



360° Feedback Assessment RATER Guide



RECRUITMENT

ENGAGEMENT

DEVELOPMENT

RETENTION

A Countywide Succession & Workforce Planning Program Resource



As a compass is a circle with 360 points of reference used to determine and monitor direction, 360° feedback provides information about your work behaviors from multiple points of reference.

Like a compass, 360° feedback is a navigational tool that helps you **know where you are on or off course.**



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INTRODUCTION

Background

The best leaders, managers, and employees make the most of their strengths and work to improve upon their shortcomings. To do this, they must first have a clear and realistic understanding of what their strengths and shortcomings are. Participating in a 360° Feedback Assessment (“360”) is a powerful way for employees to obtain this understanding and for a department to show that it supports employee development.

During the 360 process, employee participants (“participants”) receive feedback about their strengths and development needs from their supervisors, colleagues, direct reports, and customers. **YOU** have been selected by a 360 participant to be a rater in his/her/their 360 process and provide this feedback because the participant values your perspective and input.

Purpose of this Guide

This Guide provides instructions for you to follow during the 360 process. Specifically, this Guide describes the following:

- brief overview information about the 360
- your role and responsibilities as a rater
- guidelines for rating the participant

Time Commitment

Being a rater in the 360 process requires a commitment of approximately **30-60 minutes** per participant for whom you will be providing feedback. Subsequent sections of this Guide provide details that illustrate the time commitment required.



360 OVERVIEW

The following section provides a brief overview of the 360 to frame your understanding.

DEFINITION

The 360 measures an employee’s strengths and development needs through feedback provided by the employee and his/her/their supervisor, colleagues, direct reports, and customers. The 360 assesses a range of 15-30 competencies selected by the participant’s department from among the following list:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Accountability | Flexibility | Problem Solving |
| Conflict Management | HR Management | Professional Expertise |
| Continual Learning | Influencing/Negotiating | Project Management |
| Creativity/Innovation | Integrity/Honesty | Public Service Motivation |
| Customer Service | Interpersonal Skills | Resilience |
| Data Fluency | Leveraging Diversity | Strategic Thinking |
| Decisiveness | Managing Change | Team Building |
| Entrepreneurship | Oral Communication | Technology Management |
| External Awareness | Partnering | Vision |
| Financial Management | Political Savvy | Written Communication |

The 360 was developed in-house by Department of Human Resources (DHR) professionals with input from Administrative Deputies and/or Departmental Human Resources Managers from most County departments. Thus, the 360 is tailored to providing feedback that is relevant to actual work in the County.

USE

The County’s 360 is to be used for **development purposes only**. Its objectives are 1) to help participants gain deeper insight into how their work behavior is perceived by others with whom they work, and 2) for participants to use that insight to accelerate their professional development. The 360 is **not** intended to be used for performance appraisal or employment selection purposes.

“I valued the 360 immensely. I found it extremely valuable to have opinions of my work performance from people whose feedback I don’t usually receive. Since it was anonymous, it gave them the opportunity to be open, honest, and constructively critical where necessary.”

- 360 Participant



COMPONENTS

The 360 consists of an online evaluation, a feedback report, and a feedback session.

- 1) Online Evaluation:** The 360 participant and each of his/her/their raters will complete an online evaluation which involves providing the following:
 - numerical ratings on how the participant demonstrates important, observable work behaviors
 - narrative comments about the participant's general performance, top strengths, and greatest areas for development

The participant has been instructed to select 7-14 raters, including his/her/their supervisor, to complete online evaluations.

- 2) Feedback Report:** The participant will receive a confidential feedback report that presents summary analyses of his/her/their online evaluation results. These summary analyses include:
 - Rankings of the participant's competency strengths and development needs
 - Comparisons of the ratings provided by the participant and his/her/their raters
 - Average ratings for each competency and behavioral statement

The feedback report also includes a compilation of all raters' narrative comments.

- 3) Feedback Session:** In most cases, the participant will receive his/her/their feedback report during a 1-on-1 meeting with a feedback coach. The feedback coach will guide the participant in interpreting his/her/their results and planning subsequent development actions.

Your involvement as a rater in the 360 process is to complete the **online evaluation only**. See the "What You Need To Do" section for detailed instructions on completing the online evaluation.

ANONYMITY, CONFIDENTIALITY, & DATA SECURITY

To support you in providing honest feedback to the participant, the 360 process is anonymous. The feedback report will not identify you individually as the provider of **any** specific ratings or comments about the participant. To further reinforce rater anonymity, the feedback report will group together the ratings provided by colleagues, direct reports, and customers into a single "Others" category, unless the participant's department requests otherwise.¹ *Note: ratings provided by the participant's supervisor will be identifiable.*

Aggregated ratings at various organizational levels (e.g., Countywide and departmental) may be reported to the Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Office, DHR, or executives of the participant's department to help direct Countywide and/or departmental employee development planning. As with the feedback report, you will not be individually identified as the provider of any specific ratings or comments in these aggregated reports.

The online evaluation is administered using **Qualtrics**, the leading online 360 delivery system. All evaluation data (i.e., the numerical ratings and narrative comments) will be maintained on a secure Qualtrics' server. Based on the DHR Information Security & Privacy Officer, Qualtrics meets the security and privacy best practices for both the County and the industry.

¹ If this does occur, the feedback report will still maintain your anonymity.



WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

This section provides instructions for completing the online evaluation.

1

ENSURE YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Reading this *360 Rater Guide* is an important first step to understanding the 360's purpose and process. Additionally, reviewing the other communications that the participant has provided about the 360 is important as well. These communications include the launch date for the 360 process.

In the interest of providing a safe, open forum for you to express your questions and concerns about the 360, you can reach out to DHR's 360 Team at DHR360@hr.lacounty.gov.

2

PREPARE TO RATE

Before you begin the online evaluation, take some time to reflect on your work interactions with the participant over at least the previous **6 months**. Also, be aware that there are a number of common rating errors that may inappropriately influence your ratings and lead to inaccurate feedback. Please read the list of common rating errors below and have it as a reference when providing your ratings:

- Central Tendency – occurs when you are reluctant to rate the participant's demonstration of work behaviors as being high or low and consistently rate at the midpoint of the 5-point rating scale (i.e., "Capable").
- Leniency/Severity – occurs when you consistently rate the participant either higher (leniency) or lower (severity) than what would be appropriate based on his/her/their actual demonstration of each behavior.
- Halo/Horn – occurs when you are overly influenced by some characteristic, either positively (halo) or negatively (horn). For example, allowing the participant's superb "people skills" to influence your ratings for all of the behavioral statements comprising the "Interpersonal Skills" competency, as well as unrelated behavioral statements comprising other competencies (e.g., Strategic Thinking).
- Primacy/Recency Error – occurs when you are overly influenced by your first (primacy) or most recent (recency) observation of the participant demonstrating a work behavior when it was different from how the participant usually demonstrates that behavior. For example, allowing an unsuccessful presentation the participant gave right before the start of the 360 rating process to guide your ratings when, in fact, all of the participant's other recent presentations were highly successful and well-received.



- **Contrast** – occurs when you compare how the participant demonstrates a work behavior with how that work behavior is generally demonstrated by others. For example, providing an artificially inflated rating for a behavior you perceive that no one else does well, when the participant’s actual demonstration of the work behavior, when considered independently, warrants a lower rating.
- **Likability** – occurs when you evaluate the participant more favorably simply because the participant is likeable rather than on his/her/their actual demonstration of the work behavior.
- **“Similar-to-Me”** – occurs when you rate a participant more favorably because you perceive that the participant is similar to you.
- **Information Favorability** – occurs when you give value to a particular piece of irrelevant information (e.g., school attended or previous employer) which results in inappropriately raising or lowering ratings.

Overall, the best way to avoid these common rating errors is to evaluate the participant realistically and independently (not in relation to others), taking into consideration the full range of his/her/their performance for **at least** the last six months.

Note: See the “Using Qualtrics” section of this *360 Rater Guide* for instructions on completing the online evaluation beginning on page 10.

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PROVIDE NUMERICAL RATINGS

Using a 5-point rating scale, you will rate how the participant demonstrates important, observable work behaviors. There is also an “Unable to Assess” rating option to cover situations in which you have not observed the participant demonstrating a particular work behavior. An example is provided below.

| <i>Please rate <u>John Doe</u> on each of the following behaviors:</i> | <i>Significant Development Needed</i> | <i>Development Needed</i> | <i>Capable</i> | <i>Strength</i> | <i>Exceptional Strength</i> | <i>Unable to Assess</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Follows formal and informal organizational customs for showing professional courtesy and respect to others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2. Speaks with the credibility to inspire listeners’ trust and belief in the message | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Note: This example is for illustration only.

4

PROVIDE NARRATIVE COMMENTS

At the end of the online evaluation, you will be able to provide narrative comments about the participant's general performance, top strengths, and greatest areas for development. These narrative comments are important to the success of the 360 process, as they offer the participant insights into specific strengths and development needs that can be missed by summarized quantitative data alone. You are encouraged to provide narrative comments.

Please follow the guidelines below to help ensure that your narrative comments are truly meaningful for the participant:

- Provide clear and concrete examples with sufficient explanation to enable the participant to understand his/her/their behavior and its impact on others
Bad Comment: "His verbal communication is poor."
Good Comment: "He frequently rushes through his presentations and trainees cannot understand the information he tries to explain."
- Be positive and constructive, even when describing an area(s) where the participant needs to develop
Bad Comment: "She is incapable of effective project management."
Good Comment: "She is unable to secure the resources needed to implement a project, which reduces the project's likelihood for success."
- Suggest strategies the participant can take to improve upon his/her/their shortcomings or further leverage his/her/their strengths
Bad Comment: "He needs better training."
Good Comment: "He should invest in public speaking training. DHR has a great class, and I took an impressive Udemy.com online course."

Overall, the best way to approach providing narrative comments is to remember that the participant selected **YOU** to be a rater because he/she/they values your perspective and input. Be respectful of that nomination in providing your narrative comments. Evaluate each of your comments by asking yourself, "*Would I find this statement useful in guiding my development?*"

Note: DHR will redact comments that contain inappropriate information, as best as possible. Additionally, if any narrative comments suggest violations of County policies, then the appropriate parties will be notified.



USING QUALTRICS

The following section provides screenshots and information on using Qualtrics during the 360 process. As an initial step to get started, you may need to verify and/or work with your IT staff to ensure the following:

1. Your work email account is set up to receive emails from 360@qualtrics-survey.com (i.e., so they will not automatically be sent to your junk mail folder)
2. Your computer has the most up-to-date web browser for optimal use of and experience with your Qualtrics online 360 portal.

Rater Only

If you are only rating participants, and you are not also a participant in the 360 process, you will receive an email containing a link to the participant's online evaluation. **You will receive one email for each participant you are rating.** The subject line of each email will be "Rater nomination: 360-degree Feedback Assessment" and it will come from "Department of Human Resources" via the following Qualtrics email address: 360@qualtrics-survey.com.

Clicking the link in the email will take you to the main page of your 360 portal, which will provide access to the online evaluations for all participants you are to rate.

Note: If you were nominated to rate one participant, the Qualtrics link may open directly into the participant's evaluation (see screen shot on next page).

The screenshot shows the Qualtrics 360 portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the XM logo and a breadcrumb trail: < All 360 development projects > 360 Feedback Assessment (Test1) > Your tasks. Below this, there is a section titled "Your feedback" with a sub-section "Give feedback to others". A progress indicator shows "Completed 0/2". A table lists two participants:

| Status | Name | Email | Action |
|--------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| To do | MATTHEW BENDER | mbender@hr.lacounty.gov | Give feedback |
| To do | MEICHIN YAO | myao@hr.lacounty.gov | Give feedback |

A callout box with a blue border and rounded corners contains the text: "Select 'Give feedback' to begin the evaluation of the participant. Once completed, the 'To do' status indicator will change to 'Done.'" An arrow points from this callout to the "Give feedback" button for Matthew Bender.

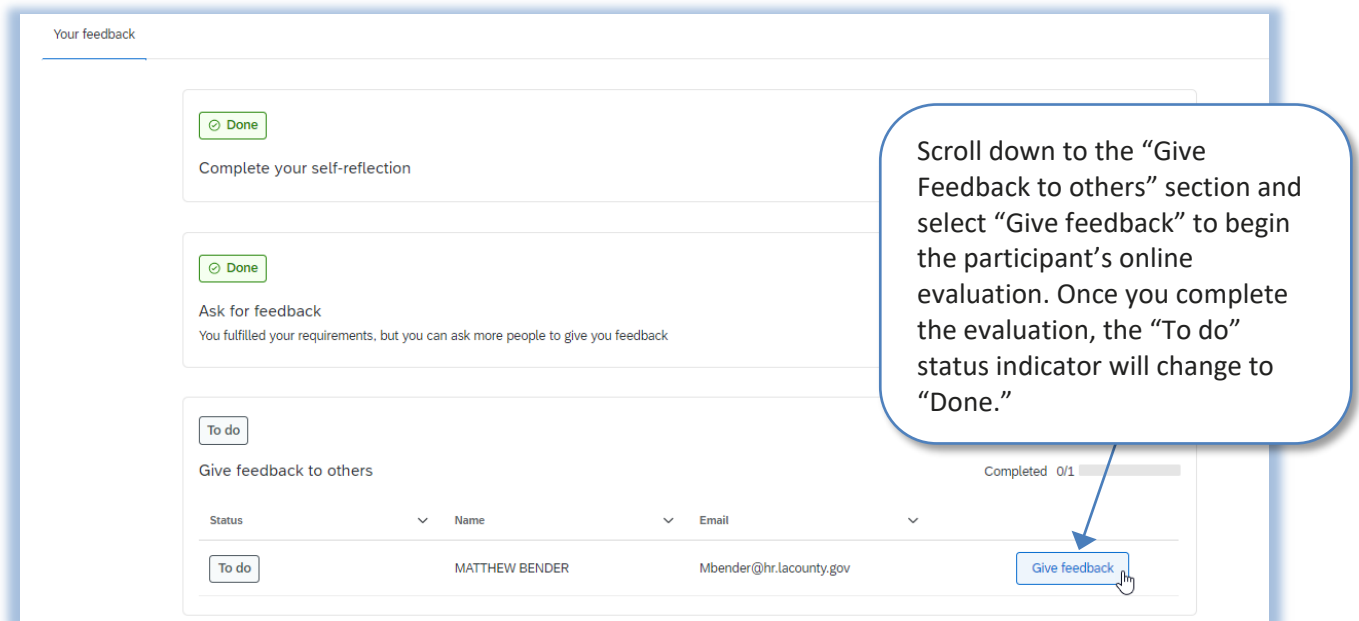




Rater and Participant

If you are both a rater and also a participant in the 360 process, you will receive an email containing a link to log-in to your 360 portal to complete the participant's online evaluation. **You will receive one email for each participant you are rating.** The subject line of each email will be "360-degree Feedback Assessment invitation" and it will come from "Department of Human Resources" via the following Qualtrics email address: 360@qualtrics-survey.com.

Logging in will take you to the main page of your 360 portal, which will provide access to complete your online self-evaluation and the online evaluations for all participants you are to rate.



CONCLUSION

Thank you for providing meaningful feedback to help the 360 participant grow and develop professionally. If you have any questions regarding the County's 360 in general, please contact DHR's 360 team at DHR360@hr.lacounty.gov. If you have any questions about the specific 360 administration in the participant's department, please contact the participant's departmental HR office.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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