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*The Mainsheet* is the student-produced newspaper of the Upper School at Chadwick School and is published seven times per academic year. It is distributed to students, faculty, and staff. Subscriptions are available to parents, family, alumni, friends, and other members of the Chadwick community upon request.

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Letter to the Editor and other contributions are welcome from any member of the Chadwick community. We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of length and clarity. Other material will be evaluated on an individual basis. Mail all correspondence to the address below, or give it to the receptionist with "For the Mainsheet" prominently displayed.

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Maddie &amp; Jake: Questioning the Athletic Policy

Kate's Kulture: The Challenged New Extension Policy

Matt &amp; Austin: A Troubling New Trend Among Teens

*Staff Editorial*

# Why Leadership is misunderstood, and why it needs to be redefined

One of my favorite Youtube videos ever consists of one guy dancing ridiculously amongst a crowd of people. For the first thirty seconds or so, people just watch on in shock as this guy dances to no music and for no apparent reason. He is the loner attempting to start a movement all on his own.

Once we hit the one minute mark though, things change. A single person, the first follower, has decided to join this guy and dance with him.

Within the next thirty seconds, the group grows exponentially as more and more people join the original dancing guy in a spur-of-the-moment dance session.

In the end, the roles are switched and the people who are not dancing are the ones who are seen as strange.

The video describes the first follower as, "an under-appreciated form of leadership. The first follower transforms a lone nut into a leader. If the leader is the flint, the first follower is the spark that makes the fire."

The moral of the video is that without that guy taking the first step to join the dancer, or the second follower who stabilizes the movement, there would never have been the following that there was.

That Youtube video perfectly epitomizes how I see leadership. Leadership is not just about being the person to start the charge and lead on a group, leadership is seeing that something great is being done and mustering up the courage to follow somebody else. As important as that first guy is to starting the dancing movement, the first follower is just as important to the furthering of the movement.

Both actions require at least some amount of courage, but they just take shape in a different form.

I think Chadwick forgets sometimes the value of the first follower and the courage that she shows. We are so busy putting an emphasis on the leader who leads the club or takes charge of the discussion in the classroom, but we very often forget the value of the follower. What worth is a leader when he has nobody who is courageous enough to follow him?

We so greatly appreciate the club leader who sees some sort of void on campus that she hopes to fix. However, when we look at most clubs, the members more often reflect the social circles of the leader as apposed to people joining together for a common purpose. Instead of just praising the courage of

the club leader, we should praise the student who decides to join a club not just for the social aspect, but because she agrees with the purpose or mission of the club and wants to join in it. We need to see leadership not just as the actual leader of the club, but the person who really takes a leap of faith in putting some sort of value to a club.

Alison and I see this all of the time in *Mainsheet*: a newspaper staff with just editors-in-chief do not get much done. We need committed writers, interviewees who do not mind a couple of questions, and interesting topics to write about.

Without a staff of editors, writers, photographers, cartoonists, and man-

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agers, we would not be able to publish a paper seven times a year. Yes, while Alison and I do serve a purpose to get the paper out on time and in a professional manner, we certainly owe as much credit to our staff as we do ourselves.

The staffers hold responsibilities just like us, and leadership should not just extend to the holding of the title "editor-in-chief," leadership should be understanding each one's specific responsibilities and meeting them.

And here is where Chadwick, to an

extent, gets it wrong: we put so much emphasis on the leader that we forget the true value of the first follower, or any follower. We praise club leaders who take charge and help make a difference at our school and yes, while they are greatly benefitting to the community, they could not do what they do without some dedicated members in their clubs besides their friends.

We very much have a misunderstood sense of leadership. We see a leader solely as the person or persons who start the club; we do not take the time to admire those people who see that somebody is doing something great on campus and want to help them.

Instead of merely honoring club leaders, we should honor those people who join a club not because their friend is the leader but because they truly love the purpose of the group and want to be a part of it.

I still maintain that being the leader in some sense is a very valuable skill, one that deserves recognition for making the community a better place. Leaders bring order, drive, and responsibility, all qualities that help develop Chadwick into a better

community.

But that should not lead us to forget about the other aspect of leadership, the first follower. Instead of merely acknowledging the leader of a group or club, we should put some more effort into acknowledging the followers of a group and what they contribute to the group.

If you are interested in the original video that inspired my thoughts on leadership, it is titled "First Follower: Leadership Lessons from the Dancing Guy," and it was posted on Youtube.



COURTESY OF YOUTUBE

"First Follower: Leadership Lessons from the Dancing Guy" emphasizes the value of the first follower through an example of one guy dancing among a crowd of people.