

Navigating the 360 Feedback Experience

What Participants Experience	How They Might Show Up	What Coaches Can Do
Phase 1: “The Green Room” Preparing to launch the 360		
<p>Participants oscillate between anxiety and excitement in anticipation of their results.</p>	<p>With their coach: Participants usually seek involvement in the process and attempt to ingratiate their coach in order to ensure the coach is “in their corner” as they hedge against the possible worst-case discovery that others think negatively of them. This may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking numerous questions about the logistics 360 process. • Trying to influence respondent selection, often more subtly than overtly. • Asking to exert control over the messaging of the 360 process. Excessive preoccupation with wording and phrasing of 360 email invitations and correspondence. • Generally expressing confidence in the coach and positive relationship building. <p>With their colleagues: Participants engage in strategic networking behaviors to both consciously and unconsciously influence the feedback. Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-preparing for upcoming interactions. • Subtly gathering insider information. • Scheduling more one-on-one meetings to create moments of positive interaction. • Complimenting others in team meetings. • Acting to favor potential respondents, such as offering unsolicited help or positive feedback. • Mirroring behaviors of key respondents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear process information and candid advice on what makes for a valuable 360 process. • Highlight some of the typical behaviors at this stage for the client, and encourage them to be aware and mindful of them. • Be generally warm and empathetic, even if the client does not seem anxious and acts completely cool and collected.
Phase 2: “Purgatory” During Review Collection		
<p>Participants wade through a period of uncertainty and suspense as they wait for results.</p>	<p>With their coach: Participants may unconsciously be pulled in two different directions. At once both desiring connection and affirmation from their coach, while simultaneously feeling anger or hostility toward their coach as the instigator of this anxiety-provoking experience. As a result, they may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently check-in about the progress of feedback collection. • Seek general reassurance about how they are perceived, both by the coach and others. • Guide conversations towards speculation about feedback and others' motivations and circumstances. • Express annoyance and fault with the logistics of the process. • Find minor grievances with their coach and/or their coach's choices in the 360 process • Detach and become far less-responsive to their coach than typical • Act with outright hostility or anger toward their coach, sometimes regarding something unrelated to the 360 <p>With their colleagues: Participants continue to engage in strategic networking behaviors, albeit more cautiously than before.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Heightened sensitivity to colleagues' remarks. ◦ Over-interpretation of casual interactions as feedback indicators. ◦ Avoidance of or (conversely) excessive engagement in work-related discussions. ◦ Realize minor faults with their colleagues, but keep quiet about them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide concrete updates on the review process to minimize anxiety. • Encourage focus on present responsibilities rather than speculation. • Point out any finger-pointing or negative attributions toward others. • Allow the client to express anger or frustration with you. • Monitor your own reactions to them (self-as-instrument) and be mindful of how they act toward you as their colleagues may experience them similarly in other moments of stress. • Acknowledge their frustrations and take ownership where reasonable, but do not do much more just yet. • Share 'common responses to seeing 360 results' with clients to prepare them to monitor their own reactions and behaviors
Phase 3: “Reckoning” Immediately after receiving feedback		
<p>Participants have initial reactions to the feedback, ranging from relief and pleasure to disbelief, disappointment, anger.</p>	<p>With their coach: Emotions and defense mechanisms become the primary drivers of participant's behavior. They may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have emotional or defensive responses to feedback, expressing doubts about respondents' intentions and finding fault with the 360 methodology and the coach • Attempt to sound highly-rational, seeking clarifications or challenging certain points, particularly in an attempt to find nuance that fits results with pre-existing narratives. • Ignore or evade having the feedback conversation • Minimize the feedback; acting as though the process was never that important and simply confirmed what they already knew • Challenging whether the coach is right for them, often privately but potentially together <p>With their colleagues: They may feel paralyzed with how to proceed and what to acknowledge. Behaviors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal or (conversely) increased assertiveness in team settings. • Skipping meetings last minute or no-showing followed by (digital) apology notes • Enthusiastic about interactions with those whom they believe rated them positively • Either over-thanking others for providing feedback or completely failing to mention the completion of the feedback process • Inserting passive-aggressive remarks referencing the 360 findings (e.g. “I know I need to work on my communication so...”) • Beginning to make conscious choices about collaboration or communication style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a supportive, empathetic environment for processing feedback. • Help contextualize and depersonalize the feedback. • Guide in forming constructive responses to the feedback, specifically encouraging action planning • Encourage journaling and self-reflection • Role-play upcoming interactions that may be causing anxiety
Phase 4: “Uncharted Waters” Short-Term Aftermath		
<p>Participants navigate accepting others perceptions as their realities and explore integrating feedback into personal and professional development.</p>	<p>With their coach: Participants speak with an action-orientation and discuss their evolving self-experience. They will frequently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive discussions toward actionable steps and goal setting. • Express uncertainty or excitement about new challenges, including doubts about their own capabilities. • Tend to ignore previous hostility or interpersonal negativity with the coach, in an attempt to move beyond it. • Reveal binary thinking about their future at the organization (e.g. “this is great!” or “I don't know if I can make it here”). <p>With their colleagues: They begin to test out new approaches and show signs of integrating others' perspectives, both overtly and tacitly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentative application of new behaviors or strategies. • Seeking informal feedback on changes made. • Adjusting to new dynamics in team interactions. • Scheduling and having “clear the air” conversations with key colleagues • Including colleagues in activities they previously would not have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in designing realistic and achievable goals. • Encourage experimentation with new approaches and self-monitoring. • Offer continuous support and feedback on progress, actively pointing out moments of growth you see in them. • Reference your own experiences and interactions with the client, where appropriate. This may include their earlier ingratiating or hostile behaviors toward you. • Reference key findings in the 360 with respect to what you discuss in your coaching sessions.
Phase 5: “Me 2.0” Long-Term Response		
<p>Participants build new relationships with others and themselves as they continue to integrate feedback into their work persona and practices.</p>	<p>With their coach: Participants gradually rely less and less on their coach as they build new behaviors and approaches to working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing successes and challenges of implementing changes. • Asking very specific, tactical questions about unique circumstances. • Seeking advice on sustaining improvements. • Reflecting on the journey and planning future development. <p>With their colleagues: Relationships that have been maintained have changed and improved and a new set of interactive norms have been established.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consistent demonstration of new behaviors. • Occasional regression into previous behaviors, but is often addressed • Evangelizing the coaching and 360 experience to others, especially to those whom they believe need feedback. • Greater confidence and competence in their role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate successes and acknowledge challenges. • Provide guidance for ongoing development. • Encourage reflective practice and continuous learning.