



Head Light

Changing Culture and Shifting Values: Introducing 360 into Fire and Rescue Services



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A Desire for Change and the Publication of the HMICFRS Values and Culture Report

The Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services Report published by the HMICFRS called for change.

It examined what works well, what needs to shift and the barriers to improvement across the 44 Fire and Rescue Services in England.

It recognised the pivotal role that leadership has in driving culture. Several recommendations called for an update or introduction of 360-degree feedback for all leaders and managers across the service – and with tight timescales.

The publication of the Report coincided with a surge in enthusiasm and eagerness for 360 across all sectors. 360 is a vital tool used to benchmark, sharpen individual attention and focus development on the skills and behaviours needed to move an organisation forward.

While the catalyst for action may have been the Report, for many Services the commitment to improvement and development had meant that 360 was either already in place or was on their agenda.

This is a story of cultural change. A story of adopting new leadership approaches and understanding how to develop – this is a story across multiple fire services.

This Case and Capability Study draws together the experiences of five Fire and Rescue Services from across England. They share their stories – and key learnings.

We explain how our fire service-specific 360 questionnaire was designed and developed and how Head Light supports Services to set up, roll-out, manage and get the very most from 360-degree feedback.

The Design and Development of the Bespoke Fire-specific 360 Questionnaire

With decades of experience in designing 360 questionnaires, a track record in working with police and fire services and a data-secure and robust talent management platform already in place, Head Light was able to move quickly.

“We wanted to support Fire Services to be able to take action quickly and make it as straightforward as possible to get up and running with a valid 360 that would provide them with valuable information,” comments Ian Lee-Emery, CEO and founder of Head Light.

In the National Fire Chief Council’s (NFCC) Leadership Framework, four behaviours were already in place: Personal Impact; Outstanding Leadership; Service Delivery; and Organisational Effectiveness.

Head Light’s business psychology team created items for the Fire Edition of the Head Light Talent 360 questionnaire based on these behaviours, ensuring that each questionnaire statement made sense, linked directly back to a specific behavioural indicator from the NFCC’s Leadership Framework and was easy to understand by potential participants and feedback providers. Some specific indicators were selected from the framework as they related closely to the areas of cultural change that the HMICFRS Report had identified as important.

Debbie Hance, Head of Business Psychology at Head Light, comments:

“We adopted a positive focus for the questionnaire, choosing not to include what could be viewed as more negative items.

“A 360-feedback process is, for many services, an entirely new initiative. Making it easy to complete, simple to understand and a positive experience were essential to making sure Services got buy-in at all levels. 360 may not be familiar to some or past experiences may have coloured judgement. We had to make sure that these 360 questionnaires were relevant, credible and straightforward so as to overcome any negative perceptions.”

Three versions of the questionnaire were created, one of which was for all leaders and managers with at least one direct report. For the most senior of leaders, a separate questionnaire was designed to include an additional set of items that focused solely on an additional dimension relating to the strategic leadership of the organisation. This was created again from some of the indicators across the existing four behaviours, but with an additional focus on Leading the Service. The third questionnaire was designed to be used with those in more operationally-focused management or supervisory roles.

The draft 360 questionnaires were then reviewed by a fire and rescue service with an established background in 360. Comments and tweaks were made, before finalising the questionnaire and getting it ready to be rolled out. The result was a focused and relatively quick-to-complete questionnaire that provides plenty of rich data to talk through and build up from.

The individual report generated from the 360 results is configurable by each Service and for each level of manager taking part. The report presents the ‘results’ in various formats: bar charts of each item and how each feedback group rated the individual; the top skill areas – and those skills needing more work; a Word cloud of the strengths as identified by others; and the bringing together of all the strengths and blind spots into one single visual.

Head Light applied the same design rigour and flexible IT configurability to this 360 as they do to their other tools. It meant that it now offers a standard, off-the-shelf 360 for fire services – and can support them to be up and running quickly. Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, an existing customer using Head Light’s platform for PDR, was able to roll-out their 360 to senior leaders in a couple of weeks.

Outsourcing Workflow Management

For many Services, resources are tight and the timescales recommended by HMICFRS even more so.

Even with a 360 selected, the roll-out and management of a 360 programme requires resources and know-how. Head Light's Outsourced 360 Management Service helps Fire and Rescue services to understand what to do – and when.

Working through our defined and well-tested process, we ask the right questions, help Services get the answers they need and share good practice.

Our team sets up the Services-branded online portal, enters the details of each participant, helps draft the communications, timetables the workflow, issues the invitations for feedback and follows up when needed. They'll generate the reports when needed and liaise with in-house teams to keep the project on track.

For many, getting this support is the cornerstone to a 360 programme's success.

Creating an In-house Team of Feedback Facilitators and Accessing Head Light Experience

360-degree feedback is deployed in a way that best suits the Service.

Good practice encourages each participant to have access to their individual report and to a feedback facilitator or coach who can help them to understand the 360 results and decide on the action to take.

Feeding back and navigating the 360 results are vital to the development and learning that can come from the exercise. However, it can be daunting for feedback facilitators not used to having these types of conversations – although these skills can be taught and practiced in a supportive environment before going 'into the field'.

Head Light's one-day, feedback workshop teaches these skills – and provides a safe space for practice. Each participant gets the opportunity to complete (and ask others to complete) the 360 for themselves. It gives them the perspective of a participant completing the questionnaire – and having their feedback presented back to them. It also builds familiarity with the process and an understanding of the concern some may have, facing this for the first time.

For more senior leaders, there may be concerns or trepidation if their feedback is supported by an in-house professional. In such circumstances, some Services support other Services with this feedback.

For others, they choose to use a Head Light feedback facilitator who brings an external perspective alongside experience of sharing 360-degree feedback with senior leaders across various sectors.

Tracy McNeill, Business Psychologist and sector lead for Fire and Rescue at Head Light, comments:

"Head Light's Feedback Facilitators have decades of experience of understanding and guiding senior leaders' 360 results. We have supported hundreds of leaders and bring challenge, new ways of looking at things and ideas for action. And, because we are external, it means chiefs and senior leaders can be assured of an impartial, independent conversation."

The Five Critical Success Factors to Getting Started With 360

1. Get your positioning, messaging and communications mapped out

Invest time in deciding how to position the hows and whys of 360 across the workforce. Emphasise that feedback provides the opportunity to unearth strengths and potential, can help create action plans for future career development and inform action for change across the organisation. Decide on the comms vehicles to get the messages to all, plan and execute. Build 360 into everyday thinking. Reinforce messages throughout the programme. Create standard, supporting documents as a consistent 'go-to' for information.

2. Ensure buy-in and active participation from the senior leadership team

Find an advocate on the senior leadership team who will actively support and encourage their team members to lead the way with 360. Provide them with the reassurance, confidence and information that the 360 delivers what is needed by both the individuals and the organisation. Enable them to role model their openness to feedback and personal development and to lead their organisation in being the first to complete the 360 process.

3. Use a 360 questionnaire that has relevance and credibility – and is aligned with the leadership principles for Fire Services

Head Light's Fire Edition of its 360 tool has been developed by business psychologists in conjunction with Fire Services HR leaders and those in other operational Blue Light services, building on the leadership standards to create three separate questionnaires. Head Light's software designers specialise in 360 questionnaires and workflows.

4. Outsource the workflow management when resources and timelines are tight

Introducing 360 is immensely valuable and, consequently, it requires some resources and know-how. Head Light's Outsourced 360 Management service helps Services to understand the key components of a 360-degree feedback programme and how to create the right conditions for success. Our team sets up the Services-branded online portal, enters the details of each participant, helps draft communications, timetables the workflow, issues invitations for feedback and follows up when needed. We'll generate the reports and liaise with in-house teams to keep the project on track.

5. Upskill internal managers to become skilled feedback facilitators

We believe that the collation of feedback and production of reports is the beginning of a journey for many people. To help participants get the most from their 360 experience (especially when it's new to them) having access to a facilitator or coach can help them to understand their 360 results and decide on the action to take. Head Light's one-day, feedback course teaches the skills needed – and provides a safe space for practice and reflection.

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service: Introducing 360 into a Smaller-sized Service



“The programme would not have gone as smoothly without the team at Head Light.”

Their support was amazing.

They spared us the challenge of having to figure it out alone.”

*Tina Draper,
Head of Training and Assurance,
Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service*

The context: A tight timeframe for action

The HMICFRS Report into Culture and Values recommended that all Services implemented 360-degree feedback for senior leaders and managers.

For a relatively small Service such as Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, this could have resourcing challenges such as sourcing a relevant and robust 360 questionnaire, managing the administration of roll-out, completion and report generation and feedback results to each of the participant managers and leaders.

The solution: Outsourced management and sharing resources with a neighbouring Service

Head Light's Fire Edition of its 360 was selected together with its outsourced, managed 360 service.

The team at Bedfordshire also joined with colleagues from Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to share training provided by Head Light in how to understand and interpret the 360 report, how to provide feedback and frame the results and how to dig deep into detail and different presentation options. In short, they developed an in-house pool of trained feedback providers building on the coaching and facilitation skills they already had.

Both Services decided to provide feedback to each other's leaders and managers that sat below the most senior leadership team. It meant that these participants were supported by those that understood the challenges of a Fire and Rescue Service but were not part of the organisation.

For the most senior group, including the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Area Managers and Corporate Officers, and for whom the feedback might be most sensitive, Head Light's highly experienced 360 psychologists were brought in to provide this. The team decided to issue the report to the participant prior to the feedback session to allow for the entire session to focus on exploring the results deeply, understanding their meaning and planning next steps.

The team developed standard documents to support the implementation to ensure the same messages and explanations were received by all. They also took ownership of drafting all communications supporting the 360 programme.

Head Light took on the management of the set up and implementation of the programme.

Tina Draper, Head of Training and Assurance, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, comments: *“The programme would not have gone as smoothly without the team at Head Light. Their support was amazing – and so responsive.*

“They supported us throughout, answered questions whenever we had them and spared us the challenge of having to figure it out alone. We have seen how it can be done and how we might move forward.”

The outcome: From perceived 'tick box' to perceived value

Initially seen as a potential 'tick box-only' exercise, Tina highlights that *"the real value has been recognised once people have had their reports and are going through them alongside a trained feedback manager. People have warmed to 360."*

Going forward, the team are looking at ways to manage the larger numbers of managers needing feedback, exploring a general group feedback session that introduces the report and then supports individuals with their specific questions and queries separately.

Takeaways

1. Phase the feedback so not everyone is taking part at the same time.

A small service means that often the same people are invited to feedback on others in a short timeframe. It can lead to a bottleneck of feedback not being provided, or feedback fatigue.

2. Invest in preparing standard documents.

Crib sheets for feedback, tips on who to ask for feedback and detailed responses to answer the question 'why 360?' allow for a professional, joined-up and shared message across the Service.

3. Reimagine how to make 360 work in practice.

Outsource where you can if you don't have the capacity to manage the programme. Share resources with other Services. Explore how group feedback can be built into the programme to free up resources.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service: Building the Momentum to Cultivate Leadership Development



“Using 360 has definitely improved the conversations during appraisal.

It helps people to look at their development and supports conversations around careers and progress.

It gives insight into how well people are performing when new in role, and flags areas they might consider.”

Lucy Taylor,
OD Business Partner
Lancashire Fire and
Rescue Service

The context: Continued commitment to the use of 360

For many years, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service has understood the value of 360-degree feedback and made use of the services from Head Light.

A customised 360 questionnaire had been used alongside coaching with its most senior leadership team and also with middle and supervisory level managers pre-and post-development course to ensure development is sustained.

360 is well-regarded across the Service. Lucy Taylor, OD Business Partner, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, comments:

“360 is viewed very positively by our people. Indeed, we receive requests to take part in a 360 outside of our regular programmes! It's seen as a way to give – and receive – honest and confidential feedback and it plays a valuable role in our appraisal conversations.”

The solution: An updated questionnaire and a process that works for the Service

The Service already used a 360 questionnaire that Head Light had configured to reflect its values.

Head Light made small updates to this questionnaire to accommodate new thinking, as well as comments made in the HMICFRS Report.

Importantly, the Service decided to adopt, for its executive board and senior management team through to the station manager, Head Light's 360 questionnaire that has been developed specifically for fire and rescue services – aimed specifically at the strategic leader.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service chose not to give individual facilitated feedback. Instead, over the years, they have invested in helping participants to understand and make sense of their own reports. They will all have been taken through a sample report and the sections, results, formats and interpretations explained. They know what to expect and how to read the report.

This is not carried out blind. The reports generated are 'quality checked' before being released to the individual. It means any areas which might be difficult to understand or sensitive to read are flagged up beforehand. Each report is released with the offer of coaching, follow up or mentoring by a trained person. To date, no-one has come to the team to say that they do not understand the report.

The Service also uses the 360 to help those newly promoted into a new role. After some time in the role, the 360 can offer them the confidence, motivation and insight to look at how they are doing – and how others are seeing them.

The outcome: The foundation for appraisal and building capability

360-degree feedback is not seen as a tick box exercise but as a catalyst for growth. It lays a solid foundation for the appraisal conversation to explore performance and leadership. It spotlights the areas of strength and those that need some development.

“Using 360 has definitely improved the conversations during appraisal. It helps people to look at their development and supports conversations around careers and progress. It gives insight into how well people are performing when new in role, and flags areas they might consider.”

Key recurring themes are looked at across the Service. When a specific area is flagged for a particular location, group manager sessions might be held to explore the topic and look at ways to improve.

Takeaways

1. Build some self-sufficiency by helping participants understand the structure of the report.

Share the sample report with participants prior to their own report to build familiarity. Invest in explaining how to understand, approach, read and interpret the report. Offer coaching and support for those that want it.

2. Educate people on who to invite and how to feedback.

360 feedback is as good as the feedback provided. Take time to help participants understand who best to invite to give feedback. Also guide feedback providers on how to give feedback.

3. Be prepared to adjust timelines.

When participants or feedback providers are uniformed staff who are working shift patterns, completing even a 10-minute questionnaire can fall to the bottom of the ‘to do’ list. Be prepared to chase, follow up and change deadlines if needed. Build this into your overall plan.

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service: Making the Move to a More Embedded 360



“360 – and the report and feedback conversation – is seen as a very positive experience.

The report guides you from the big picture down to the detail – and its flexibility means that there are many possible start points to allow us to tailor the conversation.”

Sue Mottershead,
Senior Training
Manager,
Hertfordshire Fire and
Rescue Service

The context: Upgrading 360 within the Service

360-degree feedback already had a place in Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service on the management development programmes of its more junior officer levels. However, it used a quite basic, paper-based format to gather the opinions of others.

The trigger for wider adoption across the service, including the senior leadership team, was the HMICFRS Report.

However, if 360 was to be used across the Service, there needed to be a more relevant, robust and attractive questionnaire – and the ability to scale without more paperwork!

The solution: Adopting the fire-service specific 360 and working out how to best manage this

Head Light's Fire Edition of its 360 tool is based on the leadership framework for fire services. It means it has the credibility and relevance of being designed specifically for fire services and focuses on the core behaviours. It is delivered and managed through Head Light's online talent platform.

The team at Hertfordshire chose to collaborate with colleagues from Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to exchange feedback facilitators for some of the more sensitive senior leadership feedback. For the most senior of leaders, individual feedback was facilitated by consultants from Head Light, focusing on not only understanding the feedback received but examining how to apply their skills to the environment.

The report generated from the 360 results is configurable and provides a range of different formats for results. Sue Mottershead, Senior Training Manager, Hertfordshire County Council, comments:

“What we love about the report is how easy it is to see who a person is most likely to demonstrate a specific behaviour towards – and that makes the report for us.

“It focuses attention and helps the participant plan to take action. It's structured and guides you from the big picture down to the detail. The flexibility of the report means that there are many possible start points so we can really tailor the conversation.

“One format that has been very useful is the chart that highlights the differences between the groups of feedback providers and suggests how certain groups may or may not recognise the skills or behaviours that others do.”

As a Service, Hertfordshire invested in training to create a group of feedback managers who could help participants understand the report and the feedback they have received.

Sue comments: *“The training we received from Head Light helped us not only to frame the feedback sessions but also how best to read the report alongside a participant.*

“We chose, as a Service, to release the report to the individual prior to the feedback session so that any initial reaction is tempered. It means the feedback conversation starts to explore the detail and the implications.”

Following the feedback meeting, the participant is encouraged to share and discuss the feedback with their manager – and to indicate where development needs are. For Sue, a measure of success will be the number of requests for development post-360, be it coaching or some other intervention.

The outcome: A positive and valuable experience

Keen to keep the momentum going and build on what has been achieved, the team are now proposing to continue to use the 360 on an annual basis.

Furthermore, there is more to explore at a combined group level, looking at overall, amalgamated scores from, for example, the heads of service cohort.

Sue sums up: *“360 – the report and the feedback conversation – is seen as a very positive experience. People are finding it really useful and we hope it continues to grow in its use across the Service.”*

Takeaways

1. Be clear that the 360 programme is not the end point.

It can be easy to trip up by seeing the ‘administration’ and ‘completion rates’ as the goals. Keep reminding others that the 360 informs development and helps to make meaningful behavioural and cultural change.

2. Collaborate with – and learn from – others.

Training courses and feedback resources can be shared with other Services. Collaboration and connection are built from the network of other Head Light Fire and Rescue Services’ clients and joining Head Light’s Blue Light User Group.

3. Bring in an external feedback facilitator if needed.

For more senior leaders, consider bringing in experienced and independent feedback facilitators who can add a new perspective and discuss how to apply skills.

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service: Implementing 360 as a Change Initiative



“Messaging and communications are so important – and we saw them as fundamental to the success of the programme.

“As with any change, it takes a while, and you have to keep reiterating the value and benefits – and what needs to happen.”

Caroline Oppido,
HR Manager –
Leadership and OD,
Northamptonshire
Police,
Northamptonshire Fire
and Rescue Service
and Northamptonshire
OPFCC

The context: The capability to draw on the 360 experience within the Police Force

With no track record of true 360-degree feedback within the Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, but with years of expertise and experience of 360 within the Northamptonshire Police Force to draw from, the Service was able to move from a standing start to implementation within a few weeks.

The solution: Educating across the workforce

Together with the development team at Head Light, Caroline Oppido, HR Manager, Leadership and OD at Northamptonshire Police, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service and Northamptonshire OPFCC, worked to create a 360 questionnaire designed specifically for fire services.

Built on the levels of fire services leadership behaviours and drawing on other key behaviours within Blue Light organisations, Caroline and her team were instrumental in creating the final 360 questionnaire that became the Edition used across other fire and rescue services.

Understanding of 360-degree feedback within the Service was scarce. There had been no experience of using 360 although some paper-based 180-degree feedback had been used to limited effect.

Caroline comments: *“With no history of 360, there was very little understanding about how it worked and what was expected. We were starting with the very basics – and needing to educate managers and leaders across the organisation, sometimes correcting false assumptions and managing cynicism.”*

As such, Caroline made comms a priority. She invested time in getting the messages clear and relevant – and timetabled for implementation.

“Messaging and communications are so important – and we saw them as being a fundamental element of the success of the programme.”

Communications is always an ongoing process – and rarely can there be too much or starting too early.

Caroline adds: *“As with any change, it takes a while, and you have to keep reiterating the value and benefits – and what needs to happen.”*

With experience, Caroline also recognises the value from utilising the 360 data to inform other talent areas.

“We need to help senior leaders understand why we are doing 360 – and what they can do with the information strategically.”

“We know that we need to make sure that 360 is not seen as a standalone exercise and part of this is by talking about feedback across our entire leadership development offering.”

The outcome: Implemented on time and receiving positive feedback

Caroline hit the HMICFRS deadlines – due, in part, to her experience of implementing 360 at Northamptonshire Police and also the fact that the Service already made use of the PDR platform from Head Light that includes a 360 module.

The feedback has been good. Those who have received the feedback have found it to be a “*very positive experience*”.

All Services adopting the Fire Edition of Talent 360 have the potential to share cohort data and allow them to benchmark against levels of competencies at a national level. Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue aim to revisit the 360 in two years and, before then, aim to start to make use of the data within the in-built analytics portal to examine overall Service leadership strengths and the Service development needed.

Takeaways

1. Get the comms in place.

Make sure the Service understands what 360 is (and isn't) and how the data will and will not be used. Build a programme of communications across whatever media and channels are available. Keep sharing the messages as it is unlikely that everything will be read and people will remember!

2. Educate. Don't assume people know what 360 is about.

Unless experienced, people, be they participants or feedback providers, will have little understanding of the 360 process, what is expected, the anonymity and the value of the report. Build this across the communications plan.

3. Encourage and remind.

Even the best automated process requires the human touch. Reminders, personalised emails, reiteration of the purpose and timeline and constant encouragement are all needed.

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue: Accelerating the Journey Towards Cultural Change



South Yorkshire FIRE & RESCUE

“360 might not have been on our task list for the year initially, but we have taken huge strides.

We now have a positive and sustainable 360 programme.

The support from Head Light has been a critical success factor in this.”

*Chris Marwood,
People Partner,
South Yorkshire Fire
and Rescue*

The context: A plan for cultural change, inclusivity and brilliance

The leaders of South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue have embarked on a bold 10-year journey to develop and create the culture, values and behaviours that will deliver a forward-looking and respected service as well as building an inclusive and “brilliant” place to work.

While 360-degree feedback had never been used wholesale across the service, adopting a 360 has been firmly on the agenda. The catalyst to move 360 up the agenda came after the publication of the HMICFRS Report.

The solution: A robust and relevant 360 designed for Fire and Rescue Services

The timeline outlined in the Report for the deployment of 360 was tight and the team at South Yorkshire, led by Chris Marwood knew they needed a relevant, validated and robust 360 questionnaire.

This needed to be supported by a supplier experienced in the IT roll-out, process management and training of in-house feedback facilitators. Head Light and its fire service-specific 360 were selected.

The team recognised the need to create a pool of trained feedback providers who would be able to help each participant read and understand their report, and plan for action. They sought to train line managers in this role as they can bring context to the 360 feedback, be part of a meaningful conversation about needed development and help implement any action plan. Head Light’s business psychologists trained these in-house facilitators to explore and interpret the 360 questionnaire results, build confidence in feedback and, importantly, how to frame the results for the individual receiving the feedback.

Positioning – and reinforcing that positioning – of the 360 programme was vital to the roll-out success. Crucially, the communications focused on seeing 360 as a development opportunity – and not as an appraisal of performance.

Chris comments: *“We wanted people to understand that 360 is about identifying strengths, shining a light on capability and highlighting those with the potential to mentor others.*

“We emphasise that the focus of 360 is to support development, rather than it being an indicator of poor performance.”

For the senior leadership team, the Service decided to look outside for feedback facilitators.

“We knew we wanted our senior leaders to be wholly confident in the security of their feedback.

“More than this, we wanted them to have the ‘best practice’ experience from using external and expert feedback facilitators who have years of experience from working with hundreds of leaders.

“One of Head Light’s business psychology team helped each leader to read, understand and make sense of the report. Everyone was extremely positive about this.”

The outcome: A 360 ready for the future

Senior leaders have fully embraced the 360 roll-out, recognising the value to the service as a whole, and to them as individual leaders. They have been pleased with the progress made and the plans for the future.

Chris sums up: *“360 might not have been on our task list for the year initially, but we have taken huge strides and have established a positive and sustainable 360 programme.”*

“The support of Head Light has been a critical success factor in this. From the initial set up, the management of the questionnaire completion and report generation, through to the training of our people and the feedback to our senior team, Head Light has played a key role.”

With plans in place to complete the four phases of roll-out, thoughts can turn to creating greater consistency in subsequent development plans and exploring the data analytics available.

“We’re looking to repeat the 360 in two years. It’ll give us a great indication of not only how the organisation has progressed, but how individuals have too,” comments Chris.

Takeaways

1. Work on the positioning and the communications.

Emphasise the positives of 360; how it highlights strengths and potential, rather than being a review of performance. Reiterate that this is about change – and not box ticking because of the HMICFRS Report.

2. Secure the buy-in and active participation of the senior leadership team.

From the get-go, the most senior leaders were committed to the project and took their role in cascading this across the organisation.

3. Outsource programme management and get external support from those with experience.

For most, deploying a 360 is uncharted territory. To avoid the pitfalls and be sure of the actions to take, work with a company such as Head Light to roll-out the 360, manage the workflow, generate the reports, train in-house feedback facilitators and access their experienced consultants.

Partnering with Head Light

These Fire and Rescue Services have two realisations in common. They realised the potential for 360-degree feedback and the catalytic role that the HMICFRS Report could play.

They also realised the value in partnering with a company with the experience, expertise, track record and knowledge. A company that not only designed and developed the fire services-specific 360 questionnaire, but also has the skill and know-how to guide the implementation, the capability to upskill internal managers to become feedback facilitators and the breadth of experience to feedback 360 results to the most senior of leaders.

They chose Head Light and its services.

The Fire Edition of Head Light's 360 Questionnaire

Based on the four behaviours taken from the NFCC's Leadership Framework, the 360 offers three questionnaires: one for leaders and managers, one with an additional principle included (for senior leaders); and one for use with first line managers with more operationally-focused roles.

These are online questionnaires, delivered using Head Light's Talent® platform.

The questionnaire can be configured to reflect the Services branding, and the workflow needed. The comprehensive results report also can be configured to enable Services to decide how they want the results presented.

Outsourced 360 Management

The roll-out and management of any new initiative demands resource. When getting started with 360, Services want to be sure they are making decisions at the right time and understand the implications.

Head Light's Outsourced 360 Management Service helps Fire and Rescue Services to understand what to do – and when.

We will work through our defined and well-tested process, asking the right questions at the right time, helping Services find the answers they need and share good practice.

Our team sets up the Service-branded online portal, enters the details of each participant, helps draft the communications, timetables the workflow, issues the invitations for feedback and follows up when needed. They'll generate the reports and liaise with in-house teams to keep the project on track.

In-house Feedback Facilitator Workshop

Head Light's Feedback Facilitator Workshop is a group-based, immersive, participative one-day, in-person feedback facilitation course with pre- and post-event learning.

The workshop focuses on practising skills, discussing and exploring the 360 report and co-coaching. It ensures that everyone gains the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence.

All participants complete a 360 before joining the workshop and this provides relevant and 'live' material for feedback practice, as well as enabling them to experience what it's like from a different perspective – that of the recipient.

Unlike any other feedback course, this workshop takes participants through the different feedback 'lenses'. We call them lenses because – in much the same way as different camera lenses achieve a different effect or view – these help the feedback recipient explore, access and see their feedback in different ways.

Participants get to experience what each is conveying, how the lenses facilitate more positive, productive, action-orientated conversations and how to share and communicate the information with the 360 recipient.

Feedback Conversations with Senior Leaders

For the most senior of leaders, some Services choose to look outside of their own organisation for feedback facilitators to work with them and their 360 results – whether this is from other Services or from Head Light.

Head Light's business psychologists have many years of experience of coaching senior leaders and using 360 results as a foundation for change.

Membership of Head Light's Blue Light User Group

Connect and collaborate with like-minded professionals at Head Light's Blue Light User Group. The Group meets (online and/or in-person) twice a year at which current talent challenges and trends are discussed, product development suggestions are made and ideas shared.

Next Steps

Introducing 360-degree feedback can be daunting. There is so much to consider and you will want to make sure you are not only deploying best practice, but also avoiding pitfalls.

A start point is an exploratory call with Head Light.

Drop us an email and let's schedule a date – info.request@head-light.co.uk

About Head Light

Head Light is an award-winning talent management and talent retention software and consulting firm that works with clients to define and implement impactful talent management strategies.

Talent Cloud® is our cloud-based portfolio of integrated talent management software tools designed for those who expect the maximum return from talent management processes. Our training and consulting services uniquely complement our breakthrough software that engages employees, managers and senior leaders in the selection, development and progression of people in their businesses.

Companies in the FTSE 350, public sector, large and small, from retailers to high tech innovators have all benefitted from our tools, techniques and expertise. Founded in 2004, we are headquartered in the UK.

Head Light has attained the ISO27001 standard for Information Security.
Certificate No 217613.





How do I...

transition to Continuous Performance Management

How do I...

introduce robust succession planning

How do I...

spot high potentials and future leaders

How do I...

drive engagement through career conversations and development

How do I...

embed new values and improve culture

How do I...

conduct skills assessments and a gap analysis