

LEADERSHIP INSTRUMENT

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Kelley (1992) developed a typology that categorized followers into one of five styles (exemplary, alienated, conformist, passive, and pragmatist) based on two axes (independent thinking and active engagement). These different dimensions of followership became the basis for Kelley's Followership Questionnaire, a survey that allows followership style to be determined through an empirical approach, rather than through observation.

Followership Questionnaire

Instructions: Think of a specific leader–follower situation where you were in the role of follower. For each statement, please use the scale below to indicate the extent to which the statement describes you and your behavior in this situation.

Key:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rarely			Occasionally		Almost Always	
1.	Does your work help you fulfill some societal goal or personal dream that is important to you?						0 1 2 3 4 5 6
2.	Are your personal work goals aligned with the organization's priority goals?						0 1 2 3 4 5 6
3.	Are you highly committed to and energized by your work and organization, giving them your best ideas and performance?						0 1 2 3 4 5 6
4.	Does your enthusiasm also spread to and energize your coworkers?						0 1 2 3 4 5 6
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?						0 1 2 3 4 5 6
6.	Do you actively develop a distinctive competence in those critical activities so that you become more valuable to the leader and the organization?						0 1 2 3 4 5 6

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| 7. When starting a new job or assignment, do you promptly build a record of successes in tasks that are important to the leader? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 8. Can the leader give you a difficult assignment without the benefit of much supervision, knowing that you will meet your deadline with highest-quality work and that you will “fill in the cracks” if need be? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 9. Do you take the initiative to seek out and successfully complete assignments that go above and beyond your job? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 10. When you are not the leader of a group project, do you still contribute at a high level, often doing more than your share? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 11. Do you independently think up and champion new ideas that will contribute significantly to the leader’s or the organization’s goals? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 12. Do you try to solve the tough problems (technical or organizational), rather than look to the leader to do it for you? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 13. Do you help out other coworkers, making them look good, even when you don’t get any credit? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 14. Do you help the leader or group see both the upside potential and downside risks of ideas or plans, playing the devil’s advocate if need be? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 15. Do you understand the leader’s needs, goals, and constraints, and work hard to help meet them? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 16. Do you actively and honestly own up to your strengths and weaknesses rather than put off evaluation? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 17. Do you make a habit of internally questioning the wisdom of the leader’s decision rather than just doing what you are told? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 18. When the leader asks you to do something that runs contrary to your professional or personal preferences, do you say “no” rather than “yes”? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 19. Do you act on your own ethical standards rather than the leader’s or the group’s standards? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 20. Do you assert your views on important issues, even though it might mean conflict with your group or reprisals from the leader? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

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Scoring

The Followership Questionnaire measures your style as a follower based on two dimensions of followership: *independent thinking* and *active engagement*. Your responses indicate the degree to which you are an independent thinker and actively engaged in your follower role. Score the questionnaire by doing the following. Your scores will classify you as being primarily one of the five styles: exemplary, alienated, conformist, pragmatist, or passive.

- 1. Independent Thinking Score: Sum of questions 1, 5, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20
- 2. Active Engagement Score: Sum of questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 15
- *Exemplary Followership Style*: If you scored high (above 40) on both independent thinking and active engagement, your followership style is categorized as exemplary.
- *Alienated Followership Style*: If you scored high (above 40) on independent thinking and low (below 20) on active engagement, your followership style is categorized as alienated.
- *Conformist Followership Style*: If you scored low (below 20) on independent thinking and high (above 40) on active engagement, your followership style is categorized as conformist.
- *Pragmatist Followership Style*: If you scored in the middle range (from 20 to 40) on both independent thinking and active engagement, your followership style is categorized as pragmatist.
- *Passive Followership Style*: If you scored low (below 20) on both independent thinking and active engagement, your followership style is categorized as passive.

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

SOURCE: Adapted from *The Power of Followership* (pp. 89–98), by R. E. Kelley, 1992, New York, NY: Doubleday Business. Adapted with permission.

Scoring Interpretation

What do the different styles mean? How should you interpret your style? The followership styles characterize how you carry out the followership role, not who you are as a person. At any point in time, or under different circumstances, you may use one followership pattern rather than another.

Exemplary Follower

Exemplary followers score high in both independent thinking and active engagement. They exhibit independent, critical thinking, separate from the group or leader. They are actively engaged, using their talents for the benefit of the organization, even when confronted with bureaucracy or other noncontributing members. Up to 35% of people are categorized as exemplary followers.

Alienated Follower

Alienated followers score high in independent thinking but low in active engagement. This means that they think independently and critically, but are not active in carrying out the role of a follower. They might disengage from the group at times and may view themselves as victims who have received unfair treatment. Approximately 15%–25% of people are categorized as alienated followers.

Conformist Follower

Conformist followers often say “yes” when they really want to say “no.” Low in independent thinking and high in active engagement, they willingly take orders and are eager to please others. They believe that the leader’s position of power entitles the leader to followers’ obedience. They do not question the social order and find comfort in structure. Approximately 20%–30% of people are categorized as conformist followers.

Pragmatist Follower

With independent thinking and active engagement styles that fall between high and low, pragmatic followers are most comfortable in the middle of the road and tend to adhere to a motto of “better safe than sorry.” They will question a leader’s decisions, but not too often or too openly. They perform required tasks, but seldom do more than is asked or expected. Approximately 25%–35% of people are categorized as pragmatist followers.

Passive Follower

With low independent thinking and low active engagement behaviors, passive followers are the opposite of exemplary followers, looking to the leader to do their thinking for them. They do not carry out their assignments with enthusiasm and lack initiative and a sense of responsibility. Approximately 5%–10% of people are categorized as passive followers.

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