



Followership

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TEACHING OUTLINE

This is a brief teaching outline for the extension publication **Followership**, part of the *Empowering Leaders in Kentucky (ELK)* educational series. Before presenting this program, please thoroughly read and study the **Followership** extension publication.

Today's objectives are:

1. Define and discuss the basics of followership.
 2. Present five popular rationales for why people follow various leaders.
 3. Explore the relationship between followership and respect.
 4. Introduce the Leader-Follower Loop and its implications on leading and following.
 5. Discuss qualities essential to being a good follower.
 6. Converse on the implications (to the leadership process) of being a good follower.
- ❖ Attention steps are important first steps in gaining an audience's attention. Put this quotation up on a PowerPoint slide or write it on a flip chart/board.

I believe that everyone needs to be a follower many times in life. Followers are essentially the drive behind most groups. It is the power of ALL that accomplishes much, but one person can change the direction of that power. Often followers have the clearest sight of all involved. —Laura A. Bennett

Ask the audience what this means to them, and facilitate a discussion for about 5 minutes. There are no right or wrong answers, but make sure to bring up these points:

- There are no leaders without followers
- Followers play an important role in every group/organization/team
- Goals cannot be accomplished by a leader alone; they are a group effort (which includes followers)

Use this to segue way into the first section, the *Basics of Followership*.

- ❖ Begin by defining followership, and discuss reasons why this word may come with negative connotations.
- ❖ Move into the next section (*Reasons to Follow*) with the following comment:

“Just like we are all seen as leaders within certain situations, we may also be considered followers within other situations. But we follow for many different reasons. Below are several of the most popular reasons people follow various leaders.”

- ❖ Be sure to mention that some of these reasons for following are more negative, and some more positive. The goal should be for participants to be following for positive reasons. Encourage participants to examine their reason(s) for following within a specific situation they choose (some of this reflection is done within the *Step Out and Apply* section).
- ❖ Respect is an important component within the leader/follower relationship, and it is not only respect for the leader that should be considered, but respect for the solution. Go through the grid within the *Followership and Respect* section and explain each quadrant.
- ❖ The *Leader-Follower Loop* is a great way to illustrate the give and take relationship between leaders their constituents.
- ❖ Use the *Essential Qualities of Good Followers* section to encourage audience participation. Go through the different qualities listed, and then have the participants choose one or two they excel at. Also have them choose the quality that is the most challenging for them, and have them write what they can do to improve themselves in that quality (These are the last two questions in the *Step Out and Apply* section in ELK1-205).
- ❖ Use the *Importance of Collaboration* section to conclude the entire presentation. One of the most important aspects to be stressed throughout the entire presentation is the importance of

followers, and the contribution good followers make to successful leadership. Truly effective leaders value their followers, and keep what’s best for their constituents in mind throughout the leadership process. Thus, the importance of followers should be stressed as part of this final section, and is a good way to conclude the workshop.

NOTE: As with all of the ELK publications, using a single section (within the publication) makes a great 10-15 minute presentation for any group.

Group Activity Ideas

The activities listed below can be used in a variety of capacities: as attention steps to your presentation, at any time during the presentation to give a break to the audience or to illustrate a particular point, or at the end of your presentation to round out the presentation. All activities will be attached to the Teaching Outlines as appendices.

- 1) Follow the Leader activity (contact me for this activity – k.ricketts@uky.edu)
- 2) What Makes Us Play Follow the Leader role play