

AGILE BASED COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT

ABC Management

Output 1 / Activity 4

Article: Communication strategy while 360-degree feedback is introduced to the company

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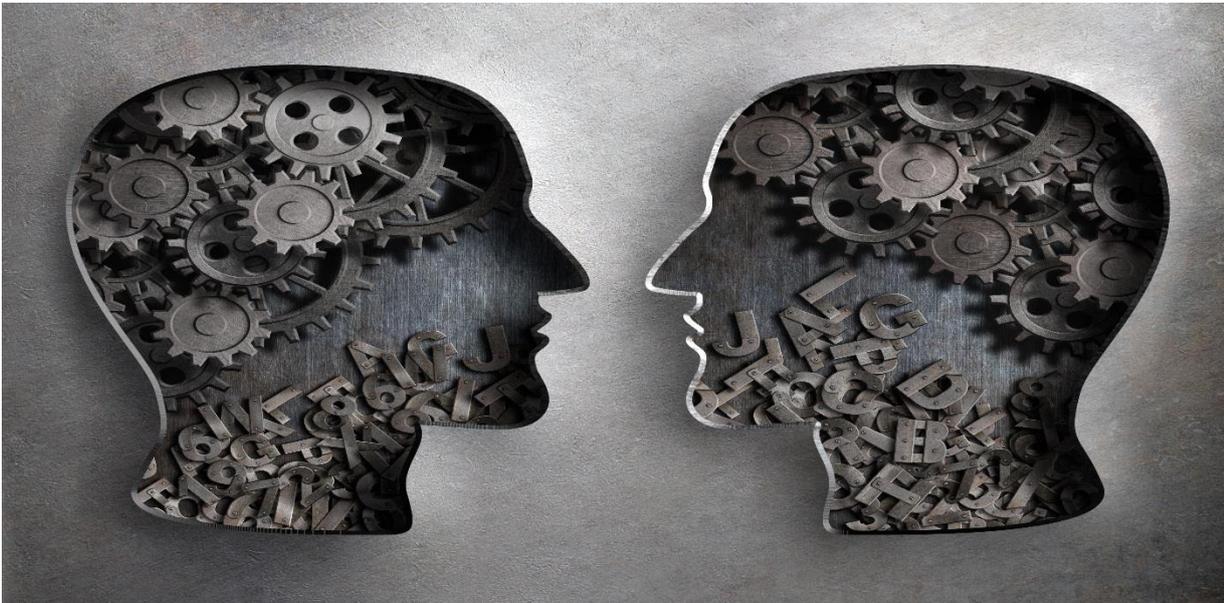
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Executive summary

This article deals with the communication strategy to be applied for the introduction of the 360-degree feedback methodology. First the term 360-degree feedback is explained. Then it is analysed how to best communicate to those getting feedback and to those giving feedback. Afterwards it is discussed, how the importance of the action as well as anonymity and confidentiality can be best communicated. The information provided here is important for the development of the CAWC method.

1. What is 360-degree feedback?

360 degree feedback is a multi-source assessment, where individual's performance is assessed and feedback is recorded from a number of people that may include managers, subordinates, colleagues and customers. The assessment takes the form of ratings against certain performance dimensions.

2. Communication to those getting feedback

It is essential to educate the employees being rated as to why they are being rated. If they are wary and do not trust the intentions, they can sabotage the initiative through their resistance to participate. Employees should know that they are not going to be fired, demoted, or penalized based on the results. The more information can be provided up-front, the more willing they will be to participate.

The following questions should be addressed:

- Why is the feedback process being implemented?
- Who will see the results?
- Will their boss see the results?
- Will HR?

- How and when will the results be delivered?
- Is participation mandatory?
- How will respondents be chosen?
- Is the participant choosing them or is HR managing this?

3. Communication to those giving feedback

Respondents are being asked to take time out of their busy days to fill out the survey. Some respondents will likely be asked to provide feedback on several of their co-workers. The respondents should be told how their answers will be used, who will see them, and why they are being asked to give feedback.

Furthermore it is important to advise them on how to give constructive feedback that is helpful and allows an employee to understand, if his or her performance is having the intended effect. Constructive feedback can be positive or negative. It is always good to start with positive feedback that acknowledges the employee's contributions and good work. The feedback shall also help the employee to understand that there are specific areas that need development. The more specific the feedback, the more likely the employee will understand and be able to replicate the desired performance. Good feedback sticks to the facts, is direct and avoids generalisations.

4. Communication of the importance of the action

The action will be more successful with vocal support of the leaders of the organisation. This can be done in the following ways:

- An email message or announcement from the CEO or Business Unit leader is a good way to let employees know that the 360 feedback program has support at the highest levels.
- Participation of the leaders as 360-degree feedback candidates themselves, thereby setting a visual example for others to follow.
- Opening of the 360-degree feedback information and training sessions by the leader of the organisation or a senior manager.
- Choosing a senior manager to be the guardian of the programme and asking him or her to sit in the steering committee.

5. Communication of anonymity and confidentiality

If people do not feel comfortable giving feedback, they may not be as candid or forthright in the feedback they give - or they may simply not participate. If people do

not feel comfortable getting feedback, they may resist participating or be less open to the feedback they receive.



In order to get candid feedback and make sure people are comfortable receiving feedback, it is important to convey to both participants and respondents that the 360 assessment is anonymous and confidential. This is often most effectively accomplished, if a neutral third party conducts the surveys. Respondents will feel more comfortable giving honest feedback to a third party and participants will feel more comfortable getting feedback from an outside source.