



Institute for  
**Organisational  
Development**

# 360 Feedback Process

An Evaluation Case Study with  
The Royal Hospital for Neuro-  
disability

## The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

Founded in 1854, The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability (The RHN) is the oldest independent hospital and medical charity in the UK and is situated in Putney, London. The RHN employs over 600 staff who use expert rehabilitations and cutting-edge technologies, alongside traditional practice to make a substantial difference to the lives of people with profound brain injuries and degenerative neurological conditions.

### Understanding the challenge

The Beech Centre (now the **UK's Institute for Organisational Development**) and The RHN worked collaboratively within a Strategic Organisational Development Membership relationship to ensure that all development interventions commissioned within the organisation comfortably aligned to their overarching vision, underpinning values, and their focus for strategy, structure, process, people and culture.

There was already a process in place to support performance and development in the organisation, but the Executive Team at The RHN were keen to establish a behavioural framework which would confirm where good leadership behaviour was being modelled and highlight areas for further development.



### Agreeing the right solution

The RHN's dedicated client lead from the now Institute for Organisational Development, worked with The RHN's Director of Corporate Services to develop and implement a 'process' which would enable understanding of the existing leadership behavioural competence.

Together they decided to implement a 360-degree Feedback Process (360). Within the 360 experience, individuals undertake self-assessment of their behaviour and obtain feedback from a cross section of the people they work or interact with. This is likely to include their manager, team members, peers and other stakeholder groups, including clients or customers.

The 360 experience provides a structured, considered and safe environment for individuals to have meaningful conversations. It's an opportunity for celebrating strengths and successes, considering feedback from different perspectives and personal growth. The behaviours required here are transferrable outside of the facilitated process into working life and promote increased trust, commitment and accountability for performance and behaviours. Through an effective 360 experience, an organisation can drive transformation, confirm positive leadership behaviours and identify progression and growth opportunities.

Establishing a 360 process was a great way to place acceptable behaviours, driven by organisational values, into the heart of The RHN's existing performance process.



## Successful implementation

At the Institute for Organisational Development, we appreciate that every organisation is unique. Each organisation and individual have their own specific needs and challenges which must be addressed in order for positive change to be possible and sustainable. Therefore, every intervention we undertake with a Member organisation is specifically designed to fit the needs of that particular organisation, ensuring that the greatest return on investment can be achieved.

Implementing the 360-degree Feedback Process at The RHN was no exception. A number of the now Institute for OD and RHN colleagues worked together to tie 360 into the people processes that already existed and were working well, such as The RHN's Leadership Charter (which expresses the organisation's core leadership values), Leadership Behaviours and Definitions Framework and the Personal Performance Objectives each individual had already committed to.

Feedback providers within the 360 Feedback sessions were encouraged to record and share their feedback in relation to these aforementioned 'people processes' under three loosely titled subsections; 'Continue doing', 'Start doing', 'Stop doing'.

The 'Continue, Start, Stop' approach was agreed to ensure feedback is specific, giving the individual receiving the feedback tangible examples of things they do already that others wish they did more of, things they don't do that others think would be helpful for them to begin doing and things they do that others see would be helpful if they didn't continue to do. This approach aids the recipient in appreciating and contextualising the feedback so they can process it and take learning forward.



## The Facilitator's viewpoint

The facilitator for the 360 process had worked extensively with this 360-degree Feedback model. This knowledge meant that they were in the right position to assist in the designing phase with The RHN; "Leaders need to be provided feedback to enable them to understand their perceived strengths, the things people really appreciate and value and essentially want to see more of, as well as providing an opportunity for them to understand their impact into the relationships they hold with colleagues and subsequently feed all of this data into their development plans."

"All too often, many leaders don't have a mechanism in place in which they can receive feedback, often when this is the case, we find that those colleagues who would be willing to provide feedback feel that they don't have the opportunity or environment in place to help them engage with this.

A considered 360-degree Feedback Process should promote the giving and receiving of feedback in a safe, considered and structured way, focussing on performance, behaviours and impact. In this way the 360 Process can promote trust, commitment and accountability for performance and behaviours, valuing the manager, employee, peer and other stakeholder relationships.

In essence, the 360-degree Feedback Process for leaders not only provides them with data around their performance but it also sends out an important cultural message into the organisation, showing that they are interested and actively engaged in receiving feedback and working with that to improve their performance. I believe it's a very powerful message to send out promoting personal awareness, responsibility, growth and change."



## The impact

Joint evaluation took place on the impact that the implementation of the 360 process into the had on both individuals and the wider organisation.

Many of the Executive Team reported having a greater realisation that their colleagues within the Executive Team value them and their contribution to the organisation.

The participants also conveyed feeling increased levels of awareness in a number of different ways. Firstly, an increased consciousness about giving good feedback to others and what things would be useful feedback for others to hear, and there is a sense that this increased awareness is impacting on the next 'level' of management (The Senior Leadership Team).

There were also descriptions of increased levels of self-awareness within the Executive Team, especially in certain situations that may "trigger" them. Many also described having an increased understanding of what to do when they feel triggered; how to take responsibility for their feelings and deal with them appropriately, as well as being able to inquire into how others respond to them in the moment. All of this, in turn, is reported to guarantee more productive conversations. The process also seemed to spark a reminder of self-development and the importance of personal wellbeing.

The process was also described as being a tool which focuses individuals on the results they envisaged seeing within the organisation and whether they had agreed ('contracted') effectively for these, especially with any temporary or interim staff. This increased level of 'contracting', feedback on performance and organisational fit present, has resulted in some performance shift.

The participants also stated that they feel better equipped to challenge in the moment as they have a framework in which to do so, which has resulted in greater productivity in the conversations between members of the Executive Team; a greater clarity now exists. They describe the Executive Team as feeling more cohesive because of the process and they say that the focus on delivering the transformational change required is now tangible.

## Participant reflections

"I didn't know quite what to expect from a group 360 Feedback session but having lived through it I can highly recommend it, both as a giver of feedback and a receiver of feedback. It was much more potent than the usual anonymised feedback. People thought deeply about what to say to each other, so that strengths were recognised and appreciated, and weaknesses were presented in a constructive and thoughtful way. I have never felt quite so appreciated by people around me, dedicating their time and thoughtfulness to feedback in the context of my own development and the good of the organisation... very powerful and definitely worth doing!"

"The 360 process raised my awareness on how I personally impact on colleagues, awareness of what I do well and what I need to get better at."

"My role requires me to influence others around me, many who do not have a direct reporting line to me, so I wanted to gain a better awareness of how I am perceived by others, and how effective I am."

"The process has made me aware of what others actually think and given me an understanding of some of the 'wants' of my direct reports and what I need to do to meet their needs, as well as putting my relationship with my manager into context."

"The information giving process from colleagues increased my awareness and revealed as much to me about the person giving the feedback, as it did about me. Feedback gave me an insight into perceptions of job role, individual ability, where support might be needed and mind sets. Having an awareness of what others think will hopefully put me in a better position when dealing with others and support me in my management role generally."

"I would absolutely recommend the 360 process - I think you need to consider who you invite carefully and feel supported through the process, which our in-house facilitators did well."

"Having only had one to one appraisals during my time at The RHN, it was something I thought I needed (and had a duty) to do, as the majority of my direct reports have worked for me for many years. At best, I saw it as an opportunity to learn about myself and at worst an opportunity for others to get issues off their chest and for me to hear about all the things I do that really annoy others!"

"I think all middle managers upwards who manage/lead groups of staff or those in customer facing roles should consider being involved in the process. One to one appraisals tend to focus on the relationship between employee and the line manager, so conversations can be biased and only concentrate on two people's views. In my opinion, all managers/leaders need to be prepared to receive constructive comment from others, so they increase their self-awareness and in the interests of gauging overall effectiveness."

"The 360 process has made me more effective and also ensure projects that I am leading on are better managed."

## Next steps?

The 360-degree Feedback Process was successfully implemented within its first series of sessions with the Executive Team at The RHN. Following the initial review and evaluation of this process, key learning and development around this has been driven into the second year of the process, where 360 was to be rolled out into the Senior Leadership Team and the wider organisation. 360 Feedback sessions will look to be facilitated internally in the long term, with plans being made for facilitation skills development within the organisation to support this, as well as workshops based around the good giving and receiving of feedback.

The 360 process will continue to be inextricably linked to The RHN's wider Organisational Development strategy to ensure it maintains maximum impact and effectiveness.



## The Institute for Organisational Development's reflections

The 360-degree Feedback Process is easy to sound transactional and 'just' a process. However, in practice it is far from that!

The 360 experience requires both the person receiving the feedback and, arguably more so, the person providing the feedback, to take responsibility for their language, behaviour and consider the intent and impact of what they share. Feedback is required and probed by the facilitator to be specific and aligned to the desired outcome from the session and process as a whole.

One key thing about 360's is that nothing shared should ever be a surprise! This ethos means that each person giving feedback must take the responsibility prior to the session, if they were to be sharing something that had never been heard before by the person it is about. This begins to drive into the culture the habit and behaviours of having enabling conversations as 'adults'. We work with individual and organisational readiness by understanding where people are at, and work together to be ready to give and receive feedback helpfully.

There is a real amount of flexibility from the participant's perspective about how their 360 will be run; including who facilitates it and how things are handled in the moment to create the most valuable experience.

Being in this experience with colleagues enables helpful vulnerability in a safe environment and sets the precedence for people experiencing a change in behaviour, which supports the sustainability of positive individual and organisational development.

Essentially, 360 is an option available for organisations to consider for their employees as part of their holistic and annual development, and must be linked to other development happening, for it to be effective and have a role in true strategic organisational development. As a standalone intervention, true value can be lost.

For more information on how your organisation could benefit from 360-degree Feedback in a Strategic Organisational Development approach, please contact the Institute for Organisational Development on [membership@instituteforod.org.uk](mailto:membership@instituteforod.org.uk) or call us on 0845 4303 021.



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