

# What Your Followers Need from You

*By Amie Gamboian  
Executive Leadership Coach*

As Leaders we're often bombarded with requests, multitudes of meetings and overwhelming "to do" lists. It's easy to get stuck in the "do vs. be" cycle. Leaders wouldn't be leaders without producing, executing, and ensuring desired outcomes. However, overly intense focus is often counterproductive.

Undoubtedly, followers love to follow leaders who get things done and move the team forward. Knowing someone can produce results definitely creates extra assurance and ignites endurance.

Yet, followers can quickly lose respect for leaders who are only high producing without being equally relationally invested. Leaders who lead from the strength of their personhood vs. the magnitude of their production tend to grow more impactful and sustainable followings. Ultimately, followers freely seek out leaders for who they are.

Leaders sought for BOTH their productivity AND their vision, wisdom, humility, confidence, capacity, decision-making, empathy and encouragement build greater relational capital with their followers and tend to get the best from others. Remember, great leadership is what you accomplish together with others.

Here are three things your followers need from you:

- 1) **PRESENCE:** Proximity, consistency of contact and quality of conversations all impact the leader-follower relationship. Showing up, being fully present and managing distractibility are some of the greatest gifts you can give to followers. Followers need leaders who choose to be fully present and maximize interaction opportunities.
- 2) **AFFIRMATION:** Even in the midst of major failures and mistakes, followers need some form of affirmation because they're already battling against their internal judge. While difficult to provide praise during frustrating times, it significantly reduces stress levels for everyone and helps people move past the fight-flight reactions that present when mistakes are made. Finding something to praise can make a difference.
- 3) **REALITY:** Even though positivity is important, followers have greater respect and belief in leaders who keep one foot firmly planted in reality. To do otherwise is delusional, and over time erodes trust, reduces leadership relevancy and creates relational gaps. Great leaders balance positivity and healthy doses of affirmation with awareness about challenges, necessary changes and the realities everyone must navigate.

Be intentional about how you show up so you're giving your followers what they need!