

TEDTalks, Derek Sivers

How to start a movement

00:12	Ladies and gentlemen, at TED we talk a lot about leadership and how to make a movement. So let's watch a movement happen, start to finish, in under three minutes and dissect some lessons from it.
00:22	First, of course you know, a leader needs the guts to stand out and be ridiculed. What he's doing is so easy to follow. Here's his first follower with a crucial role; he's going to show everyone else how to follow.
00:35	Now, notice that the leader embraces him as an equal. Now it's not about the leader anymore; it's about them, plural. Now, there he is calling to his friends. Now, if you notice that the first follower is actually an underestimated form of leadership in itself. It takes guts to stand out like that. The first follower is what transforms a lone nut into a leader.
00:56	(Laughter)
00:58	(Applause)
01:02	And here comes a second follower. Now it's not a lone nut, it's not two nuts – three is a crowd, and a crowd is news. So a movement must be public. It's important to show not just the leader, but the followers, because you find that new followers emulate the followers, not the leader.
01:18	Now, here come two more people, and immediately after, three more people. Now we've got momentum. This is the tipping point. Now we've got a movement.
01:27	(Laughter)
01:28	So, notice that, as more people join in, it's less risky. So those that were sitting on the fence before now have no reason not to. They won't stand out, they won't be ridiculed, but they will be part of the in-crowd if they hurry.
01:42	(Laughter)
01:45	So, over the next minute, you'll see all of those that prefer to stick with the crowd because eventually they would be ridiculed for not joining in. And that's how you make a movement.
01:54	But let's recap some lessons from this. So first, if you are the type, like the shirtless dancing guy that is standing alone, remember the importance of nurturing your first few followers as equals so it's clearly about the movement, not you.
02:09	(Laughter)
02:10	Okay, but we might have missed the real lesson here.
02:12	The biggest lesson, if you noticed – did you catch it? – is that leadership is over-glorified. Yes, it was the shirtless guy who was first, and he'll get all the credit, but it was really the first follower that transformed the lone nut into a leader. So, as we're told that we should all be leaders, that would be really ineffective.
02:32	If you really care about starting a movement, have the courage to follow and show others how to follow. And when you find a lone nut doing something great, have the guts to be the first one to stand up and join in. And what a perfect place to do that, at TED.
02:46	Thanks.
02:47	(Applause)