



*As military professionals, we love to talk about leadership. This focus on leadership, however, may induce a blind spot: every single one of us is first and always a follower.*

Maj Gen Michael D. Rothstein, USAF  
former Vice Commander, The Air University

## Followership and the New Normal

Read [\*Great Leaders Follow First - Nine Rules for Dynamic Followership\*](#)

Maj Gen Michael D. Rothstein, USAF

Watch [\*The New Normal.\*](#)

CMSAF Kaleth O. Wright introduced a video series to engage all Airmen and Space Professionals during the COVID-19 operating environment.

In this first episode he interviews Dr. Lori Santos on ways to thrive in this "new normal" and how leaders can encourage their followers to have an "opportunity in the midst of every challenge" mindset.

Watch this 24 minute video--share your takeaways with your team.



## Questions to Consider

*What characteristics do good followers in the Air Force and Space Force demonstrate?*

Ask these questions of yourself and your flight members

### What constitutes a good follower?

Followers who are engaged and *do something* are almost always preferred compared to those followers who *do nothing*. Carnegie Mellon University professor Robert E. Kelly once described the best, or exemplary, follower as one that "is motivated, has intellect, is self-reliant, and is dedicated to achieving the mission of the organization." Kelly focuses on two observable behaviors, **critical thinking** and **participation** to determine what constitutes a good follower.

### How do we grow good followers?

Kelly recommends you develop a specific action plan for followership development. This plan should address actions and strategies you take to improve followership in yourself, and build followership in your flight. One of the best ways to develop followership in subordinates is via mentoring. Check out the guidance for *Mentoring Plan* in Table A2.2 in AFH 36-2643, *Air Force Mentoring Program* (17 May 2019). Mentoring promotes professional development at every level and is a great way to grow Airmen and Space Professionals into both good followers and great future leaders.

### What are your rules for being a good follower?

General Rothstein lists nine great tips for all Airmen and Space Professionals looking to improve their followership (and leadership). Which of these tips resonate with you? What would you add to his list?



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