

Achieving Outcomes on the Street with Integrity, Building Loyalty and Mutual Trust

By Fred Leland

"If your boss demands loyalty, give him integrity. But if he demands integrity, give him loyalty."

~COL JOHN BOYD

As I see it, anyone in a leadership position assumes the responsibility of [TRUST](#). I know that's a pretty BOLD statement. But I feel it is true and stand by it. Trust is what organizations are all about. Trust must be created and nurtured by leaders through developing people within an organization. As a leader you have a responsibility for the people that work with you and under your charge. Yes, the leader must get the job done. Getting the job done entails people executing initiative. People are willing to take initiative when they trust those in their charge.

At the tactical level is where most problems law enforcement deals with normally dominate the outcomes, therefore, the attributes of skill, morale, discipline, unit cohesion influenced by leadership come into play. Skill must be an individual attribute, but it is officers working together solving problems however big or small a team or unit, that really matters. What counts then is not personal skill but the skill effectively applied by the team as a whole and that depends on competent leaders who know how to influence those in their charge. This is done through creating and nurturing a culture of mutual trust bound by integrity that leads to loyal "doers" on the street.

[Integrity](#) is a concept of consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations and outcomes. In ethics, integrity is regarded as the quality of having an intuitive sense of honesty and truthfulness in regard to the motivations for one's actions. Integrity, standing alone and being constant on a subject where we truly do not have all the facts and details due to our failure to dig and learn to the fullest possible extent about the subject, methods or tactics we are so constantly using to reach our endgame is also detrimental to the outcomes we seek.

The attributes of loyalty and integrity are huge in the realm of leadership. They always have been and will always be critical to the functioning of any organization. But the key in creating and nurturing effectiveness in an organization is in the synergistic effects loyalty and integrity has on one another and the culture of an organization.

Integrity is the meat in the meal of mastering ourselves as leaders and truly developing our strategies for successful operations. No matter what organization or cause or person you believe in or how deeply you believe, means nothing without asking or being asked the tough questions in our approach to getting things done in a way we can all be proud of when reach whatever goals we have set our minds to achieving. Integrity must be based in truth!

[Loyalty](#) is faithfulness or a devotion to a person, country, group, or cause. Being loyal to a person, country, group or cause is obviously an important part of any culture, but if blinded by falsehoods, self-deceptions, fear, peer-pressure and/or the acceptance of the status quo, blind loyalty can be

detrimental to the success of any vision or intent those who are the subject to blind loyalty may have aspirations for. This is where integrity and its power make its effects on outcomes of any cause, known.

Loyalty is the seasoning on the meat; you know those things that just put the right touch, the right flavor to why we seek our goals and make it all worthwhile. Our cause must be based in truth, and that truth must be sought by individuals and groups working coactively. When working coactively there will be discussions and debates maybe even knock down, dragged out disputes on the appropriate strategies and methods in implement them. In this fast paced and at times dangerous world we must understand no one possesses all the answers and even collectively we will still face uncertainty. Trust between you and those you work with are where loyalty forms. Trust and Loyalty are closely related when based on integrity, allowing the powerful effect of mutual trust to take hold. A feeling of buy in to the agencies vision takes hold and unity forms, building a high level of individual morale, discipline within the agency and unit cohesion on the frontline. Street officers are then willing to *exercise initiative* and solve problems.

Loyalty and integrity working their magic and combining intersecting ideas across the spectrum bring much more effective results because they let reason trump hierarchy. Integrity and loyalty combine to nurture true creative abilities and harness insight, innovation and initiative in any culture, most especially in law enforcement and security where sensing the climate and probing the environment are so important to quality execution in rapidly changing conditions. This leads to commitment and accountability.

For example: the Full Spectrum Policing philosophy strives to take the initiative in the cognitive (moral and mental) and physical domains of conflict and violence and asserts the critical importance of tempo and surprise to gain the initiative and compromise criminal intent and cohesion. Allowing us to not only solve crimes in their aftermath but also prevent crime from occurring. Can this type of philosophy be implemented without integrity and loyalty? I think not. Transparency throughout an organization and the community we serve, in what and how we operate is crucial in accomplishing this goal as well.

Mutual trust must be there.

Mutual trust is formed through integrity in how we lead and police. We exercise, create and nurture an atmosphere of mutual trust by engaging and interacting with those in our charge. We learn more about what makes them tick, and what motivates them. We gain insight into their strengths and weaknesses. In turn they learn the same about leaders and how we deal with problems and whether or not the leader has the ability to combine firmness, compassion, and understanding in dealing with subordinates who have to make tough decisions required in policing. This allows insight into your motivations as a leader. Are you in charge to enforce a zero defects mentality or are you there to help those in your charge learn, unlearn and relearn, removing the walls that separate people and ideas?

Over time integrity turns to trust and that trust when created and nurtured turns into loyalty, a loyalty that that forms a cohesive unity amongst members of the organization. In contrast if you have a lack of integrity, it will lead to disloyalty and hence distrust and the negative effect on execution and the

outcomes you desire. Doing what's right is integrity. Doing the right thing for the right reasons is loyalty strengthened by integrity. Very powerful attributes that affect all we do.

Integrity and loyalty are attributes we must nurture with strength of character to keep us in check. We need to stop jumping to conclusions, passing the buck, grabbing the credit, throwing our weight or egos around and stepping on others who challenge our thoughts. Instead let's believe in ourselves and in others for the right reasons. Imagine the impact this has on our abilities to truly make a difference in the complex and even sometimes chaotic problems we must solve such as, workplace violence, terrorism, ongoing deadly action (active shootings), police officer ambushes, officer safety, domestic violence, bullying and airline security, social problems, family related problems *etc, etc, etc*. I know it sound too damn simple doesn't it, almost a Pollyanna view of solving the world's problems? Maybe so but I firmly believe the answer does lie squarely in walking our talk with integrity that leads to what I will call "true loyalty" or faithfulness to the cause whatever that cause may be for all the right reasons.

None of us are perfect and quite frankly taking a stand of loyalty steadied on the foundation of integrity for many of us takes a leap of courage, a leap well worth taking if we truly wish to get the best out of ourselves and others we work with. Can it possibly cost you something? Sure it can. But it's the price we sometimes must pay for getting things done. *If every person walked their talk, can you imagine how it would be?*

Stay Oriented!

Fred