

Loyalty: “Loyalty means giving me your honest opinion, whether you think I’ll like it or not. Disagreement, at this state, stimulates me. But once a decision is made, the debate ends. From that point on, loyalty means executing the decision as if it were your own.” – General Colin Powell

How would you describe a person who is loyal? Often loyalty is associated with a person’s identity; I am a loyal Seahawks fan or a loyal Subaru owner. These loyalties demonstrate that I am committed to supporting a certain sports team or buying a certain brand of car. In a consumer driven world, my loyalty to my brand keeps me committed to the product or team through the good and bad times.

Application: Loyalty and trust continually build each other. GEN Powell’s quote demonstrates that loyalty is predicated upon trust between both himself and his subordinates. He wanted his subordinates to trust him to the point they felt they could share their honest opinions. GEN Powell expected to be able to trust his subordinates that they would execute his orders, and do so with all the enthusiasm they could muster. When both parties have this foundation of trust, loyalty is the end result. In a sense, loyalty is the barometer one can use to measure trust in a relationship. Our personal relationships operate on the same dynamic. Build trust and you will invariably also build loyalty. The result will be relationships which have a strong foundation able to withstand the numerous seasons of life.