In Other Words, Results!

Land Transport Authority

A People-Centered Vision

360° Feedback at the Land Transport Authority

The Land Transport Authority (LTA) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Transport. Since 1995, the LTA has been planning, developing and managing Singapore's land transport system to provide an efficient and cost-effective way of meeting the nation's transportation needs.

In 2008, the LTA completed a comprehensive review of their land transport strategies and announced their Land Transport Master Plan (LTMP) which will guide land transport developments over the next 10 to 15 years. The masterplan is a people-focused vision, which aims for a transportation system that places people at its heart.

The LTA realized that with a new masterplan in place, the organization would need to become more people-focused as well. They turned to the NBOGroup 360° Leadership Survey.

A 360° feedback survey is a development tool which organizations use to help people recognize their own strengths and weaknesses and identify areas which need improvement. It's a way of aligning the organization's people with the organization's business needs. And as an organization, the LTA needed to create a culture which placed service to people on par with task achievement.

So they began at the top. In 2006, the LTA nominated 39 managers and executives to participate in an NBOGroup 360° feedback survey. Two years later, another 54. And in 2009, a total of 221 people completed the 360° feedback assessment.

The LTA followed the NBOGroup 360° process completely. The LTA obtained maximum results from their 360° surveys because they are committed to planning, rolling-out, and integrating the NBOGroup 360° feedback survey throughout the organization.

Ms Alice Tan, Group Director, Corporate Services, says that "We believe that awareness is the first step towards making improvement. The 360° Leadership Survey provides our leaders with insightful, constructive feedback and that's why we work closely with NBO to scrutinize every step and every approach to ensure implementation success. We are pleased that our leaders have used the feedback to improve on their leadership and management skills."

The high survey completion rate (93%) is evidence of LTA's thorough planning and preparation.

The LTA is responsible for the successful launches of many public projects which require good team-work and communication among staff. Therefore, teamwork and staff motivation were important competency areas measured on their 360° surveys. Participants received feedback on their ability to communicate a vision, provide clear directions, encourage creative thinking, and give constructive feedback.

Participants also received individual coaching from a professional NBO coach to create an individual development plan based on their feedback. This helped them to focus on specific areas in which they could improve and eventually, to increase the effectiveness of the teams they led.

Mr. Yee Boon Cheow, Deputy Director of Systems (Circle & Downtown Lines), was a participant of the 360° feedback survey in 2009. He said, "Since receiving my 360° feedback, I've started to practice more coaching with my staff. The two competencies I wanted to focus on were *Development of People: Create new ideas and help other think creatively,* and *Counseling* and *Coaching: Deal in a clear, strong way with subordinates who are not performing well.* At first, I only thought of approaching this through more receptiveness on my part and engaging in more open communication with staff. However, after I attended another course on coaching, I realized that I should be doing more coaching than just communicating. I found that it allows the staff to be aware of the issues and come forward with the problems and devise solutions by themselves." Mr. Yee Boon Cheow has become a better coach to his staff as a result of the 360° feedback survey.

The LTA provided training programs targeted at the participants' greatest development needs. The NBOGroup created special programs for LTA's 360° feedback survey participants and rolled them out in 2010. These programs helped the participants develop specific areas identified.

Mr. Fun Wui Siung, Deputy Director of Programme Planning Division, a participant of the 360° feedback survey in 2009 said, "I see more people-oriented leaders in LTA. I now exercise delegation and empowerment at a higher level, with staff development in mind. I am more aware that my good intention may at times be viewed differently, and where necessary, I may change my approach or explain the rationale."

The results of the LTA's 360° feedback survey have been remarkable. In a 360° feedback survey, small gaps indicate areas of strength, while large gaps indicate development needs. From the first 360° exercise in 2006 to the most recent group in 2009, the average gap size for all participants has decreased in every competency category. This indicates a significant change in leadership behaviors which will have an impact on the organization.

As an organization, the LTA believes that nurturing and investing in people yield the best results which translate to a higher commitment to a people-centered land transport system, as well as a people-centered work culture. Focusing on developing talented individuals through the 360° feedback surveys boosted the LTA to become the people-centered organization it is today.

360° feedback

NELSON BUCHANAN & ÖOSTERGARD PTE LTD
tel (65) 6339 8733 | **fax** (65) 6339 7055
www.nbogroup.com | info@nbogroup.com

With partners in: Hong Kong, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, USA, Europe, South Africa, Kenya, Australia