

CLD1-5-4H



Facilitator's Guide

Followership

Understanding the Basics of Teamwork

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. — Helen Keller

Rationale:

One cannot be a leader without followers. Some would argue that this makes followers just as important as leaders when developing teams and exercising leadership. It is, therefore, important to understand why and how people follow others.

Program Goal:

To define and examine followership as a leadership concept and basis of collaboration

Program Objectives:

- Explain the important responsibilities followers have in the leader-follower relationship.
- Identify qualities of good followers.
- Distinguish between negative and positive reasons for following a leader.

Pre-Program Preparation:

- Copy the “Followership: Understanding the Basics of Teamwork” factsheet for each participant.
- Print scenarios for Learning Activity 1.
- Make role playing cards for Learning Activity 2.
- Copy the matching game “Qualities of a Good Follower” for Learning Activity 3.
- Acquire equipment to show the video for Learning Activity 4.

Introduction

In the discussion of leadership, the leader is often “the star.” However, one cannot be a leader without followers. Some would argue that this makes followers just as essential as leaders when developing teams and exercising leadership. It is important to understand why and how people follow, in order to reap the benefits of successful teamwork.

Introductory Activity:

Simon Says. Designate a Simon and a leader. Begin the activity with the leader doing everything that Simon says. Then, start to perform different actions than what the leader is saying. See if people are following what they are doing or saying. Finish the activity by talking about the role a follower plays in the leader-follower relationship.

Objective 1: Explain the important responsibilities that followers have in the leader-follower relationship.

Followership can be defined as the willingness to go along with a leader. Everyone can't be “out front;” but without followers, there can be no leaders. Followers play a pivotal role in any effort. If you don't believe it, ask anyone who's ever been a political candidate!

Learning Activity 1:

Divide participants into small groups. Ask each group to designate a chairperson and a secretary. Plan the following activity.

The “Make a Difference Volunteers” develop a pretend store every December to enable limited resource youth to shop for their family members. Gifts must be obtained, transportation arranged, facility reservations made, schedules made for event setup and workers during the event and wrapping materials organized.

Bring all groups back together and discuss leader activities (leading the meeting, setting the agenda,

This leadership curriculum was developed by 4-H Youth Development agents with University of Kentucky specialists. Examples in the guide are geared toward an 4-H audience. This guide may be reproduced or modified for educational or training purposes and used with other audiences.

calling for votes) and follower activities (i.e. sharing ideas, volunteering for committee assignments, participating in the activity and planning process).

Finish the discussion with these questions:

- What happens to the group if the leaders don't effectively perform their activities? Or if the leaders are performing the follower's activities?
- What happens to the group if the followers aren't performing their activities? Or if the followers try to take over the leader's activities?
- How would you set up and explain the expectations for both the leaders and the followers within your group or 4-H Club?
- Why is it important that everyone within the group understands the role they play?

Objective 2: Identify qualities of good followers.

We've already addressed that being a follower is an important role in groups and teams. There are numerous reasons why leaders attract or discourage a following. Anyone hoping to be a productive member of any effort, whether as a leader or a follower, will be more effective with an understanding of why people follow.

Learning Activity 2:

Ask participants to use the "Good Followership Characteristics" matching activity sheet and draw a line matching Good Follower qualities to descriptions.

Objective 3: Distinguish between negative and positive reasons for following a leader.

Good followers have distinct skills, just as effective leaders do. These are skills that will be useful to promote successful collaboration. Qualities that may be developed include self management, commitment, knowledge and focus in addition to courage.

Learning Activity 3:

List the five reasons to follow, located below, individually on note cards.

- Fear of Retribution – "If I do not follow, I may lose my job!"
- Blind Hope – "We must do something, and I hope this works!"
- Faith In Leader – "What a great person. If anyone knows the answer, he (or she) does!"
- Intellectual Agreement – "What a good idea! That certainly makes sense!"

- Buying the Vision – "What a brilliant idea. I don't care who thought of it!"

Break the participants into five groups and provide them with one of the five reasons to follow. Each group's assignment is to develop a 30-second dialogue from that point of view. The group should present the dialogue to the total participants and have the audience guess which reason to follow was portrayed.

Learning Activity 4:

Have participants view a video <http://www.ca.uky.edu/kccl/The%20Power%20of%20Motivation%20updated%20May%202011.pdf> and identify what follower qualities (listed above) are demonstrated. The scenario is as follows:

Suggested Scenario for Role Playing:

The 4-H Council is planning and developing a new community service project. Ask the selected leader to assume the role of the 4-H Council President, (the leader) with remainder of the group serving as members of the Council (the followers). Assign two Council members the role of exhibiting self-management in their comments, another two the role of exhibiting commitment in comments, another two the role of exhibiting knowledge and focus in their comments and the other two the role of exhibiting courage with their comments.

Point out that the follower comments may disagree with the leader but should be focused on the group goal of producing a meaningful community service project.

Summary:

Followers play an integral role in the leadership process and, as a result, are also an integral part of any mission or organization. Within leadership development it is important to understand the role followers play in the leader-follower relationship, various reasons people follow different leaders and skills that make a follower more effective. A healthy appreciation of followership means a healthier leadership relationship for the most successful collaborations.

Adapted by Ken Culp, III, Principal Specialist for Volunteerism and Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Family Sciences, from original materials developed by: Laura W. Wilson, Family & Consumer Sciences Agent, Lyon County; Janet H. Johnson, Family & Consumer Sciences Agent, Allen County; Laura F. Stephenson, Program Leader for Family & Consumer Sciences Agent, University of Kentucky Extension, Dr. Kristina Ricketts, Leadership Development Extension Specialist



Good Followership Characteristics Matching Activity

Self-management

Working well without supervision

Using lifelong learning to consistently improve performance

Not acting as a “yes man”

Commitment

Thinking independently

Building knowledge for maximum impact

Knowledge and focus

Growing from a follower to a leader

Having moral courage

Illustrating commitment to the mission

Courage

Buying into excellence



My First 4-H Club Meeting

1. What year did you attend your first 4-H meeting? _____
2. Who invited you to attend your first 4-H meeting? _____
3. Where was your first meeting held? _____
4. What do you remember most about your first 4-H meeting? _____

5. What activities were conducted at your first 4-H meeting? _____

6. What business was discussed at your first 4-H meeting? _____

7. Were refreshments served? _____ And if so, what was served? _____

8. Who took you to your first 4-H meeting? _____

Did that person stay at the meeting with you? _____
9. Were you excited to attend the meeting? _____
Were you nervous about attending? _____
What do you remember most? _____

