

# Teachers Support Document

## Exploring Our Perceptions

*Topic: How Important are Leaders?*

### Introduction

Over the past 50 years, leadership has taken center stage in both politics and business. Many of us are unconsciously influenced by the idea that leaders and leadership are indispensable. However, few take the time to critically examine how these beliefs shape our understanding of ourselves and society.

This support document is designed to help teachers facilitate meaningful discussions about leadership. The document is structured around central questions, each crafted to help students:

- Evaluate their own perceptions of leadership.
- Reflect on the origins of these viewpoints.

### Usage Policy

This document and its contents are free to use and share for educational purposes. It is designed to support teachers in facilitating classroom discussions and helping students broaden their perspectives on leadership and followership.

**Please note that this document may not be sold, distributed for profit, or used for commercial purposes.**

# How Important are Leaders?

**Total Time:** 20–30 minutes

## **Objective:**

To encourage students to reflect on their conscious and subconscious beliefs about the importance of leaders.

## **About the Exercise:**

This exercise serves as an excellent introduction to the concepts of leadership and followership. While most people have opinions about what makes a leader and how important leaders are, few take the time to question where these beliefs come from or how they shape their worldview. The goal of this exercise is to prompt students to critically examine how leadership is perceived and its ingrained role in contemporary thinking.

## **Instructions**

### **1. Individual Reflection**

Ask each student to independently answer the following question:

- *Spontaneously, how important do you believe leaders are to the success of a company?*

Use a scale of 1 to 10, where:

**1** = "No impact whatsoever"

**10** = "Absolutely essential"

### **2. Explore Other Contexts**

Repeat the same question but replace "company" with other relevant areas, such as:

- Team
- Society
- Organization
- School
- Political party

Avoid overwhelming the students—limit the contexts to about three.

### **3. Group Discussion**

Divide the class into groups of no more than five students each. In their groups, have them discuss the following questions:

- *How important are leaders?*
- *Why did you rate the importance of leaders the way you did?*
- *Do you believe leadership is more critical in certain areas (e.g., companies, politics, schools) than in others? Why or why not?*

#### 4. Class Reflection

Bring the groups back together and ask:

- *Did any group define the word "leader" before discussing a leader's importance?*

If any group defined the concept, invite them to present their definition. For groups that didn't, ask:

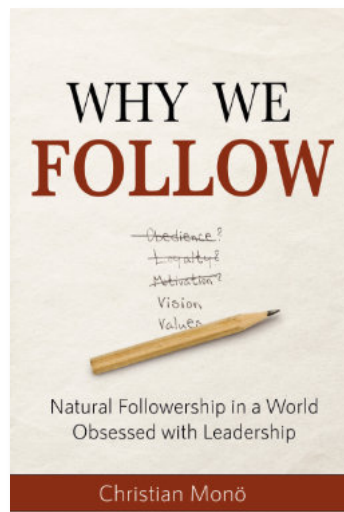
- *How can you be sure everyone in your group interpreted the word "leader" the same way?*
- *How do you know you don't have different expectations of what a leader should be?*

Follow up with:

- *Do you think people generally define "leader" and "leadership" before discussing the importance of these concepts? Why or why not?*

#### 5. Closing Insight

Conclude the exercise by highlighting that if students pay close attention, they'll notice that many scholars, experts, and laypeople frequently discuss leaders and leadership without first defining these concepts. Ask them to contemplate how this may affect people's general view on leaders and leadership.



*This document draws inspiration from the book: [Why We Follow: Natural Followership in a World Obsessed with Leadership](#) by Christian Monö.*

*For more information, visit [www.naturalfollowership.com](http://www.naturalfollowership.com)*