

## How can you open your window of self awareness ?

Ignorance can sometimes be bliss, but if you want to progress your career, increasing your level of self-awareness is key. Seeking and receiving feedback can seem scary but Michelle Lucas, a Career Coach from Greenfields Consultancy in Newbury helps her clients use a simple model to structure and control the process in a positive way.

The model used is the “Johari Window” which helps identify your development needs by considering what you know about yourself alongside what others know about you

	KNOWN TO SELF	NOT KNOWN TO SELF
KNOWN TO OTHERS	1 THE OPEN WINDOW (every one already knows what lies here)	3 BLIND SPOT (360° tools are useful here)
NOT KNOWN TO OTHERS	4 COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS (by providing others with feedback)	2 THE CLOSED WINDOW (no one yet knows what lies here although psychometric tests can help)

Start in box 1 and create two lists detailing your strengths and weaknesses. The former will include all the things you think you do well, things you have been praised for in the past, or things people turn to you for. Remember to consider every aspect of your life – work, home, social and community. The latter will contrast the areas you struggle with; those you delegate to others or have little interest in. Share your lists with someone you know well and see if they have anything helpful to add.

Box 2 is not as difficult as it may seem! Psychometric tests will convert information you know into new perspectives on yourself. Your HR department may be able to help you with this or you may prefer to use an external career coach in confidence. The results will help you build your self-understanding and will sometimes give you benchmarks to compare yourself to others.

Box 3 draws out what your colleagues think about you. There are many tools on the market for this but you can go some way to assessing this feedback yourself. Ground rules are to ask for specific feedback (with real examples supplied), to include strengths and weaknesses and to select people you trust to be honest - your supporters and critics. If you would like more information on setting up 360° feedback you can find this in the resources section of [www.green-fields.biz](http://www.green-fields.biz)

Box 4 is about having “courageous conversations” with people you find it difficult to work with and managed well, can be illuminating. This approach takes careful preparation and support as well as courage so it’s advisable to have a coach or mentor to help guide you through.

Working through this model will highlight some choices for you. Look for opportunities to exploit your strengths as this tends to be easier and much more fun! Prioritise your weaknesses and decide how best to manage them and prevent them becoming obstacles to your future success. Either focus on developing your missing skills or re-adjust your goals.

In an ever changing world, personal development is an essential ingredient for survival. If you don’t manage your own self awareness your organisation is likely to do it for you ... if you’re lucky this will be a development plan, if you’re unlucky, it could be a P45! Do you want to risk it?

For further information please contact: Michelle Lucas at [www.coachU4success.co.uk](http://www.coachU4success.co.uk)

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