

August 2025 Servant-Leadership Roundtable

This Month's Topic Is: "The Power of Mattering"

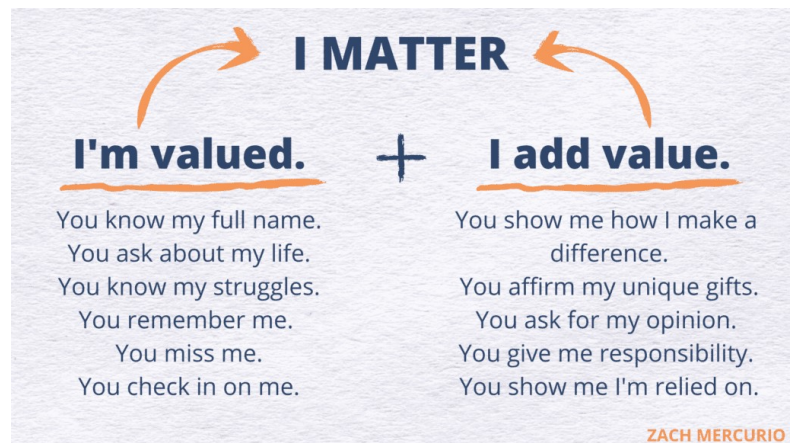


Mattering is at the heart of servant leadership because it shifts the focus from leading for results to leading for people—seeing their inherent worth and helping them recognize their own impact. Servant leaders create cultures where individuals feel noticed, affirmed, and needed, which fuels both personal growth and collective purpose.

Zach Mercurio describes "Mattering" as a core human need made up of two parts:

~ **Feeling valued** – being noticed, appreciated, and recognized for who you are.

~ **Adding value** – knowing your contributions make a difference and are needed by others.



In other words: *"Mattering happens when people see us, affirm our worth, and show us we make an impact."*

Why does this matter at work? According to a recent Gallup Poll:

- There are currently 5 generations in the workforce.
- ¾ of workers say they have had at least one bad manager.
- Yet 97% of managers consider themselves good managers.

This gap points to a deeper need: people don't just want competent managers—they want to matter to their leaders and their organizations.

The NAN Framework: Practice in Action

- **Noticing** – seeing and acknowledging people for who they are and what they contribute.
- **Affirming** – intentionally communicating how someone's strengths and efforts make a difference.
- **Needing** – helping people understand how they are essential to the team and mission.

"The best test [of a servant-leader], and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? *And*, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?"

~Robert K. Greenleaf

The Cost of Not Mattering at Work



Questions:

- **Personal Reflection:** When in your life have you felt that you *mattered* deeply? What made that experience stand out?
- **Organizational Lens:** Where in our teams or organization might people feel unseen, undervalued, or disconnected from their contributions?
- **Leadership Practice:** How can we integrate **Noticing, Affirming, and Needing** (the NAN framework) into our daily rhythms as servant leaders? What question can we ask instead of 'How are you?' to get a better understanding of the other person?
- **Bridge the Gap:** What could help close the perception gap between managers who believe they lead well and employees who don't feel seen or supported?

Suggested material to review (not required):

- *The Power of Mattering* Book by Zach Mercurio
- [Video of Power of Mattering](#) by Zach Mercurio
- Article: [How to Create Mattering at Work](#) by Zach Mercurio
- Article: [The Power of Mattering at Work](#) by Zach Mercurio
- Website: <https://www.zachmercurio.com/the-power-of-mattering/>

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