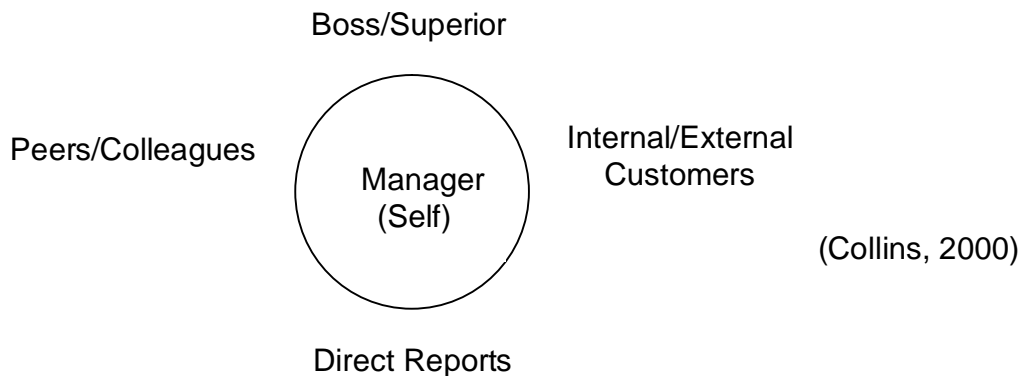# Accord's 360^0 LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

BACKGROUND

360^0 assessments, sometimes referred to as multi-rater assessments or multi-source feedback, are commonly used for leadership development. In a 360^0 assessment, raters are selected to provide objective feedback for a particular manager or leader. Typically, raters include the leader's boss or superior, peers or colleagues, direct reports, and additional constituents such as internal or external customers. Raters commonly form a full circle around the manager or leader, representing views from many distinct perspectives. Managers or leaders also participate by providing their own unique self-ratings.

Boss/Superior

Peers/Colleagues   Manager   Internal/External
                          (Self)   Customers

                                           (Collins, 2000)

Direct Reports

The 360^0 Assessment tool that Accord utilizes items related to leadership and organizational success. Ratings from each rater group are aggregated and compiled into a leadership report profile. This profile provides a comparison of the ratings provided by persons within each rater group. When multiple raters are included within each rater group, assessment results are presented as anonymous.

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

The 360^0 Assessment measures traits and abilities indicative of effective leaders. Leadership is generally defined as the ability to establish direction – develop a vision of the future with strategies for creating the changes needed to achieve this vision; the ability to align people – communicate direction to those whose cooperation may be needed, so as to create coalitions that understand the vision and are committed to achieving it; and the ability to motivate and inspire people – keep people moving in the right direction by appealing to basic human needs, values, and emotions.

Leadership capabilities differ from management skills such as planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing, and controlling and problem solving (Kotter, 1990). Leaders and executives alike share responsibility for managing and leading. The behaviors and traits assessed within the 360^0 Assessment focus

more heavily on the leadership capabilities of a leader or executive and less on day-to-day management skills. Both skill sets are necessary to be effective, although the focus and use of these skill sets varies by task and situation.

Over the past ten years, there has been a survey of over 1.5 million employees in organizations around the world. This experience has continually illustrated that effective managers and leaders excel in multiple key areas. They not only provide direction and set goals, explain the organizational vision, empower employees to make decisions, and produce results (all management related skills), but they also provide coaching and training for employees and are keenly aware of their competitive environment and customers' needs. Effective leaders also take time to think beyond today and effectively lead and manage change. Effective leaders take time to evaluate themselves, identify their strengths and weaknesses and strive for continual self-improvement.

CORE COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

The 360^0 Assessment is centered on a core set of competencies, which represent underlying characteristics causally related to superior leadership performance. Competencies are derived from understanding the knowledge, skills, abilities and behavioral traits of effective leaders. Brisco and Hall (1999) proposed a framework for deriving competencies using one or a combination of three methods: research-based methods, strategy-based methods, and/or values-based methods.

- Research-based methods define competencies based upon extensive research within an organization. Effective managers and leaders are interviewed and observed and the competencies that make them successful are identified. The result is a set of validated competencies that are correlated with successful performance. The key disadvantage of this method is that it focuses on past performance. While past performance has been used to predict future success, it may not provide a completely accurate picture given the speed at which organizational change currently tends to occur.
- The second method for deriving competencies is strategy-based. Many organizations define important characteristics based upon their business strategy and desired outcomes. This approach allows organizations to position themselves and their leadership for future change (Brisco, et al., 1999). The downside of this strategy is that the future is not always certain and predicting what behaviors are critical can be a guess at best.
- The third method for deriving competencies is values-based. The values-based approach centers on organizational values, which are fairly consistent over time. It provides a consistent approach to conducting business, learning, meeting customer needs, and leading that can endure and proactively shape business trends. Competencies based upon a

values approach focus more on how leaders or managers conduct themselves, irrespective of the situation (Brisco, et al., 1999).

The competencies included within the 360^0 Assessment were derived using the second and third methods discussed above, as well as research conducted by The Institute for Leadership Dynamics, and the Senior Executive Service Leadership Competency definition list, which is used by the United States Office of Personnel Management. Based upon this methodology, a comprehensive list of the competencies necessary for effective leadership were identified and defined. These competencies include: Communications, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Creativity and Innovation, Interpersonal Skills, Managing Client Relationships, Self-Direction, Flexibility, Resilience, Professionalism, Continual Learning, Business Acumen, Strategic Thinking, Visioning, Leveraging Diversity, Accountability, Technical Credibility, Leading Change, Influencing/Negotiating, Partnering, and Political Savvy.

While many competencies can stand on their own merit, some competencies are really part of a larger skill set and can therefore be combined to create higher-level competencies. For example, possessing good communications skills, managing client relationships, having good business acumen, and using partnering skills is the basis for creating customer focus. Similarly, competencies such as flexibility, resilience, and professionalism can be combined to create a core competency called leadership values.

The 360^0 Assessment incorporates all of the core competencies listed below. These core competencies provide a composite view of the behaviors and skills essential to effective leadership.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- *Leadership Values*
- *Leading People*
- *Leading Change*
- *Vision and Goals*
- *Strategic Thinking*
- *Customer Focus*
- *Problem Solving and Decision Making*
- *Communications*
- *Creativity and Innovation*
- *Developing Self and Others*
- *Teamwork*

LEADERSHIP VALUES
Establishes credibility as a leader; instills mutual trust and confidence; creates a culture that fosters high standard of ethics; behaves in a fair and ethical manner toward others.

LEADING PEOPLE
Provides strong leadership toward developing and motivating others; holds people accountable for their decisions and their performance; clearly defines responsibilities and sets goals; rewards others for doing quality work.

LEADING CHANGE
Understands the need for change; creates an environment that supports change; helps employees and others through the change process.

VISION AND GOALS
Builds a shared vision with others; communicates a compelling vision of the future; translates the vision into meaningful strategies and set goals for working toward the vision.

STRATEGIC THINKING
Thinks beyond today; articulates strategies for the future; coordinates work to effectively implement strategies.

CUSTOMER FOCUS
Understands customer requirements; anticipates and meets the needs of customers; shares customer feedback with employees.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING
Encourages involvement in the decision making process; makes sound decisions; focuses on future opportunities rather than past problems; is timely in making decisions.

COMMUNICATIONS
Listens effectively and clarifies information as needed; openly shares information to improve performance; facilitates an open exchange of ideas; fosters an atmosphere of open communication.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION
Creates an environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation; rewards others for trying new things.

DEVELOPING SELF AND OTHERS
Understands the need for continual learning; recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; takes an active role in coaching and developing others.

TEAMWORK
Develops cooperative working relationships; fosters commitment and team spirit; recruits, develops and retains a diverse workforce; gets people to work together.

RESPONSE SCALES

Items within the 360^0 Assessment are primarily positively framed meaning that predominantly positive leadership behaviors are the focus of the assessment. The small number of negatively framed items assess fatal flaws, or behaviors deemed to derail effective leadership. Fatal flaws include behaviors coworkers may find obsessive, over the top, or demeaning. Fatal flaws can quickly turn an effective manager/leader into an ineffective manager/leader. Negatively framed response scales are reverse coded for processing and presentation of results.

Likert type scale for positively framed items:

5 = Almost Always
4 = Usually
3 = Sometimes
2 = Rarely
1 = Not At All

Likert type scale for negatively framed items:

5 = Not At All
4 = Rarely
3 = Sometimes
2 = Usually
1 = Almost Always

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