

Pondering Point

In a world where everyone is vying for the chance to be the next great leader, those signing up to be great followers are fewer and farther between. ***Does our society recognize the powerful contribution of followers?*** *Are we undervaluing it?* With so much information out there on how to be a great leader, we may sometimes forget to give credit to the people that are doing the work. Though maybe not as glamorous as being in a leadership role, the follower's role is a critical one. Behind every great leader is an avid band of supporters that are busy at work bringing the vision of the leader to life.

Whether in business, at home or in our communities, we all need to learn how to be great followers. True progress happens when there are people out there doing the work! It is more than just following a leader; it is being a loyal steward to a leader's mission and vision. **To a leader, there is nothing more important than a dedicated support team to add a voice and bring perspective.** Great followers understand the work completely, believe in it and are ready and able to get others on board. Over time, many great followers move into leadership roles and pass the torch of responsibility to the next generation. We can then celebrate the progress that is made when we all work together.

What makes a great FOLLOWER?

A leader's performance is often defined by how the followers perform.



Without followers, the conductor will have no instruments. Great followers insist on making great music!

Imagine... being the reason great leaders succeed.

— From Pondering to Practice —

Activity:

This activity involves splitting a group into two sections to see the topic from two separate lenses.

- Ask one group about a time when they were **followers**:
 - *What worked well?*
 - *What were the challenges?*
 - *How did you get through those challenges?*
- Ask the other group about a time when they were in the **leadership** role:
 - *What kind of people did you want to help you bring your mission to life?*
 - *What separated the good followers from the great ones?*
 - *How critical were these supports to fulfilling your mission and vision?*

Reflection:

In an effort to create a communication channel and build rapport with our leader, we need to be fully open to facilitating the mission and in sync with their leadership style.

- How do you adjust your following style to their leadership style?

Sometimes we have tough leaders that may not be easy to follow or open to feedback.

- *Do you know to bring up tough conversations?*
- *Do you know when to bring it up?*
- *Are you asking the right questions before you begin to follow someone?*
- *Is the decision to follow this leader your own?*

A good followership is an alignment to supportive leadership.

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