



The Science Behind

Culture Amp's Employee Effectiveness Tool

Our Employee Effectiveness tool is shaped by academic research and built to meet customer demand.

The problem we're solving is not how to fix performance appraisals, which have historically been the source of anxiety and demotivation¹, but how to better grow and develop people. We have scoured academic literature, interrogated best practice in consulting and worked directly with some of the most feedback-oriented, high-performing companies in the world.

Through this extensive research, we have designed and developed a unique Employee Effectiveness feedback tool using 360 methodology optimized for individual development.

Decoupling performance reviews and effectiveness feedback

Decoupling performance review feedback from effectiveness feedback allows people to give honest opinions on their peers' effectiveness, without worrying that they are impacting future salary reviews or other rewards. The intention of collecting feedback for improvement rather than assessment significantly impacts how authentic the feedback is. This phenomena is described by Charles Goodhart: "*When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure.*" It's widely recognized that peer-to-peer performance assessment is broadly inaccurate due to bias and subjectivity; often the ratings people give reflect more about themselves than others². There is a place for performance appraisals, but that place is not as part of employee effectiveness feedback.

To elicit the most valuable feedback for development from an individual's manager, peers and direct reports, it's important that we avoid framing feedback as evaluation from the start.

Removing the rating aspect makes people more likely to provide honest feedback. This more streamlined and effective approach means that everyone at a company can use the tool, that providing feedback is quicker than ever and that reports are succinct and useful.

Improving the process for people providing feedback

You'll see a difference in the type of questions we ask. The emphasis is on targeting specific areas of strength and opportunities, supported by qualitative examples³. This format allows the individual to quickly identify the areas they should focus on without being distracted by often meaningless scores and/or being swamped by negative feedback highlighting what they're doing badly.

What have you observed them excelling at?

PROBLEM SOLVING: Providing practical solutions to problems	1	1	2
PRODUCTIVE: Producing high quality work (in context of time constraints)	1	1	2
TECHNICAL COMPETENCE: Demonstrating a high level of functional and/or technical capability	1	1	1
OWNERSHIP: Taking the lead and showing ownership of issues	1	1	
ORGANISED: Prioritizing work and managing their time well	1	1	
RESILIENCE: Remaining calm, composed and productive under pressure/stress	1		
COMMUNICATION: Communicating information, ideas and concepts clearly	1		
INNOVATIVE: Experimenting with innovative ideas and approaches/ being open to new ways of doing things			

For the person providing feedback, there is not a long list of competencies to rate. They can quickly move through the survey and provide higher quality, reinforcing and corrective feedback⁴ on the areas that matter most. The self-review option is included to help harness the advantages of self-awareness⁵ by broadening peoples' understanding of gaps between their perception and that of others.

Actionable insights

The Employee Effectiveness tool is optimized for individual development and growth^{6,7} using research from positive psychology, motivation theory and coaching. Future-focused feedback clearly identifies desired behaviors. Redirecting feedback flags things to consider doing differently. Reinforcing feedback pinpoints the things that are being done well and which the employee should keep doing.

Each report delivers:

- + Top identified strengths
- + Top identified opportunities to focus on
- + Easily digestible qualitative feedback

This symmetrical format intentionally gives focus to both strengths and opportunities.

Our streamlined and effective approach delivers constructive feedback easier and faster than ever before, with succinct reports that are designed to enhance an individual's development first and foremost.

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2. S.E. Scullen & M.L. Mount, *Understanding the Latent Structure of Job Performance Ratings*, Journal of Applied Psychology, 2000, Vol 83, No. 6
3. Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). *The power of feedback*. Review of Educational Research, 77(1), 81–112
4. J. Zenger & J. Folkman, *How to Give Constructive Feedback*, Harvard Business Review, 5 February 2016
5. A. Sutton, H.M. Williams & C.W. Allinson, 'A (2015) A longitudinal, mixed method evaluation of self-awareness training in the workplace', European Journal of Training and Development, Vol. 39 Iss: 7
6. McDowall, A. & Kurz, R. (2008). *How to get the best out of 360 degree feedback in coaching*. The Coaching Psychologist, Vol 4 (1), 7–19
7. Kluger, N. K., & Nir, D. (2010). *The Feedforward interview*. Human Resource Management Review, 20, 235–246