



Performance Appraisal: A trending sole of human resource management

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Abstract

In today's dynamic scenario, human resources are to be considered as a very important asset of the company and the importance of human resource is well known to the organization. The success of any organization depends on its ability to correctly measure the performance of its members and use that measure to neutrally boost and optimize their performance. So; the success of the organization depends on the performance of the employees and its human tendency to judge everything and everyone around them. Hence, performance appraisal is the trending sole of the human resource management.

The Performance Management (PM) system refers to the organization activity to ensure that employees work is aligned with the company strategic objectives, vision and the goals are met consistently and efficiently. Performance appraisals and awards systems are tools of PM that can improve the work performance of employees by helping them realize their full potentials in carrying out their organization mission; ensure that employees understand what is expected from them, and also to provide information for use in making work-related decisions for management.

Performance appraisal is a concept that stated in the early 20th century. Performance appraisal is the process of obtaining; analysing and recording information about an employee to evaluate and improve their performance. Performance appraisal supports in mapping individual and team performance to achieve organizational objectives.

Research Objective: This paper review the future oriented performance appraisal methods and identifies pros and cons for using each method especially 720-Degree appraisal.

Research methodology: In modern business scenario where job roles have become more diverse it's not easy to measure the performance of any employee. Thus performance appraisal methods can be really helpful to drive work force towards organisational goals. The study relies on the theoretical review of 720 Degree Performance appraisal towards organisational sustainability.

Further scope of study: The study can be extended towards empirical analysis of analysing the impact of modern performance appraisal technique towards employee productivity & morale.

Keywords: organizational objectives, human tendency, performance management, performance appraisal, 720-degree appraisal

Introduction

The role of Human resource in the present scenario has undergone a sea change and its focus is on evolving such functional strategies which enable successful implementation of the major corporate strategies. Today, HR works towards facilitating and improving the performance of the employees by building a conducive work environment and providing maximum opportunities to the employees for participating in organizational planning and decision making process.

Performance management is the current buzzword and is the need in the current times of cut throat competition and the organizational battle for leadership. Performance management is a much broader and a complicated function of HR, as it encompasses activities such as joint goal setting, continuous progress review and frequent communication, feedback and coaching for improved performance, implementation of employee development programmes and rewarding achievements.

Performance appraisals and awards systems are tools of Performance Management that can improve the work performance of employees by helping them realize their full potentials in carrying out their organization mission; ensure that employees understand what is expected from them, and also to provide information for use in making work-related

decisions for management.

Performance management

According to Lockett (1992), "performance management aims at developing individuals with the required commitment and competencies for working towards the shared meaningful objectives within an organizational framework".

Performance management aims at building a high performance culture for both the individuals and the teams so that they jointly take the responsibility of improving the business processes on a continuous basis and at the same time raise the competence bar by upgrading their own skills within a leadership framework.

Evolution of performance management in India

In India, The term performance management gained its importance from the times when the competitive pressures in the market place started rising and the organizations felt the need of introducing a comprehensive performance management process into their system for improving the overall productivity and performance effectiveness.

The performance management process evolved in five phases.

Phase:1	Phase:2	Phase:3	Phase:4	Phase:5
1960's	Late 1960's	Early 1970's	Mid 1970's	Still continuous
	To	To		
	Early 1970's	Mid 1970's		

Fig 1

- 1. First Phase:** The origin of performance management can be traced in the early 1960's when the performance appraisal systems were in practice. During this period, Annual Confidential Reports (ACR's) which was also known as Employee service Records were maintained for controlling the behaviours of the employees and these reports provided substantial information on the performance of the employees. Any negative comment or a remark in the ESR or ACR used to adversely affect the prospects of career growth of an employee. The assessments were usually done for ten traits on a five or a ten point rating scale basis. These traits were job knowledge, sincerity, dynamism, punctuality, leadership, loyalty, etc.
- 2. Second Phase:** This phase continued from late 1960's till early 1970's, and the key hallmark of this phase was that whatever adverse remarks were incorporated in the performance reports were communicated to the employees so that they could take corrective actions for overcoming such deficiencies. In this process of appraising the performance, the reviewing officer used to enjoy a discretionary power of overruling the ratings given by the reporting officer. The employees usually used to get a formal written communication on their identified areas of improvements if the rating for any specific trait used to be below 33%.
- 3. Third Phase:** In this phase the term ACR was replaced by performance appraisal. One of the key changes that were introduced in this stage was that the employees were permitted to describe their accomplishments in the confidential performance reports. The employees were allowed to describe their accomplishments in the self appraisal forms in the end of a year. Besides inclusion of the traits in the rating scale, several new components were considered by many organizations which could measure the productivity and performance of an employee in quantifiable terms such as targets achieved, etc. Certain organizations also introduced a new section on training needs in the appraisal form. However, the confidentiality element was still being maintained and the entire process continued to be control oriented instead of being development oriented.
- 4. Fourth Phase:** This phase started in mid 1970's and its origin was in India as great business tycoons like Larsen & Toubro, followed by State Bank of India and many others introduced appreciable reforms in this field. In this phase, the appraisal process was more development driven, target based (performance based),

participative and open instead of being treated as a confidential process. The system focused on performance planning, review and development of an employee by following a methodical approach.

In the entire process, the appraisee (employee) and the reporting officer mutually decided upon the key result areas in the beginning of a year and reviewed it after every six months. In the review period various issues such as factors affecting the performance, training needs of an employee, newer targets and also the ratings were discussed with the appraisee in a collaborative environment.

This phase was a welcoming change in the area of performance management and many organizations introduced a new HR department for taking care of the developmental issues of the organization.

- 5. Fifth Phase:** This phase was characterized by maturity in approach of handling people's issues. It was more performance driven and emphasis was on development, planning and improvement. Utmost importance was given to culture building, team appraisals and quality circles were established for assessing the improvement in the overall employee productivity.

The performance management system is still evolving and in the near future one may expect a far more objective and a transparent system.

Appraisal system

Employee appraisal systems help managers evaluate employee job performance and develop a fair system of pay increases and promotions. Appraisals in turn can help staff members improve performance, and assist companies in devising or reorganizing job functions to better fit the position or the employee

Characteristics of an appraisal system

Performance appraisal cannot be implemented successfully unless it is accepted by all concerned. There should be a common and clear understanding of the distinction between evaluation and appraisal. As Patten (1982) argues, evaluation aims at 'objective' measurement, while appraisal includes both objective and subjective assessment of how well an employee has performed during the period under review. Thus performance appraisal aims at 'feedback, development and assessment.'

Therefore, in order to be effective, the appraisal system should be individualized, subjective, and qualitative and oriented towards problem-solving. It should be based on clearly specified and measurable standards and indicators of performance.

Performance evaluation

According to R. Wayne Mondy, "performance evaluation is a formal system of review and evaluation of individual or team task performance".

Performance evaluation is defined as a formal and productive procedure to measure an employee's work and results based on their job responsibilities. Although performance evaluation is basically a procedure used for ascertaining, examining and recording information about the relative worth of the members of an organisation.

Process of performance evaluation

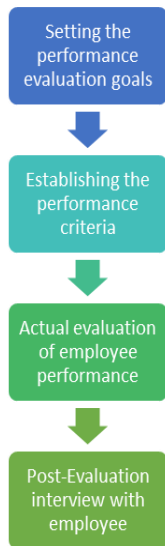


Fig 2

Setting the performance evaluation goals

The first step in the process of performance evaluation is setting specific goals. These goals are usually set jointly by both the superiors and the employees. Stephen Williams specified the following three types of objectives for a performance evaluation programme.

1. Key result areas: the objectives which contributes to the achievement of the business goals of the unit.
2. Performance standards: the objectives which contributes to the improvement in the performance of the individual job.
3. Performance development: the objectives which contributes to the development in the performance of the individual.

Establishing the performance criteria

The second step in the process is deciding the criteria for evaluation. There should be joint discussions between the superior and the employees regarding criteria formulation. These criteria are the basis for comparison. The criteria should be job-related, specific, and within the control of the employees. Once the performance criteria are established these should be communicated to all the concerned.

Actual evaluation of performance

At this stage, the employee’s performance is evaluated actually on the basis of pre-determined criteria. The evaluator and the employee review the latter’s job performance jointly and appraise it against established performance standards.

Post-evaluation interview with employees

At a final step in the formal evaluation process, the superior can have a meeting with the appraisal employees to discuss the results of the evaluation, once the appraisal is over. At this stage, the evaluator can ascertain from the employees the reasons for their high or low level of achievement against pre-determined objectives.

We may define performance evaluation as an objective review and rating of an employee’s performance in comparison with the relative performance standards.

Performance standards

Performance Standards are the establishment of organizational or system standards, targets, and goals to improve public health practices. Standards may be set based on national, state, or scientific guidelines, benchmarking against similar organizations, the public’s or leaders’ expectations, or other methods.

While the list of major job duties tells the employee what is to be done, performance standards provide the employee with specific performance expectations for each major duty. Performance expectation purpose is to communicate expectations.

Some of the performance standards are

- Based on the position; not the individual.
- Observable; specific indicators of success.
- Meaningful; reasonable and attainable.
- Describe “fully satisfactory” performance once trained.
- Expressed in terms of quantity; quality; timeliness; cost; safety or outcomes.

Performance appraisal

The concept of performance appraisal was first time used during the First World War. At the instance of Water Drill Scott the U.S Army adopted the Man to Man rating system for evaluating military personnel. This concept came for industrial workers during 1920-30 under which efficient workers used to be identified and paid wages incentives and that scheme was popularly known “merit rating programmes”. In the early fifties, performance appraisal techniques began to be used for technical, professional and managerial personnel. Performance appraisal also known as merit rating, performance appraisal, employee’s evaluation, progress report, staff assessment and fitness report.

Performance appraisal is a powerful tool to calibrate refine and reward the performance of the employees. It helps to analyze his achievements and evaluate his contribution towards the achievement of overall organizational objectives. Performance Appraisals is the assessment of individual’s performance in a systematic way.

Performance appraisal is a systematic; general and periodic process that assesses an individual employee’s job performance and productivity in relation to certain pre-established criteria and organisational objectives.

According to Edwin B. Flippo, “performance appraisal is a systematic, periodic and impartial rating of an employee’s excellence in matters pertaining to his present job and his potential for a better job.

The main objective of the performance appraisal system was to exercise control over the activities of the employees through disciplinary actions and management of rewards and promotions. The supervisors were expected to rate their employees on certain traits ranging between a scale of unsatisfactory to outstanding performance and these ratings were susceptible to various errors like central tendency, bias, halo effect, etc.

Importance of performance appraisal

- Employee recognition and rewards
- New challenges and rewards
- Continued progression and development
- Culture of trust and openness
- Support and training

- Prevention of long-term dissatisfaction
- Supporting staff to deliver an effective appraisal system

Differentiation between performance appraisal and performance management

A table depicted below shows a comparison between performance appraisal and performance management

Table 1

Performance Appraisal	Performance Management
Focus is on top down assessment	Stresses on mutual objective setting through a process of joint dialogue
Performed annually	Continuous reviews are performed
Usage of ratings is very common	Usage of ratings is less common
Focus is on traits	Focus is on quantifiable objectives, values and behaviours
Monolithic system	Flexible system
Are very much linked with pay	Is not directly linked with pay

Performance appraisal process

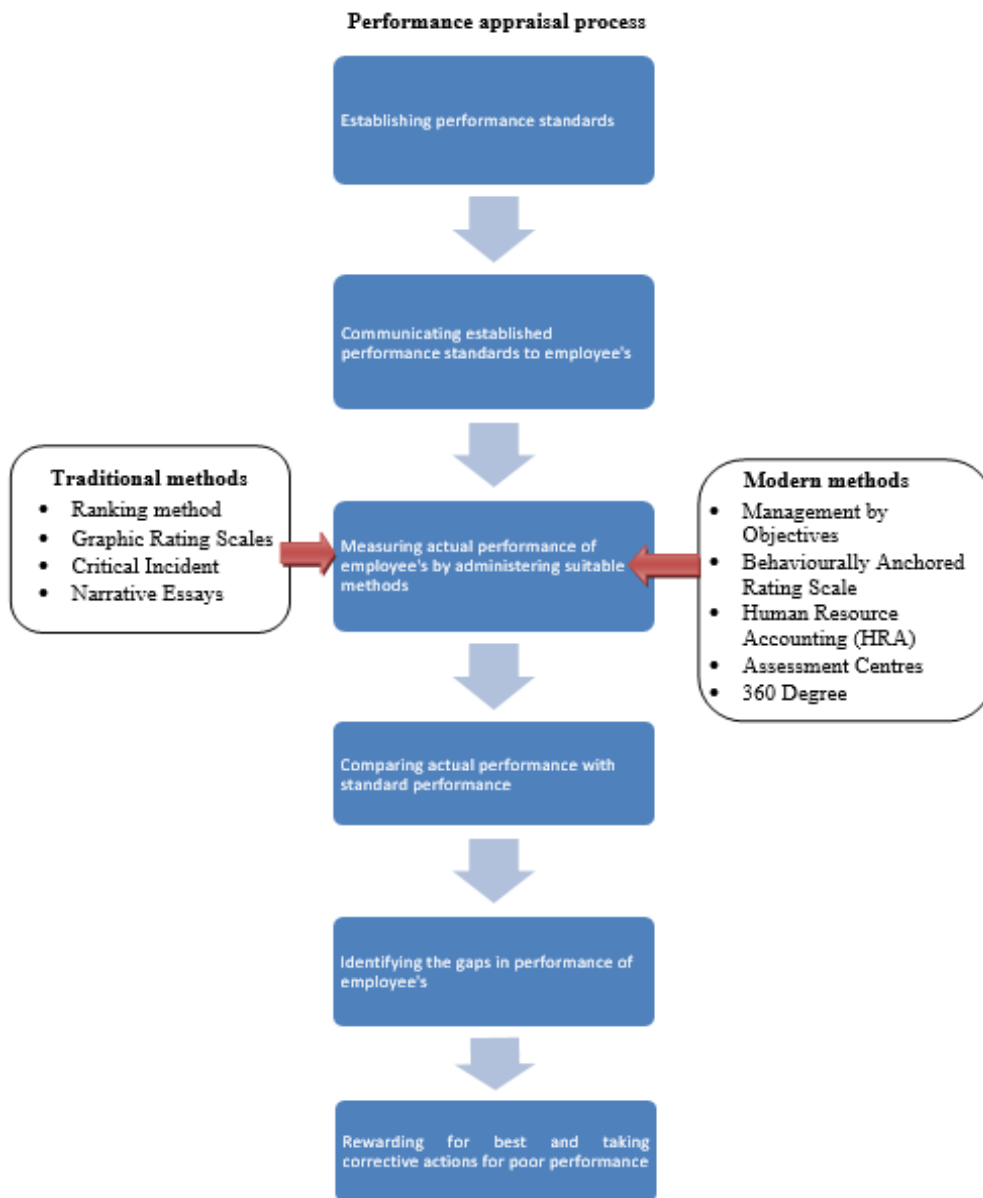


Fig 3

Methods of performance appraisal

Performance appraisals have existed in one form or another for decades. They have become more formal over time and, for years, the same methods that were originally developed worked. In today's workplace, however, the types of jobs being performed are different than ever before. In addition,

many people don't work onsite but work from home, coming in only occasionally or not at all. New methods had to be developed that would accurately assess work performance. Methods of performance appraisal are classified into two types. They are:

1. Traditional methods

2. Modern methods

Traditional methods

Traditional performance appraisal methods focus simply on what has taken place. They are designed to measure the performance of one individual and are more focused on how things have been done rather than how they can be improved. These methods include the following.

▪ **Ranking method**

These are the basic scales that measure qualities like dependability and performance by a numerical value that is normally set from one to ten. This type of evaluation is easy to do, can make it less time-consuming to evaluate a large number of employees and doesn't take a lot of training to perform. Unfortunately, this type of evaluation can be biased by the opinion of the evaluator. Key concept of ranking method; "Rank employees from best to worst on a particular trait."

Pros of ranking method are

- Simple and easy to use
- Fast & Transparent.

Cons of ranking method are

- Fewer objectives.
- Not suitable for large workforce.
- Difficult to determine workers strengths and weakness.

▪ **Graphic rating method**

Graphic rating scales require an evaluator to indicate on a scale the degree to which an employee demonstrates a particular trait, behaviour, or performance result. Rating forms are composed of a number of scales, each relating to a certain job or performance-related dimension, such as job knowledge, responsibility, or quality of work. Each scale is a continuum of scale points, or anchors, which range from high to low, from good to poor, from most to least effective, and so forth. Scales typically have from five to seven points, though they can have more or less. Graphic rating scales may or may not define their scale points.

Pros of graphic rating method are

- Adaptability.
- Easy to use and easily constructed.
- lower cost
- Every type of job can be evaluated.
- Large number of employees covered.

Cons of graphic rating method are

- Rater's bias (subjectivity).
- Equal weight for all criteria

Critical incidents methods

This evaluation method is focused on individual incidents that help determine the employee's behaviour based on things that are critical to the job. This method allows the supervisor to make notes regarding the incident and allows for giving feedback to the employee in question. The downside of this method is that focus may only be on poor performance and the employee may feel he is being reprimanded rather than being given a chance to improve. key concept of critical incident method, "concentrating on certain critical behaviours of employee that makes all the difference in the performance."

Pros of critical incidents methods are

- Feedback is easy.
- Assessment based on actual job behaviours.
- Chances of subordinate improvement are high.

Cons of critical incidents methods are

- Analyzing and summarizing data is time consuming.
- Difficult to gather info about critical incidents via a survey

▪ **Narrative essays**

In this method, the evaluator writes essay-type answers to questions regarding employee behaviour and performance. This allows for individualization of evaluations. Problems can arise if the evaluator is not adept at putting thoughts in words and evaluator bias may be an issue. Key concept of narrative essays, "Rater writes down the employee description in detail within a no. of general groups such as overall impression of performance, existing capabilities and qualifications of performing jobs, strengths and weaknesses.

Pros of narrative essays are

- Filing information gaps about the employees
- Address all factors.
- Provide comprehensive feedback.

Cons of narrative essays are

- Time consuming.
- Easy rater bias.
- Required Effective writers.

Modern methods

The old evaluation methods were meant to be used in an environment where many people in a business performed identical tasks. Factory jobs were the norm when most were developed and many of the ways a person got ahead involved having the type of personality that won over the higher ups in the business. Today's workplace tasks are much more diversified and new evaluation methods need to be considered. These methods include the following.

▪ **Management by objectives (MBO)**

In this method, employees sit down with management and create personal goals that will help them achieve success in the company. Time limits are put in place and periodic evaluations are given to see if the goals have been met, or are on track to be met. Key concept of MBO, "The performance is rated against the objectives achievement stated by the management."

Pros of management by objectives are

- Easy to execute and measure
- Employees have clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities expected of them.

Cons of management by objectives are

- Difference in goal interpretation
- Difficult for appraise to agree on objectives.
- Possibility of missing integrity, quality, etc

▪ **Behaviourally anchored rating scale (BARS)**

This method breaks down a job into what behaviours are needed by an employee. The individual employee is then rated on the scale method to determine where they rate on

behaviour characteristics necessary to succeed. BARS links aspects from critical incident and graphic rating scale methods. The manager grades employees' according to items on a numerical scale.

Pros of behaviourally anchored rating scale are

- Employee performance is defined by Job behaviours in an expert approach.
- Involvement of appraiser and appraisee lead to more acceptance.
- Helps overcome rating errors.

Cons of behaviourally anchored rating scale are

- Difference in goal interpretation
- Possibility of missing integrity, quality, etc.
- Difficult for appraisee to agree on objectives.

▪ **Human resource accounting (HRA)**

This method is based on how much money the employee is worth to the company. The HR department takes into account how much it costs to pay the employee and train him. It then determines how much net income can be expected from the employee for the company. The difference in the two amounts gives a monetary value to the employee. The people are valuable resources of an organization. Performance is assessed from the monetary incomes yields to his or her organization. It is more reliant on cost and benefit analysis.

Pros of human resource accounting are

- Improvement of human resources.
- Development and implementation of personnel policies
- Return on investment on human resources.
- Enhance the proficiencies of employees.

Cons of human resource accounting are

- No clear-cut guidelines for finding cost and value of human resources.
- The method measures only the cost to the organization and ignores employee value to the organization.
- Unrealistic to measure employee under uncertainty.

▪ **Assessment centres**

In this method, an employee is tested on not only job capability but also social interaction skills. The employee is given a combination of written tests for evaluating ability and role-playing scenarios to see how the employee will react to different situations that are a normal part of their position. The evaluation is done by a team of supervisors and a written report is made to share with the employee.

Pros of assessment centres are

- Better forecasts of future performance and progress
- Assists in promotion decisions and diagnosing employee development needs
- Allow multiple traits measurement
- Concepts are simple.
- Flexible methodology.

Cons of assessment centres are

- Costly and difficult to manage.
- Needs a large staff and a great deal of time.
- Limited number of people can be processed at a time.

▪ **360-degree appraisal**

This evaluation is done by combining appraisals from the supervisors, co-workers, and employee. All the appraisals are combined to give the company and employee a complete appraisal of their performance and behaviour in an unbiased way that takes into account everyone affected by the employee's performance. Key concept of 360-degree appraisal, "It depends on the input of an employee's superior, peers, subordinates, sometimes suppliers and customers."

Pros of 360-degree appraisal are

- Allows employees to gain a more understanding of their impact on people they interact with every day.
- Excellent employee development tool.
- Precise and dependable system.
- Legally more justifiable.

Cons of 360-degree appraisal are

- Time consuming and very costly.
- Difficult to interpret the findings when they differ from group to group.
- Difficult to execute in cross-functional teams.
- Difficult to maintain confidentiality.

720-degree appraisal

Introduction

This evaluation takes place from 360-degree appraisal system with some more additional features added. In this 720-degree appraisal method, anyone who comes into contact with the employee, including outsiders such as clients or customers is given the opportunity for input. In this way the employee and supervisors are able to get a complete picture of the individual's strengths and weaknesses. This helps an employee improve on areas where it is necessary and allows supervisors to know where the strengths of each employee lie and how that employee's skills can best be utilized. In traditional "comparison method" renamed as "720-degree performance appraisal system".

Conceptual explanation: 720-degree performance appraisal

720-degree performance appraisal', is the latest appraisal method introduced in new business era. 720 degree performance appraisal is an integrated method of performance appraisal where, the performance of an employee is evaluated from 360 degrees (Management, Colleagues, Self and also customers) and timely feedback (pre and post feedback) is given and performance is evaluated again based on the targets that are set. Hence, "720-degree performance appraisal can be stated as twice 360-degree appraisal."

Need for 720-degree performance appraisal

The main need of 720-degree performance appraisal is the improvement of the performance of the people in their jobs and to ensure that the expectations of the employer, employee and the customers are met. The main need of 720-degree performance appraisal can be summarized as follows:

1. Assessment should be done on the bases of 360-degree performance appraisal system.
2. Assessment should be done twice a year.
3. Comparison should be taken place on the pre and post assessment of the data for a given period/year.
4. 720-degree performance appraisal system is more focusing on the development of employees by giving pre- training and post-coaching to overcome their default.
5. 720-degree performance appraisal system ensures that where employees are reached to organisation standards and objectives or not.
6. Decisions are to be taken for the fixation of salary, promotions, transfer and demotion based upon the data provided by this appraisal system.
7. For knowing the performance of the employee and also knowing the drawbacks of the employee. So that organisation will provide some training and coaching to them.

Evolution of 720-degree performance appraisal

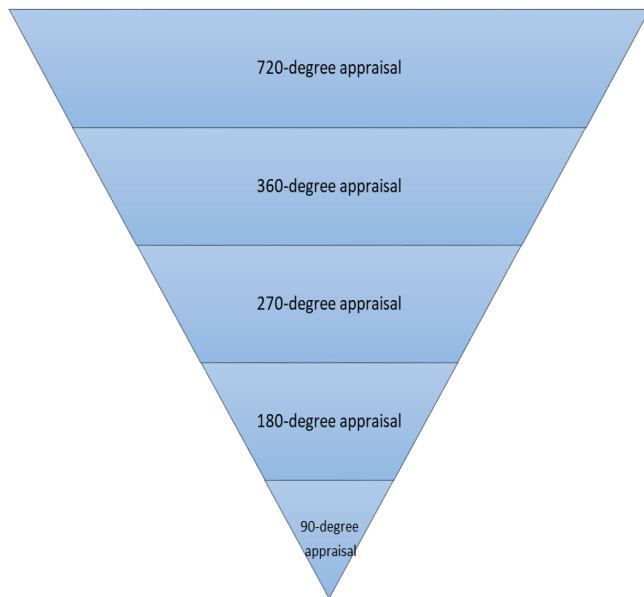


Fig 4

90-degree performance appraisal

In this appraisal, organisation will received feedback from a person (superior/ manager) in a hidden manner which was be not reveals to the employees.

180-degree performance appraisal

In this appraisal, organisation will received feedback from both managers as well as from individual employee.

270-degree performance appraisal

In this appraisal, organisation will received feedback from managers, individual and from peer/ sub-ordinates.

360-degree performance appraisal

In this appraisal, organisation will received feedback from managers, individual, peer/sub-ordinate and clients.

720-degree performance appraisal

Based upon 360-degree performance appraisal, additionally pre-intervention and post-intervention are to be added. Hence, from the every appraisal system up gradation was to be taken place and also efficiency of the employee was been developed.

Assessment of 720-degee performance appraisal

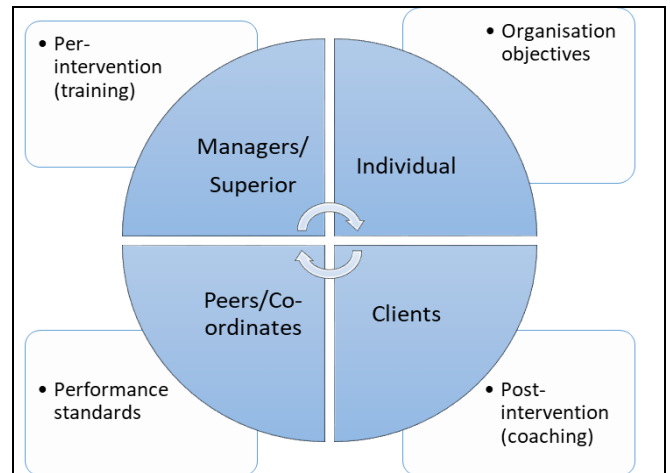


Fig 5

Per-intervention

- Provide training to the employees
- Providing clear view about organisation to employee.
- Effective utilisation of resources at work place.

Performance standards

- Creating some standards upon which employee to be performed.
- Providing those standards to employee.

Managers/superior

- Collecting information about employees from them.
- Taking feedback from them.

Individual

- Framing questionnaire and collecting feedback from individual.
- Analysing those feedback.

Peers/co-ordinates

- Framing questionnaire and collecting feedback from them.
- Analysing those feedback.

Clients

- Framing questionnaire and collecting feedback from them
- Analysing those feedback.

Post-intervention

- Knowing where employees lack and feel some difficult.
- Taking corrective action and provide some coaching to

overcome from those difficulties.

Organisation objectives

- Comparing performance standards with actual performance done.
- Analysing whether employee reached organisation objectives or not.

Comparing 720-degree appraisal with other appraisal system

Different methods are used for Performance appraisal that includes: Critical incident method, weighted checklist method, paired comparison analysis, graphic rating scales, essay evaluation method, behaviourally anchored rating scales, performance ranking method, Management by Objectives (MBO) method, 360 degree performance appraisal method, Forced ranking and Behavioural observation scales.

Upgrading 360-degree appraisal system and adding pre-intervention and post-intervention for increasing work efficiency of the employee. While the efficiency of the employee increases its leads to development of the organisation.

Benefits of 720-degree appraisal

720 Degree performance appraisal will help in creating a synergetic work environment and will help to bring out the best of each employee.

The other benefits of the 720 degree performance appraisal are as follows:

- Customer feedback is valued do better customer service and satisfaction can be obtained
- Helps to develop a better and co-operative team
- Encourages transparency and feeling of treated justly.
- Reduces the appraisal barriers like prejudice, bias and discrimination
- It helps in better analysis and improved feedback from different dimensions

Comparing 720-degree appraisal with another appraisal system

The way performance appraisal system has been evolved from adjusting traditional and modern systems to 720-degree appraisal system is as below in tabular form.

Table 2

Categories	Traditional method	Modern method	720-degee method
Guiding principle	Individualistic	Organization oriented	Self and organization
Appraisal style	Directional, evaluative	Facilitative coaching	Training and coaching
Frequency	Annually	Frequently	Twice
Criteria	Objective measurable	Vague criteria	Employee development
Assessment	Supervisor assessment	Self and peer assessment	Overall assessment

Why companies should use 720-degree appraisal?

This system is more development focused than performance alone, and supplements training and development functions in a better way. A powerful biological process tool as a result of once conducted at regular intervals it helps to stay a track of the changes, others’ perceptions concerning the staff. Many organizations square measure setting out to understand that the ability base of their executives and managers doesn't match the wants of a speedily ever-changing setting. Without these critical competencies, executives and managers are less likely to be able to lead these organizations toward successful implementation of strategic changes.

Conclusion

This temporary historical review of the event of performance appraisal over the past one hundred years ends up in a curious conclusion. Notwithstanding past decades of trial and error, overall “the outcome has been disappointing; a little progressive increase in what we all know with relevance the performance appraisal method.” Performance appraisal has become a basic tool used for facilitating structure effectiveness and larger employees’ commitment within the work. The study pointed that if workers were well rewarded and promoted for job done, it'll increase their commitment and loyalty within the organization. In the same vein, if employees were properly motivated with the necessary and adequate training needs, innovation would increase rapidly on the job and this will thereby lead to competitive positioning.

Most respondents affirmed that promotion will increase their satisfaction and level of productivity within the organization.

In addition to the current, workers in agreement that if they got regular feedbacks concerning their performance on the roles, it may secure competitive positioning for the organization. As this may facilitate them to spot their strengths and weaknesses that may invariably turn out opportunities or threat to the organization they're operating with.

As 720-degree introduction to the coaching activity, the participants work in groups to discuss what an effective performance review scheme needs. Their suggestions for a winning theme area unit mentioned and that they area unit then given a listing of necessities for comparison and discussion. Next, the participants review what associate degree appraiser ought to do to create positive a performance review theme is winning. The coaching activity closes with a review of key learning points and a final observation of performance review appraisal. An employee’s growth, development, satisfaction on the job is dependent on his/her performance. Similarly, 720-degree organisational growth future designing and employee’s development area unit contingent of employee’s performance.

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