13 Common Mistakes Using 360-Degree Feedback

Here's how to avoid some common missteps when implementing multirater feedback.

BY SCOTT WIMER AND KENNETH M. NOWACK

IMAGINE having returned from a conference where you heard reports on the power of 360-degree or multirater feedback. Excited by the prospect of introducing it in your organization, you start sharing your enthusiasm and find that others are interested and receptive. After much discussion, you receive the go-ahead from your manager. Now, your challenge is to figure out the best way to implement it.

First, you decide to do some informal benchmarking. As you read about multirater feedback, talk with colleagues, and attend workshops, it becomes apparent that it's a complicated subject with many options for design and implementation. At times, you even wonder whether 360-degree feedback is the potent tool for performance management and organizational change it's hyped to be or just another management fad.

Your initial research reveals varied results. In some organizations, people rave about multirater feedback, claiming it's the cornerstone intervention for individual and organizational change. Others say it has left people feeling betrayed, broken confidences, and heightened cynicism.

There are commonalties in the success stories and in the failures. Most organizations using the best practices anticipate potential mistakes and plan actively how to avoid them. You want to make sure to address the pitfalls before embarking on your own 360-degree process. The successful implementation depends on whether it truly addresses, and is perceived to address, important performance issues in your organization. When done well, multirater feedback systems can lead to enormous positive change and

enhance effectiveness at the individual, team, and organizational levels.

Here are 13 common mistakes to avoid when implementing a multirater assessment.

Mistake 1: Having no clear purpose

One of the main reasons for the unsuccessful implementation of a 360-degree feedback process is the lack of a clear purpose. The feedback doesn't address an organizational performance issue or strategic need. Instead, it's being done because it's the latest management trend, because a senior manager thinks it's a good idea, or because a recent benchmarking study reports that world-class organizations are doing it.

Many organizations use 360-degree systems trying to addressing specific performance issues and problems. Similarly, training and performance improvement consultants, in their never-ending search for the latest cutting-edge tools, may unwittingly recommend interventions that appear exciting, without regard to whether they fit the culture of the organization or address important needs.

Suggestion. Performing an intervention without a clear purpose is like prescribing an antibiotic for a virus; it doesn't treat the underlying problems and may lead to undesirable outcomes. Multirater interventions can be powerful. They should be designed and implemented to address specific business and strategic needs. For example, managers may need to enhance the critical competencies for competitive performance, based on feedback from multiple internal and external stakeholders. Or people may be operating "in a vacuum" and need to open channels of feedback to be able to serve customers better. Or the compensation and reward systems may be outdated and 360-degree feedback may be a way to bring about actual or symbolic change. Or the organizational hierarchy may have become rigid and 360-degree feedback is a way to develop a different culture that emphasizes continuous feedback and improvement.

Whatever the needs, it's imperative to have a clear and well-defined understanding or contract with employees on why the organization is undertaking a 360-degree feedback process. Ideally, the process should be designed for a specific purpose (for example, management development, succession planning, performance management, coaching, or career development). It shouldn't be to meet the needs of often-conflicting human resource systems. It's also a poor idea to use 360 feedback just because other organizations are doing it or you've been given a green light by a self-diagnosing client who'd like to give it a try. That generally results in an intervention that misses the mark, which can undermine any future attempts to use a 360-degree process when organizational conditions may be more conducive.

Mistake 2: Using it as a substitute

Multirater feedback isn't a substitute for managing a poor performer. It's a process for helping people gain a rich, accurate perspective on how others view their management practices, interpersonal style, and effectiveness. It shouldn't take the place of managers assessing and managing people's performance.

Managers can be tempted to use 360 feedback to facilitate a behavior change in poor performers. They may think it can motivate them to improve, based on the feedback they get. Rather than manage employees' performance day-to-day, they see multirater feedback as a panacea. It's not uncommon to hear managers murmuring, "If I only had an objective way to deliver constructive feedback to employees, I'd be able to manage their performance better."

Although feedback delivery from a 360-degree process can stimulate an employee's self-awareness, it can't replace direct communication between that employee and his or her manager.

Suggestion. When you see managers substituting 360-degree feedback or some other performance improvement tool for effective management, call it to their attention. Be sure not to collude with them in an attempt to avoid unpleasant, but necessary, management tasks. Ideally, a training or performance improvement consultant can encourage managers to make feedback an ongoing, day-to-day process that contributes to keeping an organization healthy—instead of a once-a-year event that managers must check off their to-do lists.

In addition to the one-time benefits of exchanging feedback, it's also a way to get people accustomed to living in a feedback-rich environment. In high-performing teams, exchanging performance feedback is encouraged.

It's important to remember that managers are responsible for confronting under-performance or inappropriate behavior in a constructive way. Although others' feedback can be valuable, it's no substitute for managers establishing and communicating performance goals or for tracking performance towards achieving those goals. Managers must be willing to confront unacceptable behavior and manage poor performers on an ongoing basis. They should provide feedback to their staff on an as-needed basis, without relying on a 360-degree feedback system as a replacement for performance management. They're unlikely to get people to change unless they give them timely, specific, and useful feedback to correct undesirable or unproductive behavior.

Mistake 3: Not conducting a pilot test

There's a danger in being too ambitious too soon when introducing any major change in an organization. Most 360-degree feedback systems represent a radical departure from the way people are traditionally given feedback and managed. The concept of upward feedback to a supervisor or manager and collecting information from peers, staff, and customers may be considered radical in top-down cultures.

Consequently, initiating a culture change of information-sharing shouldn't be taken lightly. It requires a change in people's mindset and day-to-day behavior. They have to refocus their energies and rethink who the key stakeholders are. To bring about such a shift in a short time can be hazardous if the appropriate groundwork isn't laid.

Suggestion. Find a stakeholder within the organization who has a strategic business need that can be addressed by using a 360-degree feedback process. Introduce the process on a pilot basis so that it can be evaluated to determine its effec-

tiveness and potential impact on the identified business need. Involve others in the planning, implementation, and evaluation to modify the pilot program. Look for ways to integrate the multirater process with other HR systems. For example, hold employees accountable for implementing performance development plans that become part of the organization's performance planning and evaluation systems. Build in checkpoints to evaluate progress and collect data to support the effectiveness and success of your 360-degree process.

Mistake 4: Not involving key stakeholders

It's important to involve key stakeholders in the design and implementation of a 360-degree process. They need to be aware of important decisions and the rationale behind them. They should provide input to such decisions and assist with the implementation.

Many performance improvement consultants have battle scars from change efforts that got throttled because certain key players weren't included. Those key people either withheld their support or actively sabotaged the effort. Despite the idealism of most performance improvement consultants and others involved in organizational change, there are usually winners and losers. That's particularly true of 360-degree feedback interventions. Feedback has the power to enhance or diminish people's reputations. The more that accountability and information-sharing are built into the process, the more important it is for stakeholders to participate.

Suggestion. First, identify the key stakeholders. Get them involved and keep them informed. Stakeholders can be senior managers, the intended recipients of 360-degree feedback, their immediate supervisors or managers, and the potential providers of the feedback—such as staff, peers, team members, and customers. All parties should know the strategic competencies to be measured, the methods for gathering and summarizing the feedback, and how the feedback will be integrated with existing development or evaluation systems. That involvement is critical to ensure people's support and commitment to a fair, objective, and constructive feedback process. A particularly good way to get people involved is to have them help select the survey instrument or help generate specific questions that will measure the targeted competencies.

> *It's important to gain senior management's true commitment and involvement*

It's important to gain senior management's true commitment and involvement rather than a general blessing. The most potent demonstration of managers' commitment is a willingness to also take part and receive feedback. Ideally, they could be the first group to receive feedback. Accepting it nondefensively and making positive changes can set a positive tone and provide a role model.

Mistake 5: Having insufficient communication

Complete communication is especially important with 360-degree feedback. Given that some feedback can seem threatening, it's important that its purpose be communicated clearly. To avoid potential misunderstanding or feelings of betrayal, it's also essential to communicate clearly about confidentiality issues.

The logistics can be complex. Unattended little details can lead to major mishaps. Without making clear who needs to be rating who in what timeframe and sorting out the mechanics of processing and issuing feedback, a theoretically smooth process can degenerate into a big, jumbled mess.

Suggestion. Communicate, communicate, communicate! Be sure that all stakeholders and other interested parties have thoroughly discussed their concerns before implementation and that, at minimum, they understand the rationale underlying major decisions. Typically, there are judgment calls or unexpected questions that crop up. It helps for people to have come to a consensus about the overall approach before they have to make on-the-spot decisions.

Although not one of the most exciting aspects of a 360-degree feedback intervention, the coordination and administration are absolutely critical for success. Overseeing the administration can be a logistical challenge at best and a nightmare at worst. Regardless of the medium used—such as paper-and-pencil, floppy disk, or email—it's important to have clear decisions and a clearly communicated understanding on how the survey instruments will be distributed and processed and how feedback will be routed to people.

It's essential to communicate—and communicate—about such major issues as how confidentiality will be safeguarded and what the potential impact of negative feedback might be on someone's career. It's also important to communicate about lesser issues, such as whether written feedback will be transcribed verbatim or summarized and what terms will be used—for example, *direct reports*, *team members*, or *respondents*? It's a good practice to develop a written communication plan summarizing the administration, scoring, and overall feedback process. The plan should be shared with all parties.

Mistake 6: Compromising confidentiality

Multirater feedback is based on the idea that people can feel safe providing anonymous feedback. It can be a death knell if confidentiality or anonymity is compromised or if there's the perception that it has been compromised.

Suggestion. At the outset, nail down which data is confidential and which is anonymous. Communicate those decisions clearly. People need to know exactly what will be reported to whom, if they're to speak freely. Be rigorous in enforcing confidentiality agreements. Even though feedback recipients may argue (sometimes with merit) that they can benefit from more information, safeguarding the feedback providers' confidentiality is a greater concern.

Many subtle issues can affect the rigor of confidentiality agreements and the perceptions surrounding them. Be sure to address these issues:

- how to refer to respondents providing numerical or written feedback
- how written comments will be presented (transcribed or summarized?)

- how numeric or graphic data will be summarized and presented—and how data will be sorted by category of respondents
- what types and how much feedback, if any, will be shared with feedback providers
- what types and how much feedback, if any, will be shared with a person's manager
- how the results of the 360-degree process will be used in the organization—for example, whether it will be integrated with existing performance management or succession development systems and who might have access to such information
- what the minimum number of respondents (or respondents per category) is in order for a person to receive feedback.

Mistake 7: Not making clear the feedback's use

It can cause great confusion if you don't make sure people know whether the feedback will be used for evaluative or development purposes.

Some organizations use 360-degree feedback strictly as a development tool, and there are no repercussions for people getting negative feedback. Other organizations use 360-degree feedback as a vehicle for performance management, typically as an adjunct to existing systems. Sometimes, 360-degree feedback falls somewhere in-between; its purpose is for development and evaluation.

Suggestion. There are important trade-offs to using 360-degree feedback as a development tool. Don't gloss over that issue just to get on with the process. If you decide to use it for development purposes, be sure to make that clear. If you decide to use it for evaluative purposes, start slowly and move gradually. Whatever the decision, it's ill-advised to change purposes after an intervention has begun.

Some people argue that for feedback to be most effective, it must be purely developmental. Feedback providers have to know there's no pressure for them to be anything but honest and candid, and people will accept feedback more easily when they don't fear retribution. Others argue that if they're to invest a lot of time, effort, and money, it's a waste not to use feedback in employee evaluations.

Both views have merit. An important consideration is which approach is most congruent with an organization's culture. If 360-degree feedback is to be used in evaluation, it's important to make sure people think the rating system is fair. They may worry about undue influence or retribution. That's why its advisable to start using 360-degree feedback for development only. When the process becomes familiar, people can be held more accountable and feedback can count towards their evaluations. What's most important is that conditions are clear and people know what they are.

Mistake 8: Not giving people sufficient resources

People must have ways to act on the feedback they receive. A recurring problem is that people don't know what to do with the feedback they get. Insight isn't enough; people need guidelines—such as individual coaching, training, or self-study—for taking action. Many people don't know how to address issues they've been made aware of, often out of the blue. That's especially true when the issues are interpersonal or psychological and people aren't inclined to think along those lines.

Suggestion. Give people the tools to use feedback productively. The way it's delivered can have a big impact on how constructively people will use it. One way to deliver feedback is one-on-one with a trained professional who can explain and clarify the feedback and also deal with people's emotional reactions to disturbing information. Another approach is to provide feedback in a group setting with a supportive climate. After receiving feedback, people can benefit further from training, books, and other resources. If feasible, it's good to provide people with mentoring, coaching, job rotation, or changes in their work conditions so they can develop needed skills.

When possible, you should design the mechanisms for facilitating transfer of learning from a multirater intervention at the front-end. For example, you can hold participants accountable for completing a development plan and discussing the plan with their managers at the end of the feedback process. Or you can encourage or require people to share their development plans with their staff or feedback providers.

Mistake 9: Not clarifying who "owns" the feedback

Questions about access to and ownership of data are fraught with difficulties. When feedback is used for development, people can feel less empowered if they don't own their data and if they don't have control over who gets to see it, and when and how that happens.

When feedback is used for evaluative purposes, participants clearly don't own the data. They feel even more lack of control if they weren't fully informed or didn't take part in the initial decision making on how data would be handled. It's bad when participants are subject to surprises about who sees the data and for what purposes it will be used. The worst case is when people are led to believe one thing and the situation changes after the process has begun.

Suggestion. To the extent possible, give people control over their own data. In a 360-degree process used for development, people will feel most empowered if they get to choose exactly when and with whom they share their feedback. That doesn't mean taking a laissez-faire, hands-off approach. Provide guidance on the best ways to share data so that it's constructive for everyone. It's also important not to exert subtle, unstated pressure to get people to share data when that may not be in their best interest.

If the feedback process is evaluative, it takes on more significance. When the process is incorporated into the performance management system, the organization owns the data, not the individuals. Within that context, however, there are still ways to give people control. If their views are considered in the design of the process and they're kept well-informed throughout, they're less likely to feel that something is being done to them. Beyond being a matter of respect and dignity, it's also a question

of fairness that people know exactly who has access to their feedback, how it will be treated, and what the potential ramifications are for their careers.

Mistake 10: Having "unfriendly" administration and scoring

The administration and scoring of any 360-degree feedback process should be user-friendly. The process can entail a large and complex set of procedures. Sometimes, it's obvious who needs to fill out a survey and for whom. For example, if it's purely upward feedback and the feedback recipient has a manageable number of staff, everyone in his or her group fills out the survey. In other multirater systems, the selection of potential respondents can be more complex. For example, sometimes people get to choose who fills out surveys on them, or there may be random procedures for selecting from a pool of eligible raters. Without a good questionnaire and a logical and clearly communicated set of procedures, there's the danger of introducing a cumbersome, paper-intensive process. In such cases, the response rate may be low and the feedback less accurate because people may not be motivated to complete the survey.

Suggestion. Insist that "user-friendly" be high on the list of criteria when designing a 360-degree process. Spell out who needs to provide feedback to whom. Make sure there are fair, logical, and consistent criteria for selecting respondents. Certain feedback providers may have many surveys to complete. In such cases, a survey especially has to be simple and user-friendly so that people don't feel burdened.

People in general don't like to complete a lot of paperwork, especially for HR-driven projects. A survey should be clear, make sense to people, and be easy to complete in 10 to 15 minutes at most. Resist the temptation to include every conceivable question measuring every conceivable competency. It's better to err on the side of simplicity than comprehensiveness.

Different formats can work, but the most user-friendly surveys typically have items grouped by category, with a 5- or 7-point scale. A survey should have open-ended questions so respondents can comment on topics not covered in the rating scales.

Mistake 11: Linking to existing systems without a pilot

A 360-degree feedback system should not be integrated casually with existing performance management and merit systems. Too often, organizations just patch them together. When a feedback process is new and unfamiliar, people may not treat their ratings of others with the concern for accuracy necessary for such systems to work. Only later, it might be discovered that feedback providers were engaged in a ratings game, which can prevent future trust of multirater evaluation. Research suggests that (unless there are considerable precautions) ratings are inflated when they are integrated into pay-for-performance systems—compared with ratings used solely for development purposes.

When used for performance evaluation, the focus of a 360-degree process can be driven primarily by numerical scores and their weight in overall performance evaluation ratings and subsequent merit increases. It's important to clarify these issues:

- what performance factors should be evaluated
- how they should be evaluated in behavioral terms
- who should provide feedback ratings
- how many feedback providers are required to ensure fairness and equity
- how they should be selected
- how their results should be weighted to provide an overall score
- how scores should be collected and summarized.

Suggestion. Organizations that have successfully integrated a 360-degree feedback system into their performance management and merit systems usually do a thorough job of piloting and evaluation. Typically, a project team involving various stakeholders—such as HR, line management, and field staff—is created to design and pilot the new performance management system. It's best to introduce the 360-degree rating system over several years. During the first year, performance evaluation and merit increases should be based on traditional performance measures and the 360-degree results used only for development purposes. That way, people can become comfortable with 360-degree ratings and the kinks can be worked out.

It's essential to define relevant, measurable performance competencies and develop an administration process that ensures confidentiality and ease of data collection before implementing the system. It can take several iterations and considerable fine-tuning before the pilot stage is completed. Only then can you proceed confidently knowing that the introduction of 360-degree ratings will improve rather than hinder performance management.

Mistake 12: Making it an event rather than a process

As with other training and development interventions, 360-degree feedback systems can be considered flavors of the month to try, taste, and discard until something new comes along. Many organizations introduce 360-degree feedback with much fanfare. When resistance, negativity, or a nonsupportive executive comes along (perhaps one who personally received some negative feedback), an organization may stop using the intervention with this chorus: "We tried 360-degree feedback and had a bad experience." Without follow-up, commitment to continuous improvement, and the linkage of formal and informal organizational rewards to successful implementation, it's unlikely that a multirater system will have a positive effect.

Suggestion. A 360-degree feedback process should be repeated over time. That way, the intervention is truly a process aimed at increasing and improving critical competencies and behaviors rather than a single event providing a one-time snapshot to recipients. If they're given feedback in a supportive manner and have the opportunity to learn and practice new behaviors, it makes sense to also provide follow-up op-

portunities to receive new feedback—typically, 8 to 12 months later. Then, they can assess their attempts to change their behavior and identify future challenges.

For feedback recipients, the power of a 360-degree process comes from the continuous feedback of observers who have a context within which to identify what people do well and what they need to improve on. Continuous process improvement is based on the tenet that feedback over time helps people focus on specific behaviors and approaches that affect competitive performance. Similarly, the administration of a 360-degree feedback system can benefit from ongoing feedback and be continuously improved on. Just as someone might walk down a dark hallway with a flashlight to avoid getting lost, organizations need to provide continuous illumination through 360 feedback.

Mistake 13: Not evaluating effectiveness

People often speak of the merits of performing a systematic evaluation but don't actually do it. Too often, 360-degree feedback systems are implemented with the expectation that they'll translate automatically to improved management effectiveness; better team and individual performance; and enhanced relationships between people and their managers, staff, team members, customers, and others. But just learning that you have high blood pressure, for example, doesn't ensure that you'll do what's necessary to minimize the risks. Similarly, only through follow-up and evaluation will an individual or organization learn to what extent a behavioral change was successful and whether it had an impact on performance.

Despite the growing popularity of 360-degree feedback and other multirater systems, few companies take the time to evaluate systematically the impact and effectiveness of these powerful interventions. Scattered comments from respondents or feedback from senior management are often the only form of evaluation that takes place.

Suggestion. Invest in a rigorous and systematic evaluation of the 360-degree process. Training and performance improvement consultants are well aware of how challenging it can be to "teach old dogs new tricks" and sustain a successful behavior change over time. Even under the best conditions, complex management behaviors can be resistant to change. Multirater systems, when properly designed and implemented, make people aware of the crucial first step to changing their behavior—overcoming their own resistance. Even when they know what to focus on, they may not be motivated or have the interpersonal skills to go about making a change. What's more, organizational conditions may not support, or may interfere with, making a change.

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If you're committed to understanding what constitutes successful implementation of a 360-degree process, it's wise to take the time to evaluate its effectiveness and make alterations. You can conduct an evaluation through post-program surveys, focus groups, or a time-series analysis of critical individual or organizational outcomes such as employee grievances, morale assessed through employee satisfaction surveys, quantitative performance measures, implementation of development plans, or changes in relationships with a respondent's supervisor, staff, or peers. It's important to determine exactly how 360-degree feedback can be used to improve both individual and organizational performance.

Beware the slippery slope

Multirater systems give people feedback that might not usually be shared with them. They can glimpse how they're perceived by others who know them well and come into contact with frequently. It can be especially enlightening to illuminate someone's blind spots, and it's essential for change.

Work groups can also benefit greatly. When people have an opportunity to express themselves anonymously about peers or managers, they're sometimes able to unburden themselves of years of pent-up feelings. They hope their feedback will motivate others to change. It's common for a group's morale and effectiveness to improve dramatically after the members have had the opportunity to give others concrete, honest, behavioral feedback and know that their views have been heard and taken seriously.

There are also enormous benefits to an organization. It can send a signal to employees about what behavior is encouraged and expected and what type culture the organization has or is moving towards. Multirater feedback systems show that all employees' opinions are important and actively sought. Such systems should operate on the principle that the truth shall set you free. That reflects a philosophy that the exchange of valid information enhances work relationships and makes an organization function better.

To ensure success and avoid the 13 common mistakes, it's essential to let people know what they're getting into, to involve key stakeholders, and to use such systems strategically to address key organizational performance issues. Depending on your organization's particular quirks, you may have to compromise at times. Sometimes when organizational conditions aren't optimal, they're still good enough to gain something positive from an intervention. But be careful: It's a slippery slope from rational compromise to compromised rationale. If more than a few of the 13 mistakes are present and can't be corrected, don't proceed. It's a recipe for disaster.

But if organizational conditions are ripe and the difficulties surmountable, then go for it! Undoubtedly, challenges will arise as you embark on the feedback trail and you'll have to make decisions and mid-course corrections as you go. But, throughout, the guiding principle should be to do

whatever you can to create conditions in which people can express their true thoughts safely and in which those thoughts will be summarized and presented in a supportive, caring, and respectful manner.

Above all, be guided by a consistent respect for the truth. It's the essence of 360 feedback. ■

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A Case Study and Some Critical Questions To Ask

Terry, a member of the HR department, was contacted by Joan, the manager of the customer service department, to facilitate a multirater process with the customer service supervisory staff. Joan had recently participated in a personal development workshop that included a multirater process. She found it "eye-opening" and "useful" and thought it would be important for all of her supervisors to go through something similar. Joan told Terry that, although she was excited about proceeding with the project, she had some concerns about her boss. Although he approved the effort, she questioned how supportive he really was.

On probing further, Terry found that Joan had experienced several recent staff problems, including high turnover, a sexual harassment complaint against one supervisor, and an increase in customer service complaints. Terry had tried to enlist the support of Joan's boss in dealing with those problems but found that he wasn't especially helpful. Though Joan thought it might be good "in principle" for Terry to meet with her boss to discuss the new project, she said that he was busy and advised against it. Even so, Terry agreed to help Joan plan and implement the multirater intervention.

Terry did some benchmarking with colleagues in other companies and selected a popular off-the-shelf instrument. Then she drafted a memo (which she and Joan signed) that described the process that was about to take place. The memo explained that Terry would be available to meet with supervisors to discuss their feedback results if they requested. It also set a deadline for returning the survey instruments.

Surveys were sent to each supervisor to distribute to their own supervisor, staff, and peers. The completed instruments were to be forwarded for scoring directly to the supplier from whom Terry purchased them. After analyzing the data, the supplier would send the feedback reports to Terry for distribution.

Several weeks later, the reports arrived but didn't appear to have input from all of the supervisors' staff and peers. In reading the reports, Terry noticed some disturbing feedback about a few supervisors, based on the written comments that were included. She decided to remove those sections and send only the graphic and numeric summary portion of the feedback. As she was about to mail that to the supervisors, Terry received a call from Joan's boss saying that he'd like to see the results. He wanted access to the information because of a planned reorganization of his department and thought the information would be useful. Although Terry never expected to share the results with Joan's boss, she agreed to make a copy for him.

> ***Most of the supervisors didn't want to participate in the feedback process because they "didn't trust management"***

Terry then distributed the reports to the supervisors and waited for them to call for feedback meetings, but only a few did. Terry was puzzled but eager to meet with them and hear their reactions. The few meetings Terry had turned out to be mostly with the people who had received the best feedback. She discovered that most of the supervisors didn't want to participate in the feedback process because they "didn't trust management." She also heard a rumor that one supervisor was upset because "his rights had been violated" and he believed HR was responsible.

If you were the HR consultant asked to help this client, how would you approach the situation? Which of the 13 mistakes were made? What would you do differently?

Imagine that one year after this intervention, you're in Terry's job and asked to implement another multirater process. What extra challenges do you'd think you'd face? How would you handle them?

Here are some crucial questions when planning a 360-degree feedback intervention.

- Will you design the instrument in-house or will you purchase one from a supplier?
- Will you provide feedback to respondents using internal or external consultants?
- Will you use an online system (intranet or other internal email) to administer the instrument or a paper-based approach?
- Will you use feedback for development purposes or performance evaluation?
- Will you provide completely anonymous feedback or just make it confidential using such rater categories as "staff"?
- Will you use off-the-shelf or customized competencies?
- Will you collect only upward feedback or more comprehensive 360-degree feedback from managers, peers in other departments, customers, and others outside of the organization?
- Will you provide quantitative (graphic or numerical) feedback or qualitative feedback (written comments or narrative summaries)?
- Will you encourage development planning or make it a requirement?