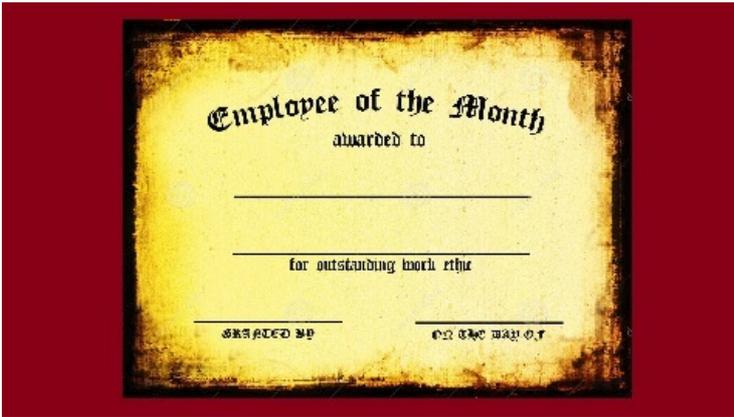


WHEN LOYALTY PAYS OFF



When I worked my first job as a dishwasher, I would come home stinking of food every night. My dad, who drove me home, encouraged me seek new employment. Whether from laziness or loyalty, I held out and stayed at the company, and I would recommend the same to my son. Why? Nowadays the virtue of loyalty has waned to a pale nothing. We divorce at the drop of the hat, we give up our friends when they annoy us, and we are always seeking for the job a step up, the next rung in the ladder. That we see each new job as a rung in a ladder is telling: the idea that a man or woman would stay at one company their whole lives seems terribly old-fashioned. That's not even what employers expect or want anymore, they want fresh blood, and the initial enthusiasm that comes with the job. Since employers are tending to fire more and more employees and dump the extra work on the few employees that remain, they expect high turn over, and won't grudge you if you have to leave. So why revolt against this system? Just as in marriage, doing humiliating work and failing to receive due gratitude may tempt you to leave. Don't be tempted. By holding out, holding your own, and expecting respect, promotions, appreciation, and increase in power, while the whole time doing extraordinary work and going above and beyond expectations, your employer can't help but respect your tenacity, your perseverance, and your bold follow-through on your work. Scientists have discovered that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to master any activity, be it playing the guitar or performing surgery. In marriage, you would rightly say that you don't properly fall in love until after ten years together. It is the same with the job. By staying loyal to your company through thick and thin, you gain a place in it that you can never gain by hopping from company to company. You can settle your roots deep and draw in water and nourishment that shallow roots simply can't tap. Stay with it, therefore, even when it gets tedious. Be inventive in vying for new positions and try to work your way up. Often your boss won't know how to challenge you, will wonder if you should just go to a business that has more to offer you. Consider it. But consider also being proactive in suggesting to your boss a new position that maybe even doesn't exist that you could do. Loyalty is a game plan that can pay off greatly for you, so long as you have the patience and endurance to sustain it.