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7 Essential Tips to GET MORE OUT OF 360 FEEDBACK REVIEWS

77%

*of HR execs believe performance **reviews are a poor representation** of employee performance. - PWC*

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

have long been used to evaluate an employee's skill set, make difficult decisions in times of budget cuts, and determine who should receive merit increases or be promoted. Too often, though, these reviews are administered in such a way that creates an inaccurate picture of a faculty member or employee's performance. In some cases, performance reviews may even be inherently biased due to structural issues with the processes or within the institution itself.

If it's been a while since your institution reviewed and optimized the 360 feedback process, follow these 7 tips to ensure you're following the latest best practices.

1 CUSTOMIZE 360 FEEDBACK CRITERIA FOR
YOUR ORGANIZATION'S IDENTITY, VALUES & NEEDS

Finding a template from the internet or using an off-the-shelf method for 360 feedback in many ways defeats the purpose. Instead, think about the values and needs of your campus community and craft your survey questions around these tenets. What has your institution always prided itself on? If there are certain values you've deemed important, ask for an example of a time that the employee being reviewed exemplified those values. Knowing the behavior you expect from high performing employees should inform your questions rather than rankings or answers based on generic criteria. You should also be transparent with all involved about what you're aiming to glean to ensure that the process is seen as valuable and not a waste of time.

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2 STANDARDIZE THE
RATING PROCESS

Once you've established the criteria you want to assess employees on, it's time to build out a system of ratings that focuses on identifying skill level or quality of work in a non-subjective manner. Be sure to make survey questions that are phrased in a way that feedback is actionable, whether that means giving praise or coaching on areas of improvement. Decide what scale you are going to use for each assessment -- typically between 1-4 or 1-7 -- and make sure you are deliberate about what each of those scale rankings means to minimize confusion among raters. A standardized rating process will not only yield less vague results, but may also reduce the risk of unconscious bias.

95%
of **employees are dissatisfied** with how their performance is appraised.

—*SHRM*

3 PICK THE
RIGHT RATERS

One of the biggest benefits of 360 feedback is that using multiple raters can tell a much better story of an employee's journey -- but only if you pick the right ones. An employee's 360 feedback raters should be made up of not only managers, but teammates, peers from other teams, subordinates, and students (in the case of faculty members or those who regularly interface with the student body). If possible, choose at least two individuals from each category to make up the entirety of an employee's 360 feedback experience. With more data to work with, a pattern may emerge you wouldn't have otherwise seen. It can also make it easier to spot extreme outlier data that should be dismissed.

ASSURE
CONFIDENTIALITY

4 Once you've chosen the raters, it is vital that you make them confident in the process' anonymity to allow for more candid responses. Many people, particularly those who are rating someone they report to or who has more seniority than them, understandably feel anxious about giving honest feedback. Start the process by confirming that their confidentiality is a top priority and lay out the steps you have taken to ensure this. This can also be achieved by using a digital platform that automates survey responses instead of relying on less secure manual processes such as paper or email.

PERSONALLY
FOLLOW UP

5 360 feedback can be nerve-wracking for employees, particularly if they are concerned about their performance, changes that have recently been made, or rumors of downsizing. 360 feedback should never be emailed to someone or dropped on their desk and never spoken of again. Rather, create a plan to have the employee closely review their feedback, and then follow up by working with a designated coach (either someone from the institution or a third party professional) to set actionable goals based on the feedback. This will not only promote better results, but it will show the employee that you believe in their ability to improve instead of putting a spotlight on their weaknesses.
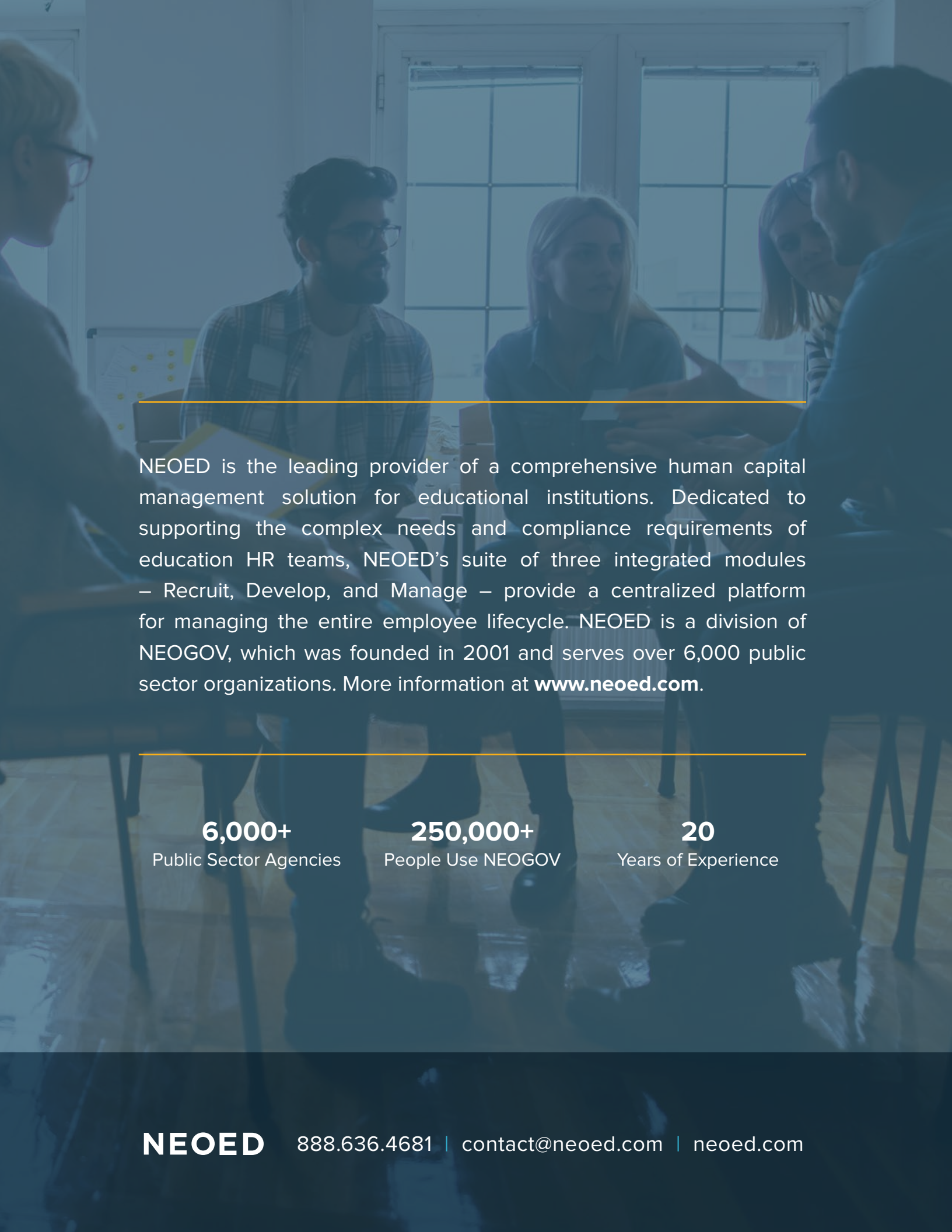
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6 MAKE IT MORE THAN ONCE A YEAR

One of the main problems with traditional performance reviews is that they happen once a year, where recency bias or an inability to remember key wins over the course of that time period can adversely affect an employee's rating. With 360 reviews, you gain data from more sources, but the same problem can arise if you only do them annually. Instead, set up your 360 feedback reviews to happen at least quarterly (or by learning period for faculty). This way, you can revisit the goals set with the employee's coach sooner to see if there is tangible improvement and make adjustments as needed.

7 USE A DYNAMIC CENTRALIZED TOOL

The 360 feedback process, when properly executed, can be extremely valuable in developing employees and improving the institution's productivity as a whole. It can also be tedious and hard to manage, with lots of moving parts and deadlines that are easy to miss. Leveraging a secure tool where you can centralize the entire process will make the routine easier and less stressful for everyone, especially HR. Look for a solution that makes it easy to create your own questions (or reuse questions you've used before), customize questions based on role, add specific raters, and most importantly enables you to automate email requests and reminders to raters.

More frequent reviews and peer feedback are perceived by HR leaders as 2x as accurate as traditional annual performance reviews.

- SHRM

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6,000+
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250,000+
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20
Years of Experience