Followership – Using Individual Influence to Positively Impact Your Library
QUIZ TIME!
How I got here:

- A little bit of my history
- Self-efficacy is a driving force in how I approach my work
- Managing Up LLAMA webinar
- Related lines of research leading to “followership”
What is “followership”? 

- **Actions** taken by *an individual* under the authority of another
- Leadership depends on followership
- Followership is an essential component when explaining organizational outcomes
- Followership behaviors can be modified
Why should I care about this topic?
Let's check our results?

![Graph showing the classification of followers based on thinking styles.]

- Alienated Followers
- Exemplary Followers
- Pragmatist Followers
- Passive Followers
- Conformist Followers

Axes:
- INDEPENDENT, CRITICAL THINKING
- PASSIVE
- ACTIVE
- DEPENDENT, UNCRITICAL THINKING

Legend:
- 0
- 15
- 20
- 30
- 40
- 45
- 60
# 5 Styles of Followers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Followership Style</th>
<th>Independent Thinking Score</th>
<th>Active Engagement Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienated</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformist</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
<td>Middling</td>
<td>Middling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
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Strategies for Developing Your Followership Skills
Disclaimer:

Nothing I’m about to say is magic.

It’s just hard, intentional work.
1. Practice self-reflection
Practice self-reflection

- Start a work journal
- Seek and receive feedback
- Examining your interactions
- Identify your own performance criteria and then conduct a self-assessment.
- Select and self-educate on performance topics
2.

Care about your organization
Care about your organization

- What is the organizational hierarchy of your library? Can you find an up-to-date org chart listing all the people and their positions?
- What is the larger organization structure that your library is a part of?
- Are there guiding documents that provide a larger vision and picture for your library? Mission statement? Strategic plan? Recent reports?
- What other groups or departments does my library work directly with and why?
- Are there internal and external opportunities available to my organization?
- What is my library’s budget, how is it organized, and who manages or controls that budget?
Learn about your supervisor’s leadership and management style

- What is their professional background? Training? Expertise?
- What’s their communication style like? Email, meetings (structured or informal?), interpersonal communication?
- What performance factors do they care about? Customer service, high numbers, employee satisfaction, completing tasks/ goals, etc.?
- Do they have an agenda?
- What are their strengths? Weaknesses?
- How do they deal with stress? Set backs? Conflict?
- Who do they influence? What’s their position in the larger organization? How do others get along with them?
- How do they get along with their supervisor?
A few realities about bosses:

- Your boss has a boss. In most cases, they deal with the same kind of pressures of being an employee that you do.
- Your boss is a human being and has human emotions and flaws.
- You and your boss have different perspectives and will see issues differently.
- Your boss may know everything about your job or nothing about your job. Their professional background will influence how they interact with you.
- Your boss is not a mind reader.
3. Add some value
Add some value

- Meet expectations
- Consider your organization’s goals
- Be a problem-solver
- Save resources
4. Communicate well
Communicate well

- Crucial Conversations
- Examine your “why”
- Challenge your stories
- “Can you help me understand...”
- Assume good will
- Be willing to speak truth to power.
Speaking truth to power

- Have empathy
- Create win-wins
- Play be the rules
- Seek wise counsel
- Have financial and emotional cushions
5. Have good work ethics
Wait a second!
My boss really does suck!
OK, but here’s the thing:

- No body does a better job when they are being abused.
- These practices still apply even with “bad bosses”.
- Try taking a pause when dealing with difficult situations.
- Figure out the line between disagreements vs. malfeasance.
If it is malfeasance...

Be smart about illegal, dangerous, and mean behaviors.
Thanks!
&
Let’s talk!
THANK YOU!

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Slides are available at:
- https://works.bepress.com/michelle_armstrong/