a final report looks like – so they know what the final product is. Use a sample report from the ***iedex*** site.

All raters – the email containing their invitations to rate the participant explains everything they need to know at this stage ie:

1. Who they are rating.
2. The need to be objective and use the full rating scale ie. not to score someone very low (or very high) on every item just because they don't like (or like) that person.
3. The security and confidentiality features behind the process.

Communication at the conclusion of the 360 feedback program

Participants – once the process has been completed and reports printed, communicate by:

1. Running a debriefing session for the entire group to show the group results, explain the overall findings and allow each person to get a feel for how they performed in relation to the group as a whole.
2. Running a debriefing session for each person individually – see the ***iedex*** "Debrief guidelines for 360 facilitators"
3. Encouraging each participant to thank all their raters individually and to give them some idea of the results that were achieved eg. "Thank you for giving me your feedback. It has been very useful. What it told me was that I am good at ABC, and need to work on XYZ. Would you mind if I spoke with you further about this some time?"

CEO or senior manager of the unit to be surveyed – tell them:

1. What results were achieved and what the implications are for the business.
2. Find out if there is any follow-up they would like conducted eg. issues to be analysed further.

HR unit – let them know that the process is over and send them the group report results. Only send individual results if this does not breach your confidentiality agreement with participants.