



Case Study

An innovative approach to 360 feedback for VW Group UK

The Context

When establishing a new Leadership Programme, VW sought a 360 feedback process that would focus on 4 aspects of leadership that were identified as key for the continuing development of senior managers. VW had previously used a questionnaire approach for collecting 360 feedback data, but found the process did not always secure feedback from key respondents.

The Challenge

The senior managers who formed the focus of the 360 feedback process were geographically spread with busy diaries. They did not have the time to take an active part in managing the collection of feedback from their colleagues. The unique challenge that they presented was the requirement to collect feedback information directly from respondents by phone interview, rather than the more typical paper or internet-based questionnaire.

The Solution

Meeting this requirement entailed a rethink of the typical approach of obtaining a relatively large number of ratings together with some text comments. Instead, we identified an alternative approach with a small number of core questions to be rated for each competency with follow-up prompts to allow respondents to elaborate their reasons for the ratings. These questions were sequenced into a highly structured interview format, with real-time verbatim transcription of respondents' answers by occupational psychologists trained in the interview technique. Our interviewers were able to query ambiguous or contradictory answers and so refine the information provided.

The Benefits

The result was a high participation rate with rich information in each competency area that allowed high-quality, informative reporting for participants. We provided extensive written reports based around the key leadership aspects and assisted VW in conducting verbal feedbacks before the Leadership Programme commenced.

The feedback was found to be useful in enabling participants to maximise the benefits of subsequent training programmes based around each competency. VW continued to use this approach for further cohorts.