

L204 Reading D: Followership Models

Classification of followers is an assessment tool (Figure 1). Categorizing followers allows a leader to make assumptions about their future behavior and helps to determine developmental needs. For a leader to implement change in an organization, they must understand a follower's level of commitment and abilities to think critically. *Kelly's model of follower behavior classifies followers into five categories: Alienated Followers, Sheep, Yes People, Effective Followers and Survivors. Listed below are how each classification of Followers are defined.

"Sheep" are defined as passive and uncritical, lacking in initiative and sense of responsibility. Sheep perform tasks given them and stop.

"Yes People" are defined as followers who are livelier and readily carry out orders, but remain an equally un-enterprising group. This group is dependent on a leader for direction and are normally uncritical thinkers.

"Alienated Followers" are defined as critical and independent thinkers, but they fulfill their roles passively because of their alienation. These individuals are "alienated" by the organization by something, someone, or some event that "turned them off" to participate in the organization. The alienation mechanism distanced them from the group and any responsibility in the organization. These individuals are the critical thinking non-active participants of the organization. These individuals are the "bitter" employees who are always disgruntled with the organization.

"Effective Followers" are defined as critical thinkers and active participants in the organization. These individuals are the problem-solvers, work well with others, reflect on organizational goals, and effectively bring up concerns to the boss or leader.

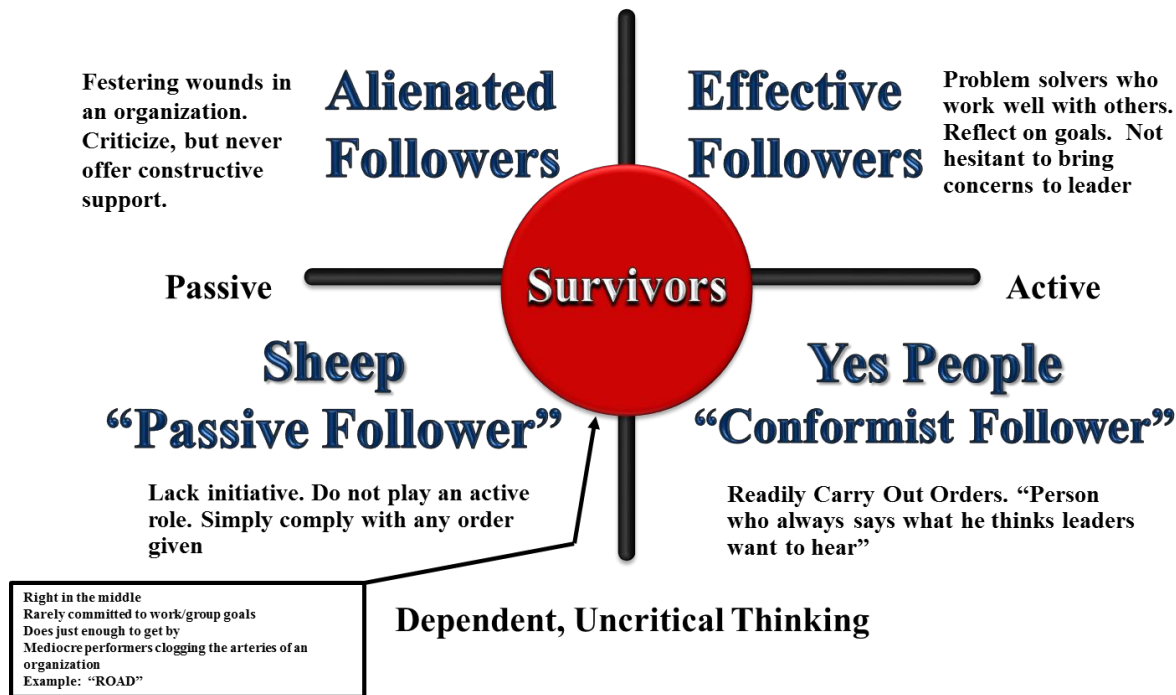
Survivors' are defined as those individuals who are rarely committed to work/group goals. They only do enough to get by and are mediocre performers. This type of individual "clogs the arteries of an organization" and may be best represented by the military term "ROAD," which means, "Retired On Active Duty." They keep their participation in activities of the organization to a minimum. These individuals do the minimum work and are still promoted in their organization because they do just enough to get by. The issue of what to do about the "survivors" might include motivation, power and influence, or the exercise of various leadership styles, however, the leader will most likely end up settling for compliance with the survivors.

While Followers will generally fall into one of these five classifications, a leaders' influence and leadership style can move an individual from their present category toward effectiveness. The followership development of subordinates is just as important as leadership development and can be more influential in the success of the organization. The process of moving individuals between quadrants relies on the leader's ability and is called "LEADERSHIP!"

(Kelley's Model of Follower Behavior)

Followership

Independent, Critical Thinking



12

Figure 1

It is obviously very challenging to stand up to a senior leader in a hierarchical organization like the Army. Standing up for your beliefs takes a combination of moral courage, judgment, and tact. The ease of this task also depends on the climate established by the senior in the relationship. If the senior establishes a climate characterized by psychological safety, which encourages the candid exchange of ideas and information, then courageous followership will be more likely. This speaks to the responsibility of senior leaders to establish the conditions for effective followership to thrive. There are five dimensions of courageous followership. The five dimensions work in tension and in balance with each other (figure 2).

5 Dimensions of Courageous Followership

Which Dimensions do Leaders value the most?

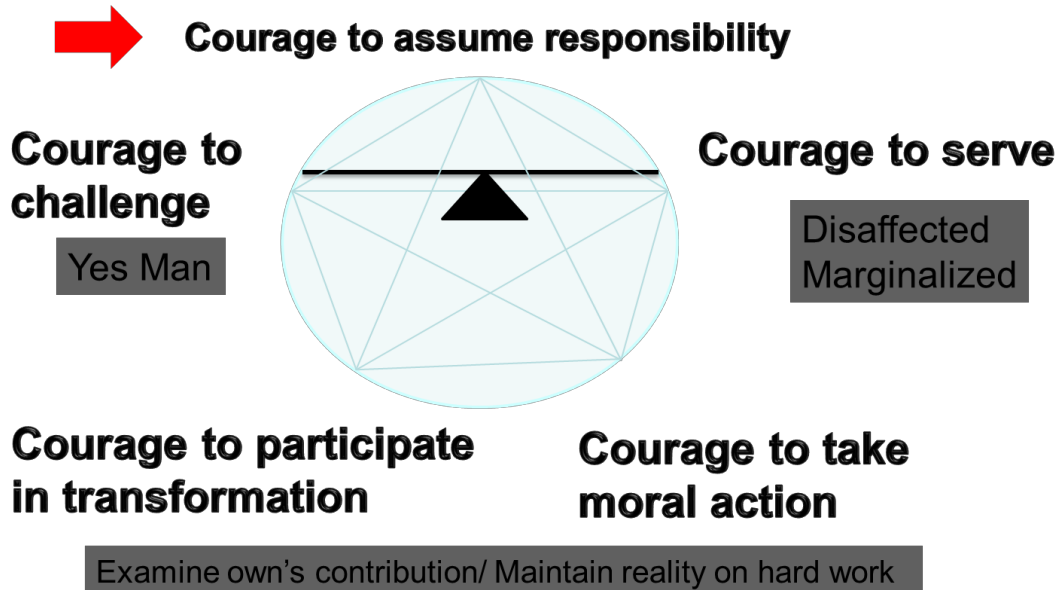


Figure 2

The Courage to Assume Responsibility: This is Chaleff's version of the "effective follower." *They assume responsibility for themselves and the organization;* they do not hold a paternalistic image of the leader or organization; *they look for opportunities to fulfill their potential and maximize their value to the organization.* Courageous followers assume responsibility for themselves and the organization; they do not hold a paternalistic image of the leader or organization; they do not expect the leader or organization to provide for their security and growth, or to give permission to act. Courageous followers discover or create opportunities to fulfill their potential and maximize their value to the organization; they initiate values-based action to improve the organization's external activities and its internal processes". Contemporary research on Followership has found that leaders value the Courage to Assume Responsibility more than the other four behaviors combined (though they value those as well). Thus, this is the platform on which to build relationships with senior leaders that will support candor.

The Courage to Serve: Not afraid of the hard work required to serve a leader and to assume new and additional responsibilities to serve the organization. "Courageous followers are not afraid of the hard work required to serve a leader and they assume new and additional responsibilities to unburden the leader and serve the organization; they stay alert for areas in which their strengths complement the leader's and assert themselves in those areas; courageous followers stand up for their leader and the tough decisions a leader must make if the organization is to achieve its purpose."

The Courage to Challenge: They give voice to issues that conflict with their sense of what is right and are willing to stand up, stand out, risk rejection, and initiate conflict to examine the actions of the leader and the group when appropriate. “Courageous followers give voice to the discomfort they feel when the behaviors or policies of the leader or group conflict with their sense of what is right and are willing to stand up, to stand out to risk rejection, to initiate conflict in order to examine the actions of the leader and the group when appropriate; they are willing to deal with the emotions their challenge evokes in the leader and the group; courageous followers value organizational harmony and their relationship with the leader, but not at the expense of the common purpose and their integrity.”

The Courage to Serve and the Courage to Challenge must be kept in balance. If they veer too far in one direction, the follower becomes a "yes man" and in the other direction the follower becomes disaffected and marginalized.

The Courage to Participate in Transformation: When behavior jeopardizes the common purpose of the organization, they champion the need for change. “When behavior that jeopardizes the common purpose remains unchanged, courageous followers recognize the need for transformation and champion the need for change and stay with the leader and group while they mutually struggle with the difficulty of real change; they examine their own need for transformation and become full participants in the change process as appropriate”. The Courage to Participate in Transformation is necessary for two reasons: 1) to examine one's own contribution to the behavior of other leaders and 2) to maintain reality on the hard work and support required for growth and transformation by both parties.

The Courage to Take Moral Action: They know when it is time to take a stand that is different from the leaders when behavior violates the shared purpose or core values of the organization. “Courageous followers know when it is time to take a stand that is different from that of the leader’s; they are answering to a higher set of values; the stand may involve refusing to obey a direct order, appealing the order to the next level of authority, or tendering one’s resignation; these and other forms of moral action involve personal risk; but service to the common purpose justifies and sometimes demands acting” The Courage to Take a Moral Stand is most legitimately used (if time permits) when efforts to correct situations using the other courageous follower behaviors have been taken in good faith. Sometimes taking a moral stand must be done in compressed time; the other behaviors also probably occur but do so in seconds or minutes before taking a moral stance is required. When a moral stand is necessary, it becomes the most important behavior, but fortunately is only rarely needed.

The importance for the individual leader’s development is to understand their own tendencies in these behavioral patterns, and to commit to creating better balance to optimize their effectiveness. Also to prepare themselves through scenarios and drills much as they would for any engagement.