

# JOELLE K JAY

## 360-DEGREE DOSE OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Originally published in CEO IQ, October/November 2009

What if your best isn't good enough?

What if there are things you are doing – or not doing – that are sabotaging your success? What if you're missing a few key tasks that could bring even better results?

### **GET FEEDBACK ON YOU**

A popular tool among coaches and HR representatives, a 360-Degree Profile is a process that brings feedback on you. It involves asking seven to 10 people around you – colleagues, family, your boss, direct reports, vendors, suppliers, mentors, customers or clients – to provide perspective on how you're showing up, what it's like to watch you day-to-day, your flaws and strengths, what questions you should be asking what you need to learn and how you might behave in order to improve your success.

### **WHEN YOU PARTICIPATE IN A 360-DEGREE PROFILE, YOU:**

- Discover your strengths and how to build on them for performance optimization.
- Clarify your weakness and learn to manage them so they don't get in your way.
- See yourself as others see you, so you can respond more effectively.
- Gain valuable insight into actions that will bring success and improved results.
- Learn a process you can use again and again throughout your career.

### **THE 360 IS A POWERFUL CATALYST**

In the family of leadership development tools, a 360 is a powerful catalyst toward higher levels of effectiveness, productivity and achievement.

360-Degree profiles come in a variety of flavors. Leadership companies offer 360s that assess leaders against a predetermined set of skills and characteristics. For a more customized approach, executive and leadership coaches offer 360s specifically designed for the individual leader, helping him or her determine a focus for the assessment. For a 360 to be truly effective, it's important to choose the approach that will get you the most useful information

## **CONDUCT YOUR OWN 360**

Just follow these seven steps:

### ***STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW***

Create a questionnaire that will help you learn what you most want to know by starting with three simple questions:

1. What am I doing that's working?
2. What could I do even better?
3. What one daily task would dramatically increase my effectiveness?

Or,

1. What are my strengths?
2. How might I leverage my strengths to improve my effectiveness?
3. What ideas or perspectives should I embrace in order to be my best?

You can also create a survey in which people rank your performance on a scale of one to 10, focusing on your core values or competencies. Keep it simple and focus on what will really reveal the greatest insights for you.

### ***STEP 2: CHOOSE YOUR RESPONDERS***

This is a selection process in which you choose seven to 10 people who you'd most like to provide feedback. These will be people in your personal and professional life who are more likely to be honest but fair.

### ***STEP 3: REQUEST PARTICIPATION***

Contact your responders and ask them to fill out your questionnaire. E-mail makes it easier for all parties. Plan about one week to collect the responses from your group.

#### **STEP 4: DISTRIBUTE QUESTIONNAIRES**

Set a deadline to help your responders schedule their time.

#### **STEP 5: SEND REMINDERS**

Send reminders to your responders to help ensure that you get all of your questionnaires back, on time. People usually want to help; sometimes they just need a gentle reminder.

#### **STEP 6: RECEIVE THE FEEDBACK**

Schedule about two hours to read the completed questionnaires, and another two hours to create an action plan. This is a great time to work with a coach who can help you glean the most valuable information and put your findings to work. Gathering sound feedback designed to trigger positive behavioral change is pointless if you don't intend to execute an action plan to adopt the changes.

#### **STEP 7: THANK YOUR RESPONDERS**

Thank your responders for taking part in your 360! This is a brief but important step in developing relationships with the people who are helping you to be your best.

Remember that 360-Degree Profiles are not for the faint at heart. You will be challenged and surprised by some of the response. But without that feedback, you rely blindly on the accuracy of your own self-perception – a perception that research shows to be flawed 86% of the time. When you take the step of getting valuable feedback with a 360-Degree Profile, you put your best foot forward on the road to success.



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