



When Followers Go Quiet

Diagnosing Hidden Disengagement in Your Organization

Inspired Coaching and Leadership | inspiredcoaching.net | Dr. Ashley Newcomb

Follower disengagement rarely announces itself. By the time it becomes visible in performance data, it has usually been building for months — through subtle shifts in voice, initiative, and investment. This diagnostic is designed to help you identify those patterns early, before they become something harder to recover from.

Complete this assessment as the organizational leader, reflecting on your team or organization as a whole. Rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5.

1 — Strongly

Disagree

2 — Disagree

3 — Neutral

4 — Agree

5 — Strongly Agree

Section A — Voice & Contribution

These questions assess whether followers in your organization are still actively contributing their thinking, ideas, and honest feedback.

1. Followers in my organization regularly share ideas and suggestions without being prompted.

1

Strongly
Disagree

2

Disagree

3

Neutral

4

Agree

5

Strongly Agree

2. When my team disagrees with a decision, they feel safe saying so directly.

1

Strongly
Disagree

2

Disagree

3

Neutral

4

Agree

5

Strongly Agree

3. I receive early warnings about problems from followers before those problems escalate.

1

Strongly
Disagree

2

Disagree

3

Neutral

4

Agree

5

Strongly Agree

4. The volume of voluntary input — ideas, questions, feedback — has remained consistent or increased over the past six months.

1

Strongly
Disagree

2

Disagree

3

Neutral

4

Agree

5

Strongly Agree

Section B — Initiative & Discretionary Effort

These questions assess whether followers are going beyond the minimum — a key indicator of whether influence investment is healthy or declining.

5. Followers in my organization regularly take ownership of problems beyond their defined job responsibilities.

1

Strongly
Disagree

2

Disagree

3

Neutral

4

Agree

5

Strongly Agree

6. My team demonstrates initiative — acting without waiting to be asked — on a regular basis.

1

Strongly
Disagree

2

Disagree

3

Neutral

4

Agree

5

Strongly Agree

7. The people I rely on most continue to go above and beyond what is required of them.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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Section C — Trust & Psychological Safety

These questions assess whether the conditions exist for honest, productive followership — or whether fear and distrust have begun to shape behavior.

8. Followers in my organization believe that speaking up will be received well, even when the message is difficult.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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9. There is a low gap between what my organization says it values and what it actually rewards.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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10. When a follower raises a concern, there is a visible and consistent leadership response.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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11. People in my organization do not fear retaliation — formal or informal — for being honest with leadership.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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Section D — Engagement Over Time

These questions assess whether follower engagement is stable, improving, or quietly declining — often the most important trend to track.

12. My highest performers are as engaged and invested today as they were six months ago.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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13. Followers who used to ask for growth opportunities and new challenges continue to do so.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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14. My easiest-to-manage employees are easy because they are thriving — not because they have disengaged.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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15. When I compare individual followers' current behavior to their past behavior, I see consistency or growth — not quiet withdrawal.	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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Scoring & Interpretation

Add your scores for all 15 questions. Higher scores reflect healthier follower engagement. Use the categories below to interpret your result and identify the most appropriate next step.

Score	Category	What It Means
60 – 75	Healthy Investment	Your followers are actively engaged and investing meaningfully in your leadership. Maintain the conditions that make this possible — and stay attentive to early shifts.
44 – 59	Early Withdrawal	Some followers are beginning to pull back their investment. Voice, initiative, or trust may be quietly declining. Proactive, targeted conversation is warranted now.
28 – 43	Moderate Disengagement	Follower disengagement is likely already affecting performance, innovation, and organizational resilience — even if it isn't yet visible in your metrics. Structured intervention is recommended.
15 – 27	Advanced Disengagement	Your organization shows significant signs of follower withdrawal. The influence your leadership depends on has been substantially reduced. Urgent, structured support is strongly advised.

My Total Score: _____ / 75

Section Subscores (optional)

For a more targeted picture, record your subtotal for each section below. Sections scoring 12 or below (out of 20) warrant focused attention.

Section	Focus Area	My Score ____ / 20
A	Voice & Contribution	_____
B	Initiative & Discretionary Effort	_____
C	Trust & Psychological Safety	_____
D	Engagement Over Time	_____

This diagnostic is a starting point, not a finish line. If your scores are raising questions, that's exactly what they're designed to do.

The next step is the full training: *When Followers Go Quiet — Diagnosing Hidden Disengagement in Your Organization*. Available at inspiredcoaching.net. You can also listen to *The Resilient Organization* podcast for real stories and deeper insight into everything this assessment is measuring.

"When your best people stop trying, it doesn't just affect performance. It weakens your organization's ability to adapt, respond, and remain resilient."