

## Unit 1 DEREK SIVERS:

### How to Start a Movement

#### Part 1

So, **ladies and gentlemen**<sup>1</sup>, 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**<sup>2</sup> some lessons from it.

First, of course you know, a leader needs the **guts**<sup>3</sup> to stand out and be ridiculed. But what he's doing is so easy to follow. So here's his first follower with a crucial role; he's going to show everyone else how to follow.

Now, notice that the leader **embraces**<sup>4</sup> him as an equal. So, 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**<sup>5</sup> into a leader.

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.

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. 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 **in-crowd**<sup>6</sup> if they hurry. 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.

#### Part 2

But let's **recap**<sup>7</sup> 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**<sup>8</sup> so it's clearly about the movement, not you. Okay, but we might have missed the real lesson here.

The biggest lesson, if you noticed—**Did you catch it?**<sup>9</sup>—is that leadership is over-glorified. That, 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.

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.

Thanks.

<sup>1</sup> Note that while it's mostly considered outdated now to use the *lady* or *gentlemen* as a general reference to a woman or a man, the term "ladies and gentlemen" is still a common expression used to address a large audience of both men and women.

<sup>2</sup> When you "dissect" something, you take it apart and analyze it piece by piece.

<sup>3</sup> "Guts" is a colloquial term used to describe having characteristics of confidence, bravery, and determination

<sup>4</sup> "To embrace someone" can mean both to hug someone or to welcome them into your group. In the video in Sivers' TED Talk, the shirtless man both physically and figuratively "embraces" his first follower.

<sup>5</sup> A "lone nut" is an individual seen as crazy, whose strange actions are done alone.

<sup>6</sup> The "in-crowd" refers to the group doing what is considered popular at the time; a group others often look up to.

<sup>7</sup> When we "recap" something, we review it point by point. Note that "Let's recap" is a useful term for students to use in their Project presentations when going over the main points one more time.

<sup>8</sup> Someone who is your "equal" is someone you consider on the same level as you—someone with the same status.

<sup>9</sup> The verb "catch" is used here to mean both notice and/or understand something that might not be obvious at first. The speaker asks "Did you catch it?" to draw the audience's attention to a point they might have missed.