



Are you a leader?

When you think of a leader, what image comes to your mind? Do you think of the quarterback on a football team, the fire chief at the scene of a fire, or the one sitting at the head of the table in the corporate board room? Many of the people in those roles are leaders, but there also exists what I call "[informal leaders](#)" hidden in every organization.

Informal leaders are those people who don't necessarily have a leadership title (quarterback, chief, president, etc) but they are influential within the organization. Informal leaders have their pulse on the people in the organization and those people generally tend to listen and follow these people. In my past management roles I have used my informal leaders to help me drive change, or to simply bounce ideas off of them.

If you are a manager then look in your organization to find the informal leaders. Use your informal leaders as a way to stay in touch with what your employees really think about the organization's strategy, effectiveness, viability, etc. Don't forget to reward your organizational leaders with activities that keep them tied into different parts of the organization such as key projects and leadership activities.