

McMaster Leadership Achievement Multi-rater Assessment Survey

Rater Tip Sheet

McMaster's leadership assessment is a feedback survey that will gather input from participants and their co-workers (supervisor/manager, peers, direct reports and clients) on specific behavioural practices that demonstrate alignment with McMaster's leadership capabilities, leadership values and FWI strategic priorities. These behaviors are measurable characteristics of a leader that are typically reflective of success at work. The results from this feedback may help participants to understand how others perceive their demonstration of leadership thus enabling them to target developmental goals for greater effectiveness.

Serving as a rater may be a new experience for you. Your role is critically important in helping the participant gain a true picture of their current leadership behaviours. All rater responses are confidential and will be reported anonymously. This tip sheet is provided to aid you in providing constructive and respectful feedback.

Rating Preparation

Before you begin the online evaluation, take some time to reflect on your work interactions with the participant. Also, be aware that there are a number of common rating errors that may inappropriately influence your ratings and lead to inaccurate feedback.

Please read the list of *common rating errors* below and have it as a reference when providing your ratings:

- **Central Tendency** – occurs when you are reluctant to rate the participant's demonstration of work behaviors as being high or low and consistently rate at the midpoint of the 3-point rating scale (i.e., "Successful").
- **Leniency/Severity** – occurs when you consistently rate the participant either higher (leniency) or lower (severity) than what would be appropriate based on his/her actual demonstration of each behavior.
- **Halo/Horn** – occurs when you are overly influenced by some characteristic, either positively (halo) or negatively (horn). For example, allowing the participant's superb "people skills" to influence your ratings for all of the behavioral statements comprising the "Interpersonal Skills" competency, as well as unrelated behavioral statements comprising other competencies (e.g., Strategic Thinking).
- **Primacy/Recency Error** – occurs when you are overly influenced by your first (primacy) or most recent (recency) observation of the participant demonstrating a work behavior when it was different from how the participant usually demonstrates that behavior.
- **Contrast** – occurs when you compare how the participant demonstrates a work behavior with how that work behavior is generally demonstrated by others.
- **Likability** – occurs when you evaluate the participant more favorably simply because the participant is likeable rather than on his/her actual demonstration of the work behavior.
- **"Similar-to-Me"** – occurs when you rate a participant more favorably because you perceive that the participant is similar to you.

- **Information Favourability** – occurs when you give value to a particular piece of irrelevant information (e.g., school attended or previous employer) which results in inappropriately raising or lowering ratings.

Overall, the best way to avoid these common rating errors is to evaluate the participant realistically and independently (not in relation to others), taking into consideration the full range of his/her performance.

Providing Comments

At the end of each section, you will be able to provide comments about the participant's general performance, top strengths, and greatest areas for development. These narrative comments are important to the success of the multi-rater/360 process, as they offer the participant insights into specific strengths and development needs that can be missed by summarized quantitative data alone. You are encouraged to provide narrative comments.

Please follow the guidelines below to help ensure that your narrative comments are truly meaningful for the participant:

Example #1: Provide clear and concrete examples with sufficient explanation to enable the participant to understand his/her behavior and its impact on others

Bad Comment: "His verbal communication is poor."

Good Comment: "He frequently rushes through his presentations and trainees cannot understand the information he tries to explain."

Example #2: Be positive and constructive, even when describing an area(s) where the participant needs to develop

Bad Comment: "She is incapable of effective project management."

Good Comment: "She is unable to secure the resources needed to implement a project, which reduces the project's likelihood for success."

Example #3: Suggest strategies the participant can take to improve upon his/her shortcomings or further leverage his/her strengths

Bad Comment: "He needs better training."

Good Comment: "He should invest in public speaking training. HR may recommend a good class, and I took an impressive Lynda.com online course."

Overall, the best way to approach providing narrative comments is to remember that the participant selected YOU to be a rater because he/she values your perspective and input. Be respectful of that nomination in providing your narrative comments. Evaluate each of your comments by asking yourself, "**Would I find this statement useful in guiding my development?**"

Source: Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources, 360 Feedback Assessment RATER Guide