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## Three questions for a 360

*If you are considering using a 360-degree assessment tool, Craig Chappelow has three questions for you: Why? Why now? Why you?*

by [Bob Wells](#)



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A senior manager at the [Center for Creative Leadership](#) in Greensboro, N.C., Craig Chappelow works with clients and manages Executive Dimensions, the center's 360-degree assessment instrument developed for use with top-level leaders. He has written extensively on leadership and 360-degree assessment and is co-author of "Leveraging the Impact of 360-Degree Feedback."

In an interview, Chappelow said he asks the same three questions of every client who inquires about hiring the center to do a 360-degree assessment:

### Why?

What is the organizational problem or issue you are trying to solve? As obvious as that question might appear, it's one that often goes unanswered or never even asked, Chappelow said.

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Once, a potential client called asking about retaining CCL to do a 360-degree survey for executives in his firm. After Chappelow pressed the man about why his company wanted to do a 360, the caller confessed that the CEO had read about the surveys in an in-flight magazine while on a trip and just thought it might be a good exercise for the company to do. That's not a good reason, Chappelow said.

Instead, ask yourself, What's the purpose? What is the problem? How will a 360-degree survey help?

### *Why now?*

What is it about your current situation that necessitates a 360-degree assessment? Is the demographic of your leadership pool changing? Is it the economy? What is it about this moment that makes a 360-degree assessment essential for your organization?

### *Why you?*

Why these people? What is it about the people who would be the subject of your 360-degree assessment that will help address the problem your organization faces? Are these the right people to include in the 360?

A 360-degree assessment requires a substantial commitment of time and resources, Chappelow said. Answering these questions can help ensure that you use your resources wisely.

"Doing a large-scale 360-degree assessment is harder than it looks," he said. "It's like the airline industry. It's easy getting planes into the air. Getting all the systems and people and everything else in place so that can happen is a big challenge."