



Pick the Right Tool

360-Degree Feedback Reviews:

A system selection guide from eXplorance

No general purpose feedback management (survey) system can be everything to everybody. Many tools on the market purport to address many different information-gathering demands at once. But they can require more investment of time and effort, be less flexible, generate less satisfying results and ultimately have a higher total cost of ownership (TCO).

This system selection guide describes the key advantages of a specialized system to implement 360-degree feedback reviews.

Efficient Implementation

In the 360-degree feedback process, you evaluate yourself while your managers, peers, direct reports, and customers also evaluate you. The result is a complete performance report, which you can use to create a personal development plan.

A typical 360-review can involve five rater-groups. In a group of 20 employees, this would be equivalent to managing 100 surveys.

A general-purpose tool conducts this process with an unmanaged public survey format where there is no guarantee the appropriate raters will complete the correct surveys.

Once completed, the surveys must be merged and the results extracted for each employee, department, division, or other useful criteria.

The system should be able to generate these different reports:

Ranking report: Shows strengths and weaknesses.

Breakdown per rater group: Shows the score from every angle of the review to provide a 360 perspective.

Gap analysis: Shows an individual's score vs. the score of everyone else reviewed in the same project.

Perception gap report: Shows areas the reviewee thought were strong but others did not, and vice versa

Pre/post reporting: Shows the efficiency of an organization's development plans.

eXplorance offers **Blue/360**, a software module specifically built for 360-degree feedback reviews.

The general-purpose tools offered by other vendors perform basic survey functions but are less flexible and unable to manage the process properly. They also lack the intelligence to generate reports needed for effective results analysis.

To help you pick the right tool for 360-degree feedback reviews, the following table sums up some useful questions to ask potential vendors. It also shows how the features of Blue/360 stack up to a general-purpose feedback management system.

Questions to Ask Your Vendor

Questions	General-Purpose Survey Tool	Blue/360
Is the system smart enough to allocate the appropriate review form to the appropriate rater?	NO Requires a public form where respondents decide which person to review. Separate surveys must be issued for the different employee/rater combinations.	YES One centralized project associates the appropriate raters with the appropriate reviewee. Rater selection can be delegated to reviewees.
Does the system understand the hierarchy in the organization, including direct and indirect relationships?	NO	YES The system can allocate different rules for different people.
Does the system have an integrated workflow to help manage the process?	NO	YES
Can the system track who did their reviews, and who didn't?	NO Unless the surveys are implemented as multiple surveys with a decentralized management.	YES Management is centralized per project, which is defined by a complete set of evaluations.
Can the system guarantee that only the appropriate raters review the appropriate employees? And only once?	NO Raters may respond more than once to the same form or evaluate the wrong reviewee.	YES The process is fully managed and controlled.
Can you apply different deadlines to different reviews?	NO	YES
Can you do a historical analysis and see how a person has developed over time?	NO May be achieved through export to XLS and manual manipulation of results.	YES
Can you sum up the results demographically: by employee, department, age group, gender, and so on?	NO May be achieved through export to XLS and manual manipulation of results.	YES
Can the system display the results appropriately with different reports per rater group?	NO May be achieved through export to XLS and manual manipulation of results.	YES Provides gap analysis, perception gap reports, competency breakdowns by rater group, as well as ranking reports.