

» **Talassure**SM 360

User's Guide

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The Talassure360 Leadership Development System

The Talassure360 system is a process that, when begun, will be an ongoing quest for continuous improvement. It is a process that requires the identification of the need for improvement, an analysis of the current atmosphere for resolution of that need, a commitment of resources, and detailed plan for implementation and follow-up.

A 360 feedback system can and is needed for any size organization in which there are leaders and managers. It is just as applicable to the entrepreneur with 3 or 4 people working for them as companies with tens of thousands of people. Smaller companies may have an easier time of preparing for 360 feedback, but all companies need to focus on readiness for the process. Since the actual feedback process involves collecting perceptions about a leader's behavior from that person's boss, direct reports, and fellow team members. The effectiveness of the feedback is directly linked to the integrity of the process which is measured in terms of commitment, purpose, and follow-up.

The Talassure360 system has been used to accomplish business strategy and culture change by clarifying the behaviors needing concentrated efforts to achieve organizational goals. It has also been used to enhance team effectiveness in organizations seeking to implement and/or improve a team-based structure. Additionally, it has been used to help individuals determine personal development needs, thereby allowing the total organization to create a profile of learning and development.

The Talassure360 can be of use to any organization that truly believes performance can be improved by changing/developing/coaching differences in individual behavior where leadership and management performances are not occurring at desired levels.

One of the hallmark principles of 360 feedback is asking people to be as honest and forthright as possible in providing feedback. This is also the reason for protecting the anonymity of peers and direct reports; 360 feedback should NOT be considered a way to gather documentation against a single problem employee! Face-to-face discussions are more appropriate for addressing these situations. Imagine people's reaction should they perceive that the 360 feedback is being used to "get" someone.

Since the assessment process itself is an empowering process, it is key that open communication and an encouraging culture are either desired or known to be in place. Communication regarding the process is critical to all managers and participants. Everyone needs to be educated and involved from the beginning regarding the purpose and goals of the process.

While the company must address the development process, there should be sharing of information between Boss and Manger (Self); there should also be feedback to peers and direct reports (this does not mean give them a copy of the report), and some minimum activity should be undertaken to show development.

Also, since the 360 feedback process will identify skill gaps and development needs, and be used to prepare individual and organization-wide development plans, funds must be made available. In an atmosphere of trust, where people feel that the information will be used for development (and not be held against them), they will naturally expect feedback on their improvements from the development process, continued follow-up training, and coaching/assistance. They will also expect FUTURE feedback, meaning a second round of 360s (or more). In the spirit of “continuous improvement” there should be no limit to the number of 360’s to be completed.

The Seven Management Competencies

The Talassure360 defines the seven core competencies and 17 skills which represent the most critical management performance areas. These competencies were determined to be the most suitable based on research completed by the design team. The individual survey questions were designed to define the actual observable skills and behaviors which define these core competencies. The Talassure360 competencies and skills are shown below.

Competencies & Skills	
Competencies	Skills
Communications	Listens to others
	Processes information
	Communicates effectively
Teamwork	Manages the team
	Promotes team harmony
	Facilitates team success
Engagement	Seeks improvement
	Motivates successfully
Resourcefulness	Works competently
	Obtains necessary resources
Decisiveness	Takes action
	Addresses needs
Leadership	Establishes trust
	Provides direction
	Delegates responsibility
Achievement	Identifies obstacles and problems
	Devises potential solutions

Introduction to the Process

It is important to get senior management to participate in and drive the effort. Many times, senior management exclude themselves from the process, but they direct middle management to participate. This is less likely to have the intended effect.

Emphasize clear and frequent communication about the feedback's purpose and implication for each member of the organization. The more people understand how the information will be gathered and why 360 feedback is used, the more likely the process will be supported. Anonymity of responses and positive use of the information should be very clear.

Clarify expected sharing of information; be sure that the use of the information between Boss and Self is addressed and used for performance enhancement. Make sure that peers and direct reports get feedback related to their input and can see evidence that their responses were used as part of the development process.

Begin by identifying the participant that will be rated. They are referred to as the Self. These are the leaders/managers for which the process will benefit the most.

It may be beneficial to arrange a meeting for all participants to give them information about the system, and to give the 360 feedback process a positive send off. The type and size of the initial meeting should be formulated to get as positive an initiation as possible.

Agenda items should include:

- Discussion as a Process for Continuous Development
- Senior Management Commitment
- Planned Boss/Self Interface
- Feedback to Peer/Direct Reports
- Anonymity of Peers/Direct Reports
- Information to be Provided (Report Review). This will help develop leaders and managers
- How Information is Gathered/Time to Take/Invitation Process (Mechanics)

Before the launch of the project, be sure that everyone involved receives an email outlining the process and important dates. Included in the email should be a link to a video tutorial explaining what they are to do.

An example of the email is shown below and can also be downloaded for the TIPS center.

Subject: Important – We Need Your Feedback

Body:

{Company Name} is participating in a Leadership Development program. This program is specifically designed for {Company Name} managers to encourage forward-thinking leadership while providing information for a clear, actionable plan of improvement.

You've been selected to participate in this process to provide feedback on our leadership team.

It is **important to note that your responses are completely anonymous** and that your responses will only be counted as part of a group response.

You will be receiving an invitation to participate in this program on {date of invite}. This email will be generated by the survey system. The email will say it's coming from {friendly name}. DO NOT delete this email or reply to it.

A short tutorial explaining this Leadership Development program is available. [Tutorial](#)

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact {company contact}.

This is an exciting time in our company. Please help us make {company name} the best place to work. Thank you for participating!

Sincerely,

{Executive}

Rater Groups

360 instruments are so named because they take their view from a “circle” of observers. The most useful results are obtained when all individuals who have a working relationship with the person being reviewed complete the instrument and have had the opportunity to actually observe the manager’s behavior over time. These relationships are supervisory, subordinate, peer, and, in some cases, customer or other. With responses from each of these perspectives, a very clear picture of how others perceive an individual’s management behavior may be seen.

A Respondent is any individual selected to complete the survey who provides responses and/or comments to the 62 items provided for the 17 Skills within the 7 Competency areas on the Talassure360. There can be up to three different respondent groups with a maximum of fifteen respondents in each group. Respondents must be assigned to a specific respondent group.

Self

The Self is the manager who is being surveyed. A report goes to the Self containing information focused on assisting that individual with improving the areas that are selected.

Boss

The Boss is the supervisor for Self. There may be up to two Bosses selected for each survey. The responses and comments (if any) provided by the Boss(es) are not anonymous.

Direct Reports

Those individuals who report directly to the manager (Self).

Peers

Those employees with the same or similar job titles and/or job responsibilities as the manager (Self).

Other

In some cases, the organization in which the manager is being surveyed has contact with customers or other stake holders. In those cases, an additional respondent group may be asked to complete the survey. This group can provide another perspective about how the manager is viewed.



Special Note:

There is an option for changing the names of the Respondent Groups. These names should only be changed if absolutely necessary and will be applied consistently across the entire organization.

Critical Skills

At the end of the survey process, Self and Boss are asked to independently select 5 of the 17 Skills each sees as the most important for success in the Self's position. The selection of these skill sets will help identify whether the Self is in alignment with their supervisor and will provide a focus for development suggestions in the report.

Schedule Surveys

Once all the groups and respondents that will participate in a survey are identified, the Talassure360 can be scheduled using the ProvaCore System. The process is very user-friendly and allows for configuration of the different rater groups. When scheduling, you will need to identify an anticipated completion date for the survey. This will be the date by which you will want to print the report. Also, it is recommended that you inform the respondents that you need them to complete their surveys before that date. The software allows you to set both of these dates.

A decision needs to be made whether you desire comments from the respondents. Comments can be a valuable piece of information to gather more insight from the coworkers. Not everyone will provide comments since they are not required. The default setting in the software is to include the opportunity to provide comments. If you decide not to collect them, then you will need to deselect that option.

When configuring the survey, there are a maximum number of people that can be assigned to a single survey.

Respondents / Survey Limits

Respondent	Max #
Self	1
Boss	2
Peers	15
Direct Report	15
Other	15
Total	48

Even though the software has a maximum number for each rater group, it is recommended that a normal group size be about 8 – 12. The system allows for more but it's usually not recommended to have that many per group.

Once the survey is totally configured, the process is initiated by activating the survey. This will send all the invitations to the respondents and will follow up with a reminder when one was configured.

The progress of the project can be monitored within the ProvaCore system, and if you chose, additional reminders can be sent.

Data Collection

Rating Scales

In the 62 survey statements, raters choose between six possible choices. Based on their observations, they indicate the percentage of time they feel the manager displays each behavior. The range of ratings is one to five. The sixth choice is "N" (No Opportunity) which is selected when the rater has had no opportunity to observe the listed behavior and thus, cannot provide a meaningful response. The six possible responses are shown below.

Rating	Description	Percentage of Time Observed
1	Almost Never	< 10%
2	Seldom	10 - 40%
3	Sometimes	41 - 60%
4	Usually	61 - 90%
5	Almost Always	> 90%
N	No Opportunity to Observe	

Comments

If comments were selected to be included, then each respondent (except Self) who elects to leave a comment is allowed up to 1000 characters for each of the competencies. The comments provided by the Boss will be labeled as such, where comments for all others respondents will be listed as *Respondent Groups* on the Comments page.

Confidentiality

One of the most important factors behind the success of the Talassure360 is the assurance of confidentiality. Each respondent is provided with a statement attesting to the full confidentiality of their responses and additional comments. It has been noted that a respondent is far more likely to provide true and accurate statements and responses if they are assured of the anonymity of their identities. In addition, all respondents' responses are merged with data from others within their group. If there are fewer than two respondents in a rater group (except Boss and Self), the data is not reported.

It is important that the representative of the organization who is responsible for managing the Talassure360 respects the importance of confidentiality throughout the entire process. Experience has demonstrated that even a hint that the respondent's input may be seen by someone within the organization can easily spread throughout the organization. Should this happen, much of the respondent's input could be negatively impacted

Talassure360 Feedback Report

The Talassure360 Feedback Report achieves the goal of assimilating and presenting complex data in a meaningful, simple, and graphic way. The relevance and applicability of the report for the actual user is of paramount importance.

The report is structured to appeal to all types of users by revealing an increasing level of detail, page by page. For those who prefer a summary format, the opening pages reveal only big picture information. For those who want all the details and specifics, there are complete descriptions and statistics aggregated by respondent group. These details begin with comparisons of Self with all other observers, then progressively work through each level until finally the items themselves are listed.

Self-improvement is one of the major design considerations of the Talassure360. The report allows managers to understand areas for improvement and focuses on appropriate methods to accomplish these improvements.

Another feature is to provide a method of assessing and aligning the perceptions of the Boss and the Self in the areas of objectives, concerns, and need for improvement. Five critical skill groups will be selected independently by Self, and five independently selected by the Boss. These are then compared and contrasted as critical Skills, which are special areas for consideration and development.

Features and Benefits of the Report

- Simple sources of input using mobile devices
- Behavioral focus assuring credibility of responses
- Self-improvement for the user
- Reports are clear, visually pleasing, and technically sound
- Readability aimed at all types of consumers

Report Delivery

Each report should be delivered to the Self and their Boss(es). It is suggested that Self read the report through, and then let put it down to think about it for a day and read again, making notes. After this personal review, Self can schedule a meeting with their Boss(es) to review.

A separate “Guide to Your Personal Development Plan” workbook should be provided. In addition to reading the report above, including this workbook should be related to the company’s prescribed process for follow-up on completed Talassure360s. It should be introduced when appropriate and should be included in the review with Boss for discussion and agreed upon follow-up.

For the Boss, the same basic process applies:

A key to Boss and Self meeting is to focus on the 17 Skills, and alignment of which skills each person designates as critical. An expectation would be an agreement on the five Skills: why they are important, how they tie into the company’s philosophy, attitude, goals, vision, etc.

This does not have to be accomplished in one meeting and often is not. But the key focus of 360 feedback is determining areas of focus and improvement, then developing a plan to get that done.

In addition to Self/Boss discussions, Self should provide some form of feedback to Peers and particularly to Direct Reports. The format is open, but generally does not mean showing either group the actual report. Feedback to Peers generally will be different as peer feedback is based on equal status in job position, while Direct Reports report to Self. Formats will vary, but Direct Reports should be made aware that Self has viewed the information, as well as receiving an indication of how and what will be done so that Direct Reports know that their input was noted.



Special Note

Typically, 360° Feedback is designed to be a very positive and development-inducing experience. There will be times when “perceptions” will have significant gaps, i.e. Self may rate themselves as very capable, and Direct Reports have an entirely different (negative) perception. In those cases, other factors have occurred that may require coaching/counseling/transfer/ etc. which is beyond the ordinary scope of the 360 Feedback.

Development Guide

The most successful use of the Talassure360 begins with all senior management going through the feedback, and then following up with specific development of needed skills and behaviors. An important element of the Talassure360 Leadership Development System is to create an environment of continuous improvement in the Leadership/Management elements of the business.

To aid in that effort, completing the “Guide to Your Personal Development Plan” is recommended. This item is a separate document that is based on a completed Talassure360. The two are designed to be a starting point for a development plan that will help with improvement for the Leader/Manager.

However, in the absence of anything provided by the company, these developments are suggested as the process to use to put the Talassure360 information to work.

The report and the workbook would first be part of Self/Boss discussions on the completed Talassure360. A plan should be developed from those meetings and implemented and monitored. This can take many forms; at a minimum Self should have a coach/mentor/referral person to help them complete any programs used. The key is to plan and do something to improve and complete the process.

All managers and supervisors may also need additional training on coaching and teambuilding. They will be participating in the process; but they may also need to be coaches or mentors to managers and supervisors who report to them.

The goal is to leverage all the feedback and to identify the two or three areas that – with improvement – will have the largest impact on the overall performance of the manager and, therefore the company.

In implementing a Talassure Leadership Development System, the key word is “system”. In the planning process, specific attention must be made to provide a means to give individuals the opportunity to further their development. A second Talassure360 should be scheduled to make the program a continuous process (and not a single event) and to confirm that targeted improvements were made.

Follow-up

For any development program to be successful, continuous monitoring and follow up is needed. At a minimum Self/Boss/Coach, etc. should be formally following up within 90 days of completion of the Talassure360. At that time (if not agreed and scheduled as part of the process) consideration and scheduling of the next Talassure360 should be agreed upon.

The process then follows the same path as with the first Talassure360. A new Boss(es) could be introduced, new Peers, new Direct Reports, etc. This will happen, perhaps frequently, as the Talassure360 process is designed to improve leadership/management by acquiring information from as many applicable parties as possible thus creating growth opportunities.

How will the impact of the process be measured?

In terms of the impact of receiving feedback (taking the first Talassure360) the best measurement of having done something to become a better leader/manager would be to compare the results of the first 360 to that of another, to determine where progress has been made, and where it is still needed. This can be accomplished by taking another Talassure360 and comparing it to the first one. This would not only indicate change/improvement, but would also tend to identify other areas of development.

Summary

The Talassure360 should be part of every organization. The feedback process can promote individual development and improve individual performance. It will be particularly effective in accomplishing development and improvement when linked to developmental planning, goal setting, and organizational support. Four conditions will maximize the value of this process:

- The process is business driven.
- The organization clearly needs the measured behaviors to support a corporate strategy or goal.
- The survey instrument and administration processes are reliable and valid.
- Conditions for learning new skills exist.

A 360 feedback should not be seen as a “business tool of the month”. It is a process that has a proven record of leading to positive change and enhanced effectiveness at the individual, team and organizational levels.