

# Making the business case for 360 Feedback

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## Outline the benefits

It will work. An abundance of academic research supports 360's positive impact on people and performance. Few, if any, other HR techniques have such strength of independent, empirical support. It is flexible and widely applicable - you'll get multiple returns on your investment. 360 could add real value to coaching, change programmes, training, assessment/development centres, talent management, appraisal, team building, etc. Also it's easy, takes relatively little time and people can understand/own it.

## Make it a small case - initially!

A 360 website can generate feedback reports for dozens of your people in the next few weeks. And, it won't cost much at all. But, your people will not buy into it and essential support won't be in place. All the research says merely providing a feedback report achieves absolutely nothing. So, start small, with perhaps a pilot involving a few senior managers. Use early successes to convince doubters and win resources. Then, plan something a bit bigger and more challenging, e.g. supporting change in part of the business using 360 coaches you've trained.

## Promise a lot

Promise significant improvements in business performance - they are pretty straightforward to achieve. All you need is buy-in from your people, simple, relevant 360 reports, and a supported action planning process that begins and ends with performance issues. It will really help if action plans contain practical improvements to processes, and concrete business objectives (e.g. reduced costs, improved customer service). You'll then be able demonstrate both change and bottom-line benefits. Don't forget to say how you will publicise your successes as part of your business case.



## Be gentle with senior managers

Expect senior managers to have all kinds of opinions about 360's questionnaire, reports, software, etc - all based on what was said to work elsewhere. You can bet those methods won't work for you, but it's not smart to haggle with senior managers. It's better to present managers' preferences as options in your business case, and say piloting will explore them. And plan for regular, honest reviews as part of your business case, so that everyone learns what works for your organisation.

**Expert tip.** Before you write the business case, ask your 360 provider for a free, trial website tailored to your competencies, branding, etc. Pilot the website exhaustively, with careful feedback/coaching to volunteers. That's an early, risk-free demonstration of 360's processes and benefits.