

a report by



The Evolving Dynamics of

# continuous Feedback

## Executive Summary

With the growing influx of millennials, rise of technology, and a renewed focus on employee experience, continuous feedback has today become a pivotal part of talent management in every organization. While most organizations believe in the potential of this mechanism - there is still a lot to be done in terms of laying the groundwork, actively driving adoption and employing the data gathered to better understanding employee behavior. Hence the consequences that emerge from it are not as straightforward.

Darwinbox surveyed over 100 organizations and gathered insights from real feedback conversations to analyze and identify current trends, dominant choices and employee behavior towards this new practice. The collective analysis presented in this report aims to help organizations effectively leverage continuous feedback to deliver high performance and improve engagement.

**100+** Organisations surveyed

The report showcases insights about:

- 01 Current acceptance and adoption of continuous feedback
- 02 Popular choices made by organizations to enable continuous feedback
- 03 Impact on critical talent drivers - engagement, performance, retention
- 04 Changing dynamics of the manager-reportee relationship
- 05 Factors that determine the success of a continuous feedback intervention
- 06 Role of technology in facilitating the new approach towards feedback

# Objective & Methodology

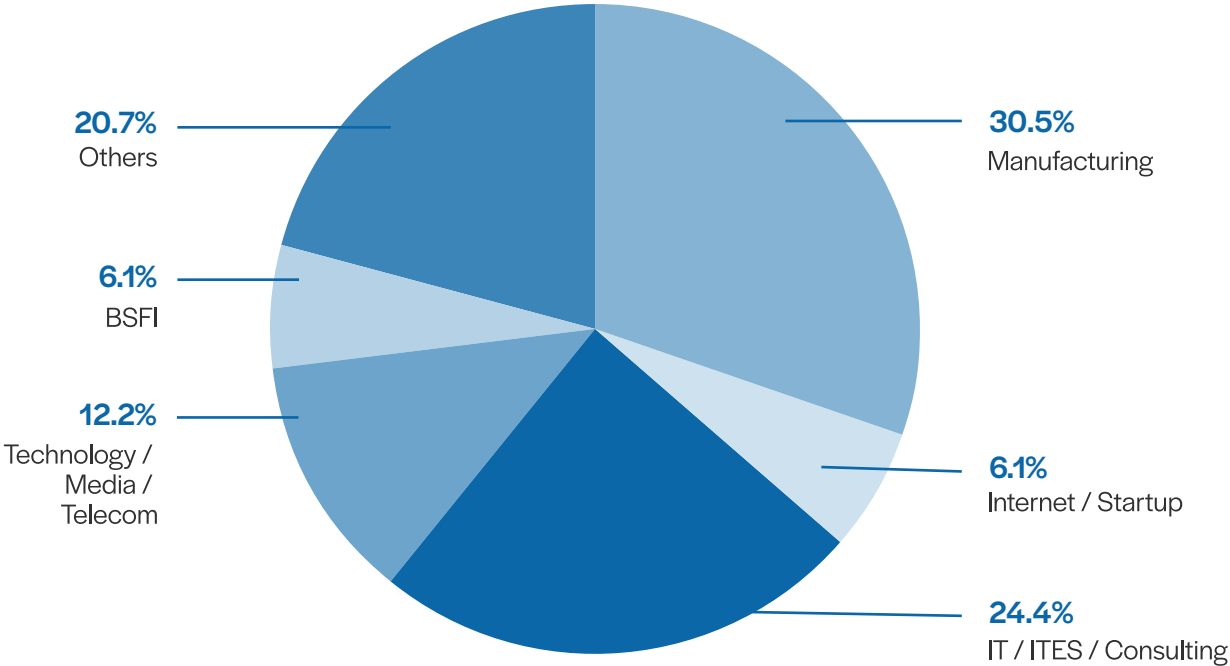
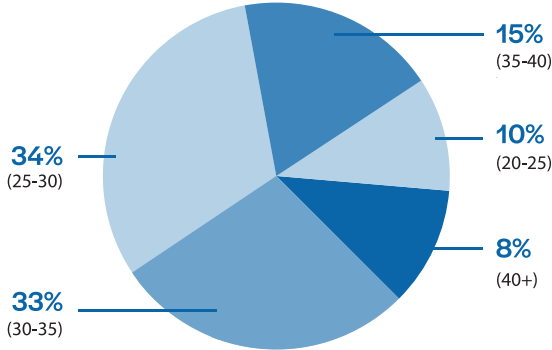
## OBJECTIVES

This report has been compiled to understand the trends and impact of continuous feedback on employee’s performance, engagement and more. It will serve as a knowledge bank for HR professionals who want to adopt continuous feedback in their organizations.

## METHODOLOGY

128 HR professionals from leading organizations across all sectors have shared their inputs through a digital survey. In addition to the survey, we have also interviewed 18 organizations who have instilled the practice of continuous feedback for a year or longer to understand how they moderated this practice and the resultant change in employee behavior observed over the course of the year. Organizations interviewed have shared insights based on real feedback conversations collectively.

% of employees by age who exchanged feedbacks



Sector-wise breakdown of survey participants

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## The Status Quo

A fairly new practice in the talent management space, continuous feedback has already been adopted by a vast majority of the organizations. While not all of them have formalized the practice through technology, they have proactively encouraged individuals and managers to engage in frequent feedback conversations. These are done in the form of check-ins and one-on-one interactions.

This is not just an initiative by the employer but even employees have warmed up to the idea of exchanging feedback more than once a year - a behavior commonly associated with the millennial workforce.

**76%** of the organizations surveyed have enabled their employees to engage in a continuous feedback dialogue. Of the remaining, 60% plan to leverage it within the next year.

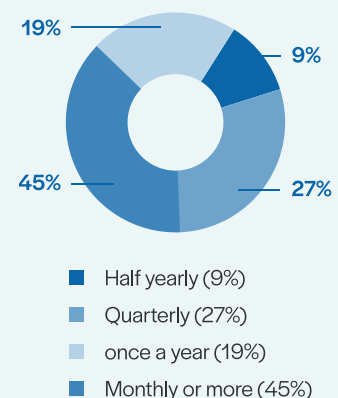
# 3 out of every 4 organizations enabled continuous feedback in some form.

Below are some numbers to understand the trends of usage within this group:

**75%** of these organizations had feedback enabled across all levels of the hierarchy while others have selectively enabled it for senior and middle management.

**45%** of the organizations have observed employees exchanging feedback at least once a month.

**39%** of the organizations enabled Continuous feedback conversations through a technology platform.



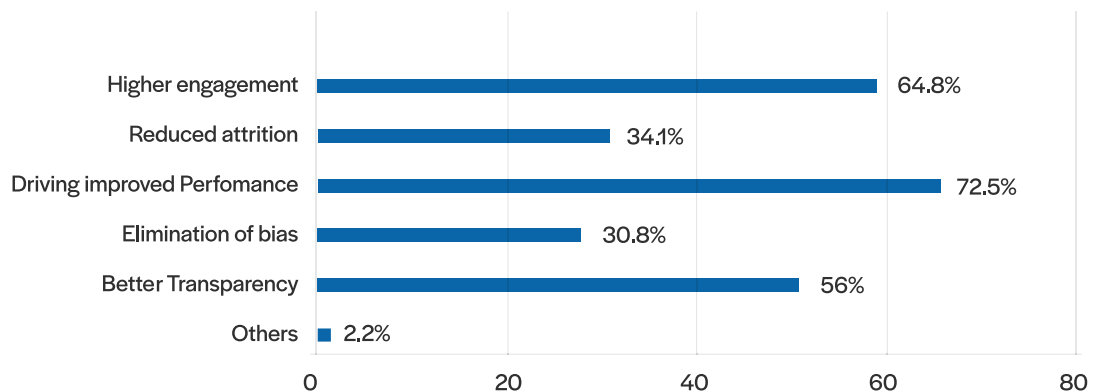
# Benefits And Impact



**73% of Organizations believe that Continuous Feedback will drive improved performance.**

Continuous feedback has been regarded to not just drive improved performance and higher engagement, it also empowers organizations to tackle recency bias and lack of transparency that may arise in the case of annual performance management model. As a result of all the factors above, attrition rates are bound to come down. Thus creating a productive, engaged, and truly empowered workforce.

What can be the impact of continuous feedback on your workforce?



# Popular Practices And Resultant Behaviour.

# Holistic Performance Management - Conversations Beyond Manager And Team

Today job roles are significantly more cross-functional and dynamic in nature. Often, this means that the stakeholders involved in the performance management of a particular employee are beyond their teams and departments! By virtue of bringing in the perspective of more than just the employee's immediate stakeholders, continuous feedback makes performance evaluation holistic and accurate.

All this while serving as a medium to increase interdepartmental interaction, engagement, and learning.

## 67% of the reviewers who shared feedback voluntarily were outside the immediate hierarchy of the employee.

**83%** of the organizations chose to facilitate feedback across the organization while the others preferred employees to exchange feedback only within the immediate department.

**69%** of the feedback exchanged was between individuals from different departments.

**92%** of companies that facilitate continuous feedback through technology, use it to complement their traditional review cycle.



# 3b

## How Asking Influences Feedback



It is human to avoid confrontation and pick easy, positive conversations. Whether it is because the employee chooses to seek feedback from an individual who has been receptive to his/her work or because the reviewer feels obliged to say the nice things when asked, organizations witnessed more positive feedback being shared when someone requests for it. In other words, they're more likely to be critical when they give feedback voluntarily vis-a-vis when they are requested to give feedback. Organizations would need to conduct a timely analysis of the behavior being displayed and take corrective steps to ensure the results are fair and unbiased.

Here are some interesting trends that were observed about how the tone of feedback varies across scenarios.

### 89% vs 71%

89% of the feedback shared on request has some or the other parameter rated positively (4 or 5 out of 5) by the reviewer whereas when employees share feedback voluntarily the number fell to 71%.

### 11% vs 29%

11% of the feedbacks shared on request is purely negative (1 or 2 out of 5). But if feedback was shared voluntarily, 29% of them is purely negative.

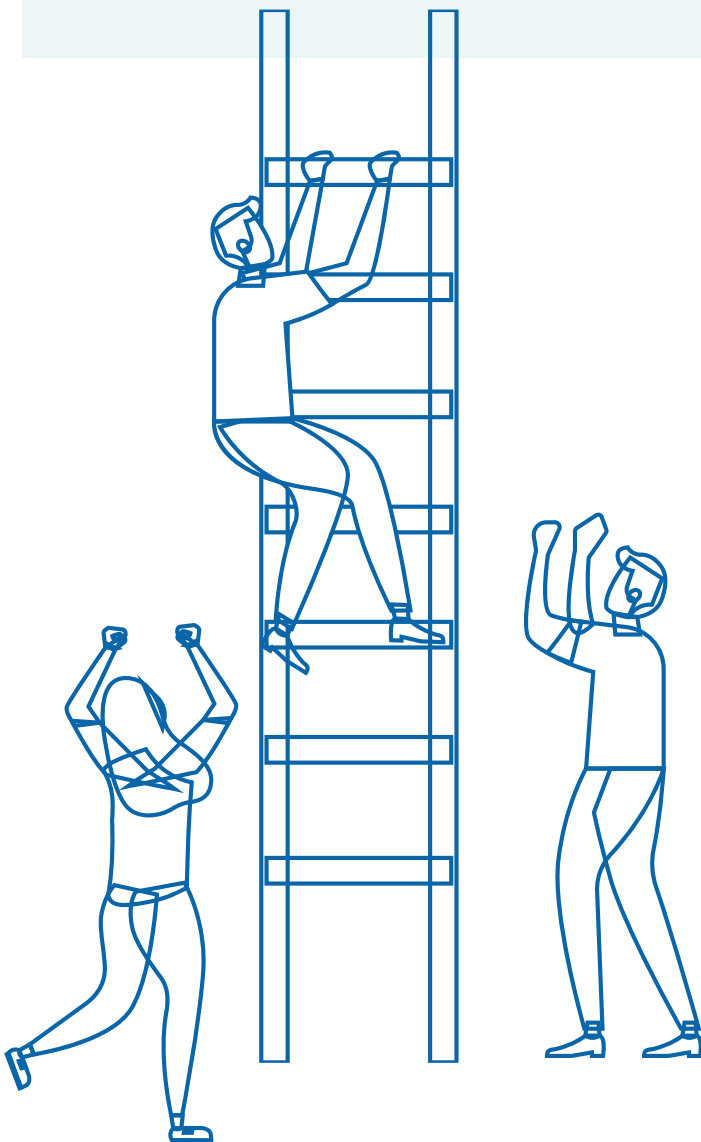
### 41%

41% of employees chose to share quantitative feedback/rating against measurable parameters of performance like goals, competencies and skills while the others shared only subjective feedback.

## Enabling Ownership - More Power To The Employee

Enabling continuous feedback essentially means enabling a culture of ownership where employees take charge of their performance management and growth trajectory. By giving them the freedom to initiate feedback conversations, performance management is now becoming an employee-driven initiative rather than a pure manager-led exercise. Trends observed across organizations reflected this behavior.

**86% of  
feedback  
conversations  
were initiated  
on request;  
whereas 14%  
were shared  
voluntarily.**



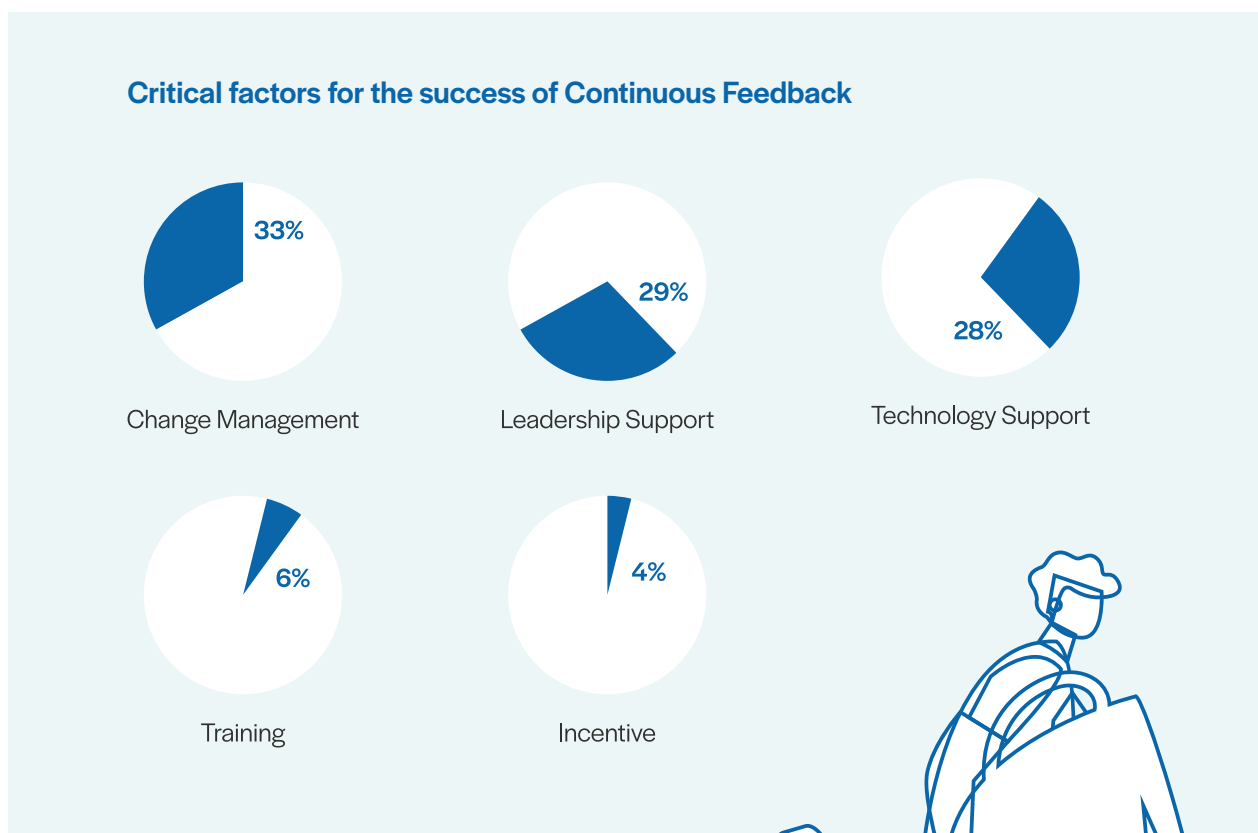
**70%** of feedback requests were initiated by the employees themselves.

**56%** organizations allowed employees to request feedback on a custom parameter of their choice, thus giving them complete control over what they wish to seek feedback on.

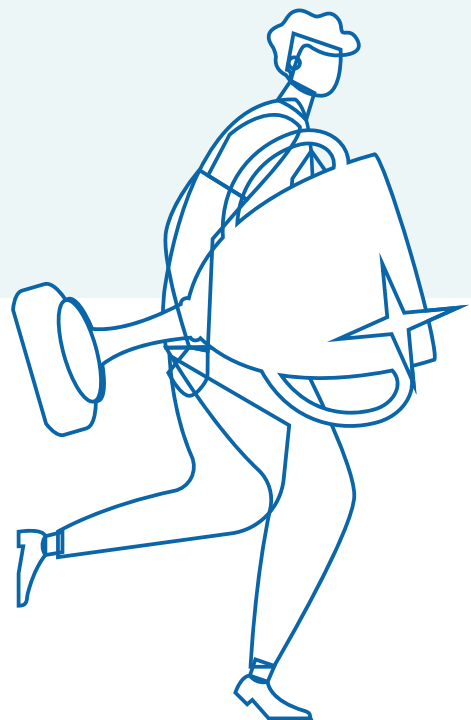
# Driving Success Home

## - Critical Factors And The Role Of Technology

An intervention of this scale and potential is a modification in the organizational DNA and determines how their culture shapes up going ahead. When asked about what the most important factors are in determining the success of a continuous feedback intervention, the following emerged as the most critical ones:



The top three factors emerged as change management, leadership support, and technology support with very minimal variation. In fact, they are interrelated to a great extent in a way that leadership support influences change management while technology enables the environment in which the desired behavior and culture takes shape.



## Driving Success Home

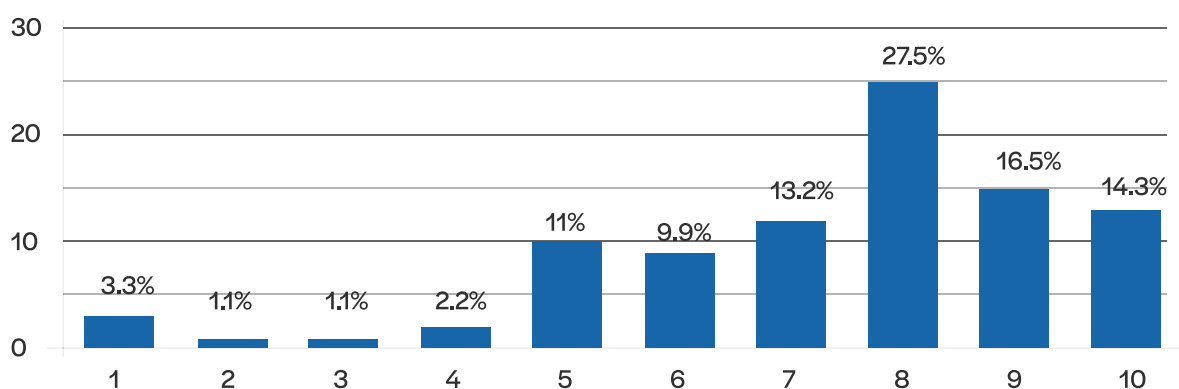
### - Critical Factors And The Role Of Technology

While the percentage of organizations that leverage technology for continuous feedback currently is 38%, the expectations people have as well as the impact technology assisted continuous feedback practice can have are quite high, as summed up below.

Organizations perceive that the right technology platform will boost adoption and eventually the ROI of continuous feedback. Technology holds the power to moderate the manner in which continuous feedback can be administered by organizations or the ease with which employees can exchange conversations on-the-go with mobile or voice-based feedback.

**71.5% of respondents rated the impact of technology as high (7 and above).**

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the impact that technology can have on the current feedback framework at your organisation ?



## Postface

We hope you enjoyed reading the Continuous Feedback insight shared in this report. To understand about more such new-age performance management practices, check out the resources below:



### 01

#### Multi-Stakeholder Feedback

Multi-Stakeholder feedback (MSF) is another new age practice that ensures that the employee's performance management happens in the most holistic way possible. Through this practice, feedback can be sourced and analyzed from multiple sources across the org hierarchy to make the evaluation more truthful and complete. This method continues to gain popularity over the 'downward' philosophy of feedback where input flows unidirectionally from higher levels of the hierarchy to the lower ones. Typically, feedback comes from these 4 sources in Multi-Stakeholder Feedback: Direct Reportees, Managers, Peers and Customers.

Here's an ebook for you have a clear understanding of the benefits that MSF provides and how you can leverage it using Darwinbox.

[Explore more](#)

### 02

#### Goal Cascading

Cascading of goals is a practice followed by organizations to align individual goals with the overall mission at a company level. Through this process, it is ensured that from the very beginning of the process, strategic, measurable, and meaningful actions are taken at an employee level for the fulfillment of the overall organizational goal.

The challenge with goals and expectations not being aligned doesn't stop at just not achieving the outcomes. It shows how responsibilities are overlapping in a team, how accountability is in shoddy fragments and how unclear the sense of ownership is.

Here's an ebook for you to have a deeper understanding of the impact of aligning goals across the organization using Darwinbox.

[Explore more](#)

## About us

Darwinbox is India's fastest growing cloud-based HCM platform that is enabling enterprises to achieve strategic HR goals faster and smarter. Over 150+ leading enterprises manage their entire employee lifecycle on our unified platform.

One of the most preferred HCM solutions by enterprises in APAC  
- Gartner.

Trusted by 150+ global enterprises:



## Hire to Retire on one platform



Time & Attendance



Recruitment & Onboarding



Core HR



Payroll & Expense Management



Rewards & Recognition



Talent Management & Analytics