

2019 RELENTLESS – LEADERS, FOLLOWERS, LIFE SUCKERS

Every team has them. Which one are you? Which one are you following? Every team has 3 general types of people- Leaders (True Leaders), Followers and Life Suckers.

“Whoever wants to be the greatest among you must be the servant of all.”

Lots of people like the *idea* of becoming a better leader, but what about the reality? The simplest definition of a leader is someone who has people following them. True leadership comes from doing not just saying. True leaders serve others. True leaders TAKE the lead in doing the hard things, the necessary things. True leaders look at themselves first for the solution, then work hard toward making themselves and their team better. True leaders can lead teams to great heights and strong friendships.

It is said that some are born leaders. Most people generally fall in the category of follower. Don't use these ideas as an excuse not to become a good leader. YOU can learn to be a leader. You can develop your leadership by doing the things that leaders do, even if it does not come “natural” to you to lead. True leadership flows from serving and EVERYONE can serve. You can lead in different ways and EVERYONE can exhibit leadership qualities.

Truth is that **Life Suckers can also be leaders**. They lead groups and teams into apathy, division, strife and discord. What do you want for your team? Are you a follower? If so, who do you follow? Do people follow you? If so, in which direction do you lead them?

LEADERS: Are confident, reliable, honest, trustworthy, hard-working, caring and accountable. Believe that they can make a positive difference. Help their teammates become all that they can be.

FOLLOWERS: Deep down want strong, reliable, honest, trustworthy leaders to follow and respect. In the absence of a strong leader over time will follow the strongest influence even if it is a Life Sucker.

LIFE SUCKERS: Are consumed with self, cannot be trusted, unreliable and continually cause strife. Want people to follow them for their own sake not the good of the team. All about ME, ME, ME

LEADERS: Know what needs done and do it. If they don't know, they find out or figure it out, then do it.

FOLLOWERS: Do what needs done when asked or led. Often wait for someone to show them what to do.

LIFE SUCKERS: Look for “outs” even if they know what to do. Mock those who take initiative.

LEADERS: Get to the gym early and prepare themselves mentally and physically (change shoes, kneepads on, bathroom, water bottle full, trainers...). Do what needs done to prepare for practice or a match to start on time. Nets up, balls and carts set up. Ready to go.

FOLLOWERS: Follow. Go along with the group. Will do what is needed when asked.

LIFE SUCKERS: May or may not be on time. If they are early will linger in the locker room/lobby and distract others. Wait until it is time to get to work to start to get themselves physically ready. Wander around looking busy while not actually doing anything. Huddle with friends. Avoid eye contact.

LEADERS: Embrace and maintain a high level of standards and expectations for the program and for themselves. Hold others in the program accountable to the same standards and expectations.

FOLLOWERS: Follow the standards and expectations demonstrated by influencers.

LIFE SUCKERS: Hold others to a high standard but refuse to hold themselves to the same. Consistently undermine and lower overall standards and expectations for themselves and the program.

LEADERS: Produce and project positive energy, enthusiasm, encouragement, good body language.

FOLLOWERS: Follow the prevailing attitude, body language varies.

LIFE SUCKERS: Sulk, pout, sorry for themselves, want others to feel sorry for them. Bad body language.

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LEADERS: Step up and volunteer for drills, demonstrations.

FOLLOWERS: Will demo if asked.

LIFE SUCKERS: Try to avoid eye contact. Turn away. Hide behind others to avoid being noticed. If called on do so reluctantly making their displeasure known to all.

LEADERS: Tell the truth. Seek the truth. Want to hear the truth. Are not afraid of the truth.

FOLLOWERS: Want to be truthful and want to follow those who are truthful.

LIFE SUCKERS: Skirt the truth. Embellish the truth. Avoid the truth. Don't tell the full truth. Lie.

LEADERS: Do things in the best interest of the TEAM to make the team better.

FOLLOWERS: Want the team to do well. Do things that the group is doing.

LIFE SUCKERS: Do things in the best interest of themselves to make themselves look better.

LEADERS: Compete hard at all times regardless of the score or their personal performance.

FOLLOWERS: Compete hardest when they or their team is doing well.

LIFE SUCKERS: Expect everyone else to compete hard but don't do so themselves unless they feel like it.

LEADERS: Most important statistic is the W column.

FOLLOWERS: Will value what the most influential players on their team value.

LIFE SUCKERS: Most important statistics are their own.

LEADERS: Learn to do the scorebook. Learn how to down ref. Step up to do those things.

FOLLOWERS: Will do book or down ref if required. Will do what is asked.

LIFE SUCKERS: Do the minimum. Stand at the back of the huddle when responsibilities are given. Avoid eye contact. Complain about working. Make excuses for why they can't learn or do the hard things.

LEADERS: When the team is struggling will ask themselves what they can do better to help the team.

Will challenge and encourage their teammates to rise up to meet the challenge.

FOLLOWERS: Will look for someone to lead the team and follow the strongest influence.

LIFE SUCKERS: Blame teammates, blame coaches, blame referees, blame parents, blame the tournament format, blame the hotel, blame the concessions, blame everyone but themselves.

LEADERS: Make it a priority to follow through with commitments even when it is difficult and will sacrifice to see them through. Show up for practices and tournaments. Communicate with coaches. Put in extra work (open gyms, work outs, video, "homework").

FOLLOWERS: Generally follow through with basic commitments but will take them less seriously if they think others don't take them seriously. Will sacrifice or put in extra if others are doing it.

LIFE SUCKERS: Always have an excuse. Don't communicate. Take others for granted. Expect others to sacrifice and do for them but won't sacrifice and do for others. Always do the minimum OR less.

LEADERS: Intentional about showing gratitude, respect for ALL. (Coach, refs, parents, cooks, custodian)

FOLLOWERS: Are generally appreciative and will show gratitude when prompted.

LIFE SUCKERS: Lack gratitude. Feel entitled. Believe that others owe them something.

LEADERS: Take personal responsibility for communication with coaches, eating healthy, having water bottle filled, uniforms and personal equipment clean and ready...

FOLLOWERS: Expect parents or others to communicate and handle basic responsibilities.

LIFE SUCKERS: Take no personal responsibility.

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LEADERS: Manage time well. Set priorities. Get school work done AND fulfill team commitments.

FOLLOWERS: Generally manage both school and team commitments.

LIFE SUCKERS: Poor time management. Wrong priorities. Waste time. Miss school assignments, miss practices due to poor time management and wrong priorities.

LEADERS: Earn playing time.

FOLLOWERS: Accept playing time.

LIFE SUCKERS: Demand playing time even when they haven't earn it.

LEADERS: Go to the gym to work out to get better. Push themselves. Finish all of their reps.

FOLLOWERS: Want to get better. Will allow themselves to be pushed but won't push themselves.

LIFE SUCKERS: Go to the gym to be seen. Don't do all of their reps. Waste time. Give up easily.

LEADERS: See, seek and bring out the best in others.

FOLLOWERS: Are longing for someone to bring out the best in them.

LIFE SUCKERS: Are self-absorbed. Only care about themselves but don't improve themselves.

LEADERS: Are intentional about welcoming new players and connecting them with teammates.

FOLLOWERS: Are focused on their friend group but will welcome others in.

LIFE SUCKERS: Are indifferent or threatened by new players. Concerned mainly about themselves.

LEADERS: Secure in their abilities. Encourage, teach and help weaker players improve and succeed.

FOLLOWERS: Less secure in their abilities. Would rather be with their friend. Tolerate weaker players.

LIFE SUCKERS: Insecure. Complain, visibly frustrated with weaker players. Only negative feedback if any.

LEADERS: Do the right thing, because it is the right thing, regardless of what anyone else does or thinks.

FOLLOWERS: Want to do the right thing and will do so willingly if the group is doing it.

LIFE SUCKERS: Only do the right thing when others are watching or to makes themselves look better.

LEADERS: Resolve conflict and restore relationships. Resolve conflicts in person. Give others the opportunity to speak and share their side and seek understanding. Seek resolution not just to prove they are right. Don't pull others into their messes or ask people to take sides.

FOLLOWERS: Don't like conflict. Tend to bury offenses and let conflict build to a point that it overflows. Prefer a stress-free and conflict-free environment.

LIFE SUCKERS: Create conflict and destroy relationships. Talk to everyone about their problem except the person with whom they have the problem. Only see their side. Want attention and sympathy not resolution. Seek to win people over to their side and pit teammates against each other.

LEADERS: Make mistakes. Fail. Do and say wrong things. Are human. Leaders take ownership of their faults and mistakes. Admit when they are wrong. Apologize when necessary and make amends as needed. The forgive others who fail.

FOLLOWERS: Make mistakes. Fail. Do and say wrong things. Are human. Followers will forgive, ask for and accept forgiveness.

LIFE SUCKERS: Make mistakes. Fail. Do and say wrong things. Are human. Make excuses. Blame others for their own mistakes. Fail to see their own faults. Rationalize and justify their failures. Seize on the mistakes of others to cut them down and puff themselves up.

Do others follow you? Where do you lead them? Do you follow others? Where do they take you?