



Credible 360

BEING RESISTANT to feedback is a common phenomenon for executives who have been taught never to show weakness during their ascent to the top. If the executive team or an influential member of it is familiar with *The Leadership Challenge* by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, then LPI Online, an extension of the research done by the authors, should be well received. The interactive tool may have enough credibili-

ty to convince executives to use the feedback process themselves before rolling it out to the rest of the management team. LPI Online is designed to administer the Leadership Practices Inventory, a 360-degree leadership assessment instrument created by Kouzes and Posner. According to the publisher, the inventory has been used in print form by close to one million people worldwide. Now LPI Online offers simplified administration, immediate results, and 24/7 online access for administrators and participants.

In addition to the assessment, three documents are available in PDF format: a facilitator's guide (nearly 250 pages of instructions on the LPI process), participant workbook (44 pages), and a leadership development planner (100-page workbook).

The strengths of the product are the ease of use and the content, which is based on the research of credible experts. The additional materials help create a complete leadership development process. Instead of spending time determining your organization's competencies, you can tap into the research done by leadership experts.

The drawback to this product is the rigidity in the questions. The instrument is based on the authors' research-based model; allowing administrators to edit or change the questions would compromise the validity of the instrument. Therefore, if you already have a competency model in your organization, you'll want to look into other options for the 360-degree

Evaluation

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We liked...

- the product's ease of use
- the content that's based on research from credible experts.

Could be better...

- Because questions are based on a research model, they can't be altered.

LPI Online

Online, 2004

Pfeiffer/Wiley

www.pfeiffer.com; (800) 274-4434

US\$110 per leader license;

volume discounts available

Other material: facilitator guide, participant workbook, leadership development planner

Recommendation

I strongly recommend this tool if your organization has never undertaken a 360-degree process and your leaders are unsure about feedback, or if executive leaders in your organization are strong believers in the work of Kouzes and Posner.

feedback aspect of your leadership development process.

When taking an organization through a 360-degree process, it's important to provide both observers and leaders with information tailored to the goals of the organization. LPI Online enables administrators to add up to four open-ended essay questions for observers. In the 360-degree processes I have implemented in organizations, the written comments were most helpful for leaders and coaches.

LPI Online product rating

Holds user interest	***
Production quality	***
Ease of navigation	***.5
Interactivity	***
Value of content	***.5
Instructional value	***.5
Value for the money	***.5
Overall rating	***.5

Deanne Bryce is principal in a learning and performance organization based near Philadelphia. She partners with organizations to implement leadership development processes linked to desired business results; dbryce@leaderstrength.com.

Diversity Lite

THE EDGE ADVANTAGE is a Web-based diversity program that's useful and engaging. It comprises four modules that take about three hours to complete,

The Edge Advantage

Online, 3 hours, 2004

Diversity University

www.diversityuniversity.com;

(513) 551-1123

US\$79.97 per student

Other material: leader guide

Recommendation

I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the program to an organization that wants a solid, engaging online diversity program before embarking on a comprehensive diversity initiative.

RATINGS

start to finish. The program delivery is unusual: It involves a diverse team of eight “employees.” The learner is part of the team. An online facilitator named Michelle guides the participant through the program and helps the virtual team

identify and resolve workplace issues.

The Edge incorporates quizzes and polls about the learner’s real-life work team. The goal is not only to educate participants about diversity issues, but also to make

them aware of their own workplace perceptions.

The interactive program, which uses Flash and QuickTime players, is very easy to use and navigate. It also allows participants to bookmark where they stop the program if they need to complete it in multiple sessions.

Overall, the Edge Advantage is a very good training product and can serve as an excellent foundation for understanding diversity issues. While the program is competitively priced when compared to training from an outside diversity consultant, it can’t substitute for having real people who know the organization facilitate a dialogue on its diversity issues.

The Edge Advantage product rating

Holds user interest	***
Production quality	***.5
Ease of navigation	***.5
Interactivity	***
Value of content	***.5
Instructional value	***.5
Value for the money	***.5
Overall rating	***.5

Matthew Rei holds a doctorate in organizational psychology and has more than 10 years experience in management and internal consulting in organizational development. He is currently manager of organizational development at Babson College in Wellesley, Mass.; rei@babson.edu.



You’re the Boss

MAKING THE LEAP from peer to boss is never easy, and the hardest part seems to be balancing former co-worker relationships with new management responsibilities. Peer Today, Boss Tomorrow is designed to help newly promoted supervisors make the transition successfully.

In a clever way, the video presents four strategies to help new supervisors handle the changing relationships. In the video’s narrative, five friends are returning home in a Winnebago from a climbing trip. One of the friends has just been promoted to supervisor but is beginning to regret the move because of problems with his former peers. As the five-hour trip progresses, this friend gets

helpful advice from his fellow travelers.

At 22 minutes, the video is short and to the point. It features a good mix of ages, races, and sexes so any new supervisor can relate to it. The program has an excellent instructor guide useful for organizations that have to train new supervisors regularly.

We liked...

- the narrative setup
- the diversity in the characters
- the useful instructor guide.

Peer Today, Boss Tomorrow product rating

Holds viewer interest	****
Acting/presenting	***.5
Diversity	***.5
Production quality	****
Value of content	***.5
Instructional value	***.5
Value for the money	***.5
Overall rating	***.5

Peer Today, Boss Tomorrow

Video, 2004, 22 minutes
 Vision Point Productions
 www.vppi.com; (800) 300-8880
 US\$795 VHS, \$995 DVD
 Other material: Facilitator guide (includes participant materials), downloadable PowerPoint presentation

Recommendation

Peer Today, Boss Tomorrow should be part of any company’s learning library. It’s succinct and ably addresses the complicated transition from peer to supervisor.

Lynn Monaco has served in a variety of positions, including vice president of training and development. She is currently a consultant; monacol@aol.com.

Product evaluations are provided by Training Media Review and do not imply endorsement by T+D or ASTD. For more information, contact TMR at (877) 532-1838; www.tmreview.com.