

Identifying Your Followership Style Questionnaire

Since most of us spend the majority of our time in the followership role, it stands to reason that how we perform as followers determines, for the most part, how satisfied we are with our day-to-day work existence

This questionnaire will help you determine your style of followership, as well as identify your strengths and areas for development as a follower. This is a self-diagnostic instrument, so please respond to each statement as you naturally behave.

For each statement, please use the scale below to indicate the extent to which the statement describes you. Think of a specific but typical followership situation and how you acted.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Rarely Occasionally Almost Always

___ 1. Does your involvement help you fulfill some societal goal or personal dream that is important to you?

___ 2. Are your personal goals aligned with your student organization's priority goals?

___ 3. Are you highly committed to and energized by your involvement and organization, giving them your best ideas and performance?

___ 4. Does your enthusiasm also spread to and energize your peers?

___ 5. Instead of waiting for or merely accepting what the leader tells you, do you personally identify which organizational activities are most critical for achieving the organization's priority goals?

___ 6. Do you actively develop a distinctive competence in those critical activities so that you become more valuable to the organization and its leaders?

___ 7. When starting a new job or assignment, do you promptly build a record of successes that are important to the organization and its leaders?

___ 8. Can the leader of your organization give you a difficult assignment without the benefit of much supervision, knowing you will meet your deadline with high-quality work?

___ 9. Do you take the initiative to seek out and successfully complete assignments that go above and beyond your role?

___ 10. When you are not the leader of a project, do you still contribute at a high level, often doing more than your share?

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0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Rarely Occasionally Almost Always

- ___ 11. Do you independently think of and champion new ideas that will contribute significantly to the organization's goals?
- ___ 12. Do you try to solve the tough problems (technical, organizational, etc) rather than look to the leader to do it for you?
- ___ 13. Do you help your peers, making them look good, even when you don't get any credit?
- ___ 14. Do you help the leader or organization see both the upside potential and downside risks of ideas or plans, playing the devil's advocate if needed?
- ___ 15. Do you understand the leader's needs, goals, and constraints, and work hard to meet them?
- ___ 16. Do you actively and honestly own up to your strengths and weaknesses rather than put off evaluation?
- ___ 17. Do you make a habit of internally questioning the wisdom of the leader's decision rather than just doing what you are told?
- ___ 18. When the leader asks you to do something that runs contrary to your preferences, do you say "no" rather than "yes?"
- ___ 19. Do you act on your own ethical standards rather than the leader's or the group's standards?
- ___ 20. Do you assert your views in important issues, even though it might mean conflict with your group or leader?

Identifying Your Followership Style

Scoring Key

Use the scoring keys below to transfer your ratings from each statement to the corresponding scoring column.

Add each column of ratings to total your individual score on the Independent Thinking and Active Engagement scales.

Independent Thinking Items	Scoring
Question 1.	_____
5.	_____
11.	_____
12.	_____
14.	_____
16.	_____
17.	_____
18.	_____
19.	_____
20.	_____
TOTAL SCORE	_____

Active Engagement Items	Scoring
Question 2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____
13.	_____
15	_____
TOTAL SCORE	_____

Identifying Your Followership Style Scoring Key

Mark the totals from your Independent Thinking scoring column on the vertical axis. Repeat the process for your Active Engagement scoring column and mark the total on the horizontal axis. Then plot your scores on the graph by drawing two perpendicular lines connecting your two scores.

The coordinates of these two dimensions form the basis upon which the five styles of followership emerge.

Followership Styles Scoring Key

Based on your Independent Thinking and Active Engagement scores, into which quadrant do you fall? By identifying which quadrant your scores fall into, you learn both where your skills lie as a follower, as well as areas for growth and development.

These labels categorize how you carry out your followership role, not who you are as a person. You may use different followership styles based on the situation or based on the leader of your group.

Followership Style	Independent Thinking Score	Active Engagement Score
EXEMPLARY	High	High
ALIENTATED	High	Low
CONFORMIST	Low	High
PRAGMATIST	Middling	Middling
PASSIVE	Low	Low

Followership Styles

Style Descriptions

ALIENATED FOLLOWER

Approximately 15-25% of the population falls into this style. Alienated followers think independently and critically, but are not active in carrying out the role of a follower. They might find themselves disengaging from the group at times. They may see themselves as a victim who has been treated unfairly.

Positive Self-Image Includes:

- Being a Maverick who thinks for yourself
- Having a healthy skepticism and seeing things for what they really are
- Playing devil's advocate for the group
- Being the organizational conscience

Others May View Them As:

- Troublesome, cynical, negative
- Having a chip on your shoulder, a rebel without a cause
- Headstrong and lacking judgment
- Not a team player
- Adversarial to the point of being hostile

Leaders Cause Frustration When They:

- Do not fully recognize or utilize your talents and ideas
- Exploit you for their gain, but not yours
- Let you down by not following through
- Are not honest in their interactions with you or others
- Refuse to acknowledge their shortcomings and inconsistencies

Moving from Alienated to Exemplary:

- Maintain independent, critical thinking skills
- Overcome negativity or hostility with the leader by confronting it
- Actively engage in the group's process by finding a new, positive motivation

Followership Styles

Style Descriptions

CONFORMIST FOLLOWER

Approximately 20-30% of the population falls into this style. Conformist followers often say “yes” when they really want to say “no.” They are eager to take orders and please others. They assume that the leader’s position of power entitles them to obedience. They do not question the social order and find comfort in structure.

Leaders View Their Positive Attributes As:

- Accepting assignments easily and gladly doing the work
- Team player
- Trusting and committing yourself to the leader of the group
- Minimizing conflict
- Being non-threatening to the leader

Others See Them As:

- Lacking your own ideas
- Submissive and self-deprecating
- Unwilling to take an unpopular position and stick with it
- Adverse to conflict, even at the risk of failing with the group
- Compromising your needs and ideas to please the group

These Characteristics Fit with Environments Where:

- Following established order is more important than the outcomes
- A domineering leader or culture presides
- Disagreeing with the supervisor or making waves is punished
- Uniformity of dress, behavior, and attitudes is encouraged

Moving from Conformist to Exemplary:

- Cultivate independent, critical thinking
- Develop confidence in your ideas and the courage to act on them
- Confront your fear of conflict and need for structure

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PRAGMATIC FOLLOWER

Approximately 25-35% of the population falls into this style. Pragmatic followers stay in the middle of the road. They question a leader's decisions, but not too often or too openly. They perform the required tasks, but seldom do more than is asked or expected. They may live by the slogan "better safe than sorry."

Positive Self-Image Includes:

- Being attuned to the shifting winds of organizational politics
- Knowing how to work the system to get things done
- Keeping things in perspective
- Maintaining balance for the organization
- Playing by the rules and regulations

Others May View Them As:

- Playing political games
- Bargaining to maximize your own self-interest
- Being averse to risk and prone to cover your tracks
- Carrying out your assignments with half-hearted enthusiasm and in a mediocre way
- Being a bureaucrat who follows the letter, rather than the spirit of the rule

They May Be In An Environment With:

- High uncertainty and instability with ever-changing direction and agendas
- An impersonal climate between leaders and members
- An active, buzzing grapevine
- A transactional atmosphere where people have to make a deal to get things done
- An emphasis on staying within the rules and regulations

Moving from Pragmatist to Exemplary:

- Develop and set motivating personal goals related to your core purpose
- Build trust and credibility with others by supporting their goals and projects

Followership Styles

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PASSIVE FOLLOWER

Approximately 5-10% of the population falls into this style. Passive followers are the exact opposite of exemplary followers. They look to the leader to do their thinking for them. They do not carry out their assignments with enthusiasm. They lack initiative and a sense of responsibility, which requires contact direction.

They Believe They Should:

- Rely on the leader's judgment and thinking
- Take action only when the boss gives instructions
- Let the people who get paid for it handle the headaches

They Frustrate Others When They:

- Only put in your time, but little else
- Don't do your share
- Require an inordinate amount of supervision relative to your contribution
- Follow the crowd without considering why

They Believe The Organization:

- Doesn't want your ideas
- Is managed by a leader who is going to do what he/she wants
- Where going along with the leader and the group is your only choice
- Doesn't recognize effort and contribution

Moving from Passive to Exemplary:

- Develop an understanding of followership that does not involve mindlessness, that it is not a spectator sport
- Work on finding ways to invest and involve yourself in the organization

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EXEMPLARY FOLLOWER

Exemplary followers operate well on the two underlying dimensions of leadership. First, they exercise independent, critical thinking, separate from the group or leader. Second, they are actively engaged, using their talents for the benefit of the organization, even when confronted with bureaucracy or other non-contributing members.

Unlike the mythic qualities attributed to leaders, exemplary followers are simply able to do their jobs and work with others in a way that adds value to the organization. It is the way in which they go about their tasks that makes them stand out from other followers. They possess a number of skills and value that are both learnable and doable.

Job Skills

- Focus and commitment
- Competence in critical path activities
- Initiative in increasing value to the organization

Organizational Skills

- Team members
- Organizational networks
- Leaders

Values Component

- The Courageous Conscience
 1. Be proactive
 2. Gather your facts
 3. Before taking a stand, seek wise counsel
 4. Build your fortitude
 5. Work within the system
 6. Frame your position so it will be heard
 7. Educate others on how your view serve their best interests
 8. Take collective action
 9. If you meet leader resistance, seek higher authority
 10. Have the necessary cushions (financial, emotional, etc) to exercise other alternatives