

THE ART OF WAR
SUN TZU

孫子兵法

兵者，國之大事，死生
之地，存亡之道，不可
不察也。



TRANSLATED BY GARY GAGLIARDI

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Though simply written, Sun Tzu system is extremely sophisticated. Sun Tzu did not write this book to be read by the uninitiated. Sun Tzu wrote in a time when students were taught by a master. He wrote as a guide for masters who already understood the techniques of competition. He wrote it to be studied and carefully applied to specific situations.

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兵WAR
法METHODS

*To my wife, Rebecca,
who makes success worthwhile!*

THE ART OF WAR
THE FREE ACROBATE EDITION

TRANSLATION AND FORWARD
BY
GARY GAGLIARDI

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CONTENTS

FORWARD	9
1. PLANNING	13
2. GOING TO WAR	19
3. PLANNING AN ATTACK	23
4. POSITIONING	27
5. MOMENTUM	31
6. WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH	35
7. ARMED CONFLICT	41
8. ADAPTABILITY	47
9. ARMED MARCH	51
10. FIELD POSITION	59
11. TYPES OF TERRAIN	67
12. ATTACKING WITH FIRE	79
13. USING SPIES	83
OTHER VERSIONS	88

Forward

Clearbridge Publishing has dedicated itself to helping people uising the competitive techniques of *The Art of War* in today's world. Sun Tzu wrote his famous treatise on war over two thousand years ago. For centuries, the text has been preserved and treasured. Today, most readers of *The Art of War* are not military men, but people who face a variety of competitive challenges in their life. They have discovered that Sun Tzu's lessons apply equally well to any competition for success.

As the first of the military classics, *The Art of War* offers a distinct, non-intuitive system for winning in competition while avoiding the most destructive aspects of conflict. Its system realizes that certain key factors influence the outcome of any battle and that victory goes—not to the strongest or most aggressive—but to the person who best understands the how to use leverage the situation and avoid the costs of conflicting desires.

We developed this new translation to eliminate the contradictions and confusion found in earlier English translations. You can actually see how accurate this translation is in our version *The Art of War Plus Sun Tzu's Own Words* (ISBN 1929194005) which shows how this version maps line for line to the original Chinese characters. That version also indicates how much of the depth of

the original is lost in any English translation.

After twenty years of studying the work, it is clear that most translations were written by people who lacked understanding of Sun Tzu's basic system. After really using its methods to build a multimillion dollar business, I clearly mastered at least some of its key secrets. After years of teaching many organizations about Sun Tzu and writing over a dozen books specifically apply *The Art of War* to specific competitive challenges, I have developed a wealth of material that helps people use these methods in the real world.

When we describe Sun Tzu's methods as "secrets," the word is appropriate. Do not expect to understand Sun Tzu's system simply from reading this book. In a single reading, this masterpiece seems little more than a collection of interesting aphorisms. It is much more than that. It describes a complex, complete, and non-intuitive method of winning without conflict in any competition.

The difficulties with even an accurate, direct translation of *The Art of War* arise from how and why the text was written. First, as Sun Tzu teaches, valuable knowledge must be kept a secret. In Sun Tzu's time, scientific systems were organized around a graphical "map" of how their elements interact. This map provides the key to understanding the text. However, Sun Tzu doesn't give you the map in the book. It was passed down in an oral tradition from master to student. Sun Tzu wrote his book, not for the outsiders, but as a study guide for the masters who already understood his basic model. This system is explained in our book, *The Art of War PLUS the Amazing Secrets of Sun Tzu*, ISBN 1929194072. and in more detail in *The Art of War PLUS The Warrior Class: 306 Lessons in Modern Competition*. ISBN

1929194099. We also provide a great deal of material for FREE at www.clearbridge.com for the readers of any of our books. We have developed hundreds of pages of material explaining Sun Tzu's system to help you in successful competition.

Because Sun Tzu's system of competition is so sophisticated, this translation goes to great lengths to preserve the original context of his words.

In the original text, Sun Tzu grouped the Chinese characters in three ways. The smallest grouping of characters he used, a Chinese phrase, is from two to ten characters. In this English translation, each Chinese phrase becomes a short English sentence. The next larger grouping of characters is a very long Chinese "stanza" consisting of as many as a dozen phrases. In the English translation, this becomes a number of sentences grouped into a verse, separated by a blank line. The largest grouping is a block of characters consisting of several "stanzas." These are become a number of verses separated by yin-yang symbols (☯). Each new block begins with a large, bold capital letter.

Through these techniques, we preserve the ideas of Sun Tzu's Chinese in an English translation that comes as close as humanly possible to capturing Sun Tzu's ideas in English. I hope you enjoy his teachings as much as I have and profit from them at least half as well.

Gary Gagliardi, 2002

PLANNING

Sun Tzu said:

This is war.

It is the most important skill in the nation.

It is the basis of life and death.

It is the philosophy of survival or destruction.

You must know it well.

Your skill comes from five factors.

Study these factors when you plan war.

You must insist on knowing the nature of:

1. Military philosophy;
2. The weather;
3. The ground;
4. The commander;
5. And military methods.

It starts with your military philosophy.

Command your people in a way that gives them a higher shared purpose.

You can lead them to death.

You can lead them to life.

They must never fear danger or dishonesty.

THE ART OF WAR

Next, you have the weather.
It can be sunny or overcast.
It can be hot or cold.
It includes the timing of the seasons.

Next is the terrain.
It can be distant or near.
It can be difficult or easy.
It can be open or narrow.
It also determines your life or death.

Next is the commander.
He must be smart, trustworthy, caring, brave and strict.

Finally, you have your military methods.
They include the shape of your organization.
This comes from your management philosophy.
You must master their use.

All five of these factors are critical.
As a commander, you must pay attention to them.
Understanding them brings victory.
Ignoring them means defeat.



*Note: Though covered in two pages, the various aspects and interrelationships of the five factors take literally hundreds of pages to explain. Our book, *Amazing Secrets of Sun Tzu's The Art of War (1929194072)* explains the graphical map of the competitive universe that shows their various interactions.*

PLANNING

You must learn through planning.
You must question the situation.

You must ask:

Which government has the right philosophy?

Which commander has the skill?

Which season and place has the advantage?

Which method of command works?

Which group of forces has the strength?

Which officers and men have the training?

Which rewards and punishments make sense?

This tells when you will win and when you will lose.

Some commanders perform this analysis.

If you use these commanders, you will win.

Keep them.

Some commanders ignore this analysis.

If you use these commanders, you will lose.

Get rid of them.



Plan an advantage by listening.

This makes you powerful.

Get assistance from the outside.

Know the situation.

Then planning can find opportunities and give you control.



Sun Tzu use the term “Planning” but the meaning is really closer to analysis or discussion. In each line and stanza, Sun Tzu is saying something important and specific. In our most detailed book, *The Art of War PLUs The Warrior Class*, ISBN 1929194099, we explain the specific meaning of each stanza of the text.

Warfare is one thing.
It is a philosophy of deception.

When you are ready, you try to appear incapacitated.
When active, you pretend inactivity.
When you are close to the enemy, you appear distant.
When far away, pretend you are near.

If the enemy has strong position, entice him away from it.
If the enemy is confused, be decisive.
If the enemy is solid, prepare against him.
If the enemy is strong, avoid him.
If the enemy is angry, frustrate him.
If the enemy is weaker, make him arrogant.
If the enemy is relaxed, make him work.
If the enemy is united, break him apart.
Attack him when he is unprepared.
Leave when he least expects it.

You will find a place where you can win.
Don't pass it by.



Note: It is very easy to misinterpret many parts of Sun Tzu. Here, you may think that he is suggesting the dishonesty is the basis for success, but this is a fatal misonception, planted to mislead the uninitiated. War is deception, but The Art of War is much more. Specifically, deception is one of the five forms of attack, targeting a specific ability of competitors. You can only learn about the role of deception in the complete system in The Amazing Secrets of Sun Tzu.

PLANNING

Before you go to war, you must believe that you can count on victory.

You must calculate many advantages.

Before you go to battle, you may believe that you can foresee defeat.

You can count few advantages.

Many advantages add up to victory.

Few advantages add up to defeat.

How can you know your advantages without analyzing them?

We can see where we are by means of our observations.

We can foresee our victory or defeat by planning.



Note: Sun Tzu wrote to address every type of competition for all time so his text is necessarily very general. Like Euclid's rules for geometry, he is stating the most general case. We make it easy to apply all of Sun Tzu's advice to very specific types of challenges. In our Art of War PLUS Book Series, we adapt each line of the text to today's world. We offer versions for advancing in your career, for making sales, for managing people, for marketing products, starting a new business, winning love, parenting teens, and more. See www.clearbridge.com for a complete list.

GOING TO WAR

Sun Tzu said:

Everything depends on your use of military philosophy.
Moving the army requires thousands of vehicles.
These vehicles must be loaded thousands of times.
The army must carry a huge supply of arms.
You need ten thousand acres of grain.
This results in internal and external shortages.
Any army consumes resources like an invader.
It uses up glue and paint for wood.
It requires armor for its vehicles.
People complain about the waste of a vast amount of metal.
It will set you back when you raise tens of thousands of troops.

Using a huge army makes war very expensive to win.
Long delays create a dull army and sharp defeats.
Attacking enemy cities drains your forces.
Long campaigns that exhaust the nation's resources are wrong.

Manage a dull army.
You will suffer sharp defeats.
Drain your forces.
Your money will be used up.
Your rivals multiply as your army collapses and they will
begin against you.
It doesn't matter how smart you are.
You cannot get ahead by taking losses!

You hear of people going to war too quickly.
Still, you won't see a skilled war that lasts a long time.

You can fight a war for a long time or you can make your
nation strong.
You can't do both.



You can never totally understand all the dangers in using
arms.
Therefore, you can never totally understand the advantages
in using arms either.

You want to make good use of war.
Do not raise troops repeatedly.
Do not carry too many supplies.
Choose to be useful to your nation.
Feed off the enemy.
Make your army carry only the provisions it needs.



*Note: Almost everyone misses the real purpose of this
chapter. Though carefully coded, it lays the economic
foundation for competition. Learn more by purchasing any
of our books.*

The nation impoverishes itself shipping to troops that are far away.

Distant transportation is costly for hundreds of families.

Buying goods with the army nearby is also expensive.

These high prices also impoverish hundreds of families.

People quickly exhaust their resources supporting a military force.

Military forces consume a nation's wealth entirely.

War leaves households in the former heart of the nation with nothing.

War destroys hundreds of families.

Out of every ten families, war leaves only seven.

War empties the government's storehouses.

Broken armies will get rid of their horses.

They will throw down their armor, helmets, and arrows.

They will lose their swords and shields.

They will leave their wagons without oxen.

War will consume sixty percent of everything you have.



Because of this, the commander's duty is to feed off the enemy.

Use a cup of the enemy's food.

It is worth twenty of your own.

Win a bushel of the enemy's feed.

It is worth twenty of your own.

You can kill the enemy and frustrate him as well.

Take the enemy's strength from him by stealing away his supplies.

Fight for the enemy's supply wagons.
Capture their supplies by using overwhelming force.
Reward the first who capture them.
Then change their banners and flags.
Mix them in with your own to increase your supply line.
Keep your soldiers strong by providing for them.
This is what it means to beat the enemy while you grow
more powerful.



Make victory in war pay for itself.
Avoid expensive, long campaigns.
The military commander's knowledge is the key.
It determines if the civilian officials can govern.
It determines if the nation's households are peaceful or a
danger to the state.



In Sun Tzu's system, the relationship between the competitive parts of the organization (the army and its commander) and the productive parts of the organizations (the nation and its officials) is delicate and complicated. Many organizations fail because, unlike Sun Tzu, they are not able to discern the necessary division of responsibilities and resources between the two. All the details are in the text, but they are well hidden. To truly understand it, you need to see specific examples like we present in our detailed adaptations.

PLANNING AN ATTACK

Sun Tzu said:

Everyone relies on the arts of war.

A united nation is strong.

A divided nation is weak.

A united army is strong.

A divided army is weak.

A united force is strong.

A divided force is weak.

United men are strong.

Divided men are weak.

A united unit is strong.

A divided unit is weak.

Unity works because it enables you to win every battle you fight.

Still, this is the foolish goal of a weak leader.

Avoid battle and make the enemy's men surrender.

This is the right goal for a superior leader.



The best policy is to attack while the enemy is still planning.

The next best is to disrupt alliances.

The next best is to attack the opposing army.

The worst is to attack the enemy's cities.

This is what happens when you attack a city.

You can attempt it, but you can't finish it.

First you must make siege engines.

You need the right equipment and machinery.

You use three months and still cannot win.

Then, you try to encircle the area.

You use three more months without making progress.

The commander still doesn't win and this angers him.

He then tries to swarm the city.

This kills a third of his officers and men.

He still isn't able to draw the enemy out of the city.

This attack is a disaster.



Make good use of war.

Make the enemy's troops surrender.

You can do this fighting only minor battles.

You can draw their men out of their cities.

You can do it with small attacks.

You can destroy the men of a nation.

You must keep your campaign short.

Note: The deeper meaning of "surrender," "cities," "destroy," "men of a nation," and a "campaign" are much more complicated in the context of Sun Tzu's compete system. They are all "code words."

THE ART OF WAR

You must use total war, fighting with everything you have.
Never stop fighting when at war.
You can gain complete advantage.
To do this, you must plan your strategy of attack.

The rules for making war are:
If you outnumber the enemy ten to one, surround them.
If you outnumber them five to one, attack them.
If you outnumber them two to one, divide them.
If you are equal, then find an advantageous battle.
If you are fewer, defend against them.
If you are much weaker, evade them.

Small forces are not powerful.
However, large forces cannot catch them.



You must master command.
The nation must support you.

Supporting the military makes the nation powerful.
Not supporting the military makes the nation weak.

Politicians create problems for the military in three different ways.
Ignorant of the army's inability to advance, they order an advance.
Ignorant of the army's inability to withdraw, they order a withdrawal.
We call this tying up the army.
Politicians don't understand the army's business.
Still, they think they can run an army.
This confuses the army's officers.

Politicians don't know the army's chain of command.
They give the army too much freedom.
This will create distrust among the army's officers.

The entire army becomes confused and distrusting.
This invites the invasion from many different rivals.
We say correctly that disorder in an army kills victory.



You must know five things to win:
Victory comes from knowing when to attack and when to
avoid battle.
Victory comes from correctly using both large and small
forces.
Victory comes from everyone sharing the same goals.
Victory comes from finding opportunities in problems.
Victory comes from having a capable commander and the
government leaving him alone.
You must know these five things.
You then know the theory of victory.



We say:
“Know yourself and know your enemy.
You will be safe in every battle.
You may know yourself but not know the enemy.
You will then lose one battle for every one you win.
You may not know yourself or the enemy.
You will then lose every battle.”



Note: Don't be misled. In Sun Tzu, the “enemy” is not just an opponent. It also means potential ally.

POSITIONING

Sun Tzu said:

Learn from the history of successful battles.

Your first actions should deny victory to the enemy.

You pay attention to your enemy to find the way to win.

You alone can deny victory to the enemy.

Only your enemy can allow you to win.

You must fight well.

You can prevent the enemy's victory.

You cannot win unless the enemy enables your victory.

We say:

You see the opportunity for victory; you don't create it.



You are sometimes unable to win.

You must then defend.

You will eventually be able to win.

You must then attack.

Defend when you have insufficient strength to win.

Attack when you have more strength than you need to win.

You must defend yourself well.
Save your forces and dig in.
You must attack well.
Move your forces when you have a clear advantage.

You must protect your forces until you can completely triumph.



Some may see how to win.
However, they cannot position their forces where they must.
This demonstrates limited ability.

Some can struggle to a victory and the whole world may praise their winning.
This also demonstrates a limited ability.

Win as easily as picking up a fallen hair.
Don't use all of your forces.
See the time to move.
Don't try to find something clever.
Hear the clap of thunder.
Don't try to hear something subtle.

Learn from the history of successful battles.
Victory goes to those who make winning easy.
A good battle is one that you will obviously win.
It doesn't take intelligence to win a reputation.
It doesn't take courage to achieve success.

Note: When Sun Tzu uses the term "history" it means something close to "statistical reality." His text only seems vague because the deeper meaning is secret.

THE ART OF WAR

You must win your battles without effort.
Avoid difficult struggles.
Fight when your position must win.
You always win by preventing your defeat.

You must engage only in winning battles.
Position yourself where you cannot lose.
Never waste an opportunity to defeat your enemy.

You win a war by first assuring yourself of victory.
Only afterward do you look for a fight.
Outmaneuver the enemy before the battle and then fight to win.



You must make good use of war.
Study military philosophy and the art of defense.
You can control your victory or defeat.

This is the art of war.

“1. Discuss the distances.
2. Discuss your numbers.
3. Discuss your calculations.
4. Discuss your decisions.
5. Discuss victory.
The ground determines the distance.
The distance determines your numbers.
Your numbers determine your calculations.
Your calculations determine your decisions.
Your decisions determine your victory.”

Creating a winning war is like balancing a coin of gold against a coin of silver.

Creating a losing war is like balancing a coin of silver against a coin of gold.



Winning a battle is always a matter of people.

You pour them into battle like a flood of water pouring into a deep gorge.

This is a matter of positioning.



Note: Positioning is one of the four basic abilities in Sun Tzu's system. It is very difficult to understand outside of the context of his complete system. Positioning is an organizational skill (Methods), not a leadership skill. It addresses the key factor of ground which is the potential source of revenue and value. Without knowing the code, you can still see hints of this throughout the chapter.

MOMENTUM

Sun Tzu said:

You control a large army the same as you control a few men.

You just divide their ranks correctly.

You fight a large army the same as you fight a small one.

You only need the right position and communication.

You may meet a large enemy army.

You must be able to encounter the enemy without being defeated.

You must correctly use both surprise and direct action.

Your army's position must increase your strength.

Troops flanking an enemy can smash them like eggs.

You must correctly use both strength and weakness.



It is the same in all battles.

You use a direct approach to engage the enemy.

You use surprise to win.

You must use surprise for a successful invasion.

Surprise is as infinite as the weather and land.

Surprise is as inexhaustible as the flow of a river.

MOMENTUM

You can be stopped and yet recover the initiative.
You must use your days and months correctly.

If you are defeated, you can recover.
You must use the four seasons correctly.

There are only a few notes in the scale.
Yet, you can always rearrange them.
You can never hear every song of victory.

There are only a few basic colors.
Yet, you can always mix them.
You can never see all the shades of victory.

There are only a few flavors.
Yet, you can always blend them.
You can never taste all the flavors of victory.

You fight with momentum.
There are only a few types of surprises and direct actions.
Yet, you can always vary the ones you use.
There is no limit in the ways you can win.

Surprise and direct action give birth to each other.
They proceed from each other in an endless cycle.
You can not exhaust all their possible combinations!



Note: Sun Tzu's system teaches individual creativity and initiative and is in many ways the opposition to Confucian teachings. It is also related to Taoism, but, again, offering a very different vision.

Surging water flows together rapidly.
Its pressure washes away boulders.
This is momentum.

A hawk suddenly strikes a bird.
Its contact alone kills the prey.
This is timing.

You must fight only winning battles.
Your momentum must be overwhelming.
Your timing must be exact.

Your momentum is like the tension of a bent crossbow.
Your timing is like the pulling of a trigger.



War is very complicated and confused.
Battle is chaotic.
Nevertheless, you must not allow chaos.

War is very sloppy and messy.
Positions turn around.
Nevertheless, you must never be defeated.

Chaos gives birth to control.
Fear gives birth to courage.
Weakness gives birth to strength.

You must control chaos.
This depends on your planning.
Your men must brave their fears.
This depends on their momentum.

You have strengths and weaknesses.
These come from your position.

You must force the enemy to move to your advantage.
Use your position.
The enemy must follow you.
Surrender a position.
The enemy must take it.
You can offer an advantage to move him.
You can use your men to move him.
You use your strength to hold him.



You want a successful battle.
To do this, you must seek momentum.
Do not just demand a good fight from your people.
You must pick good people and then give them momentum.

You must create momentum.
You create it with your men during battle.
This is comparable to rolling trees and stones.
Trees and stones roll because of their shape and weight.
Offer men safety and they will stay calm.
Endanger them and they will act.
Give them a place and they will hold.
Round them up and they will march.

You make your men powerful in battle with momentum.
This is just like rolling round stones down over a high, steep cliff.
Use your momentum.



WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH

Sun Tzu said:

Always arrive first to the empty battlefield to await the enemy at your leisure.

If you are late and hurry to the battlefield, fighting is more difficult.

You want a successful battle.

Move your men, but not into opposing forces.

You can make the enemy come to you.

Offer him an advantage.

You can make the enemy avoid coming to you.

Threaten him with danger.

When the enemy is fresh, you can tire him.

When he is well fed, you can starve him.

When he is relaxed, you can move him.



Leave any place without haste.
Hurry to where you are unexpected.
You can easily march hundreds of miles without tiring.
To do so, travel through areas that are deserted.
You must take whatever you attack.
Attack when there is no defense.
You must have walls to defend.
Defend where it is impossible to attack.

Be skilled in attacking.
Give the enemy no idea of where to defend.

Be skillful in your defense.
Give the enemy no idea of where to attack.



Be subtle! Be subtle!
Arrive without any clear formation.
Quietly! Quietly!
Arrive without a sound.
You must use all your skill to control the enemy's decisions.

Advance where they can't defend.
Charge through their openings.
Withdraw where the enemy cannot chase you.
Move quickly so that they cannot catch you.

Note: A great deal of Sun Tzu's system was developed to explain how newer and smaller competitors can and do eventually overcome larger, well-established opponents. You can learn more about overcoming your own larger opponents by buying any one of our Art of War PLUS books.

I always pick my own battles.
The enemy can hide behind high walls and deep trenches.
I do not try to win by fighting him directly.
Instead, I attack a place that he must rescue.
I avoid the battles that I don't want.
I can divide the ground and yet defend it.
I don't give the enemy anything to win.
Divert him from coming to where you defend.



I make their men take a position while I take none.
I then focus my forces where the enemy divides his forces.
Where I focus, I unite my forces.
When the enemy divides, he creates many small groups.
I want my large group to attack one of his small ones.
Then I have many men where the enemy has but a few.
My large force can overwhelm his small one.
I then go on to the next small enemy group.
I will take them one at a time.



We must keep the place that we've chosen as a
battleground a secret.
The enemy must not know.
Force the enemy to prepare his defense in many places.
I want the enemy to defend many places.
Then I can choose where to fight.
His forces will be weak there.

MOMENTUM

If he reinforces his front lines, he depletes his rear.
If he reinforces his rear, he depletes his front.
If he reinforces his right flank, he depletes his left.
If he reinforces his left flank, he depletes his right.
Without knowing the place of attack, he cannot prepare.
Without knowing the right place, he will be weak
everywhere.

The enemy has weak points.
Prepare your men against them.
He has strong points.
Make his men prepare themselves against you.



You must know the battle ground.
You must know the time of battle.
You can then travel a thousand miles and still win the battle.

The enemy should not know the battleground.
He shouldn't know the time of battle.
His left will be unable to support his right.
His right will be unable to support his left.
His front lines will be unable to support his rear.
His rear will be unable to support his front.
His support is distant even if it is only ten miles away.
What unknown place can be close?

We control the balance of forces.
The enemy may have many men but they are superfluous.
How can they help him to victory?

We say:
You must let victory happen.

The enemy may have many men.
You can still control him without a fight.



When you form your strategy, know the strengths and weaknesses of your plan.
When you execute, know how to manage both action and inaction.
When you take a position, know the deadly and the winning grounds.
When you battle, know when you have too many or too few men.

Use your position as your war's centerpiece.
Arrive at the battle without a formation.
Don't take a position.
Then even the best spies can't report it.
Even the wisest general cannot plan to counter you.
Take a position where you can triumph using superior numbers.
Keep the enemy's forces ignorant.
Their troops will learn of my location when my position will win.
They must not know how our location gives us a winning position.
Make the battle one from which they cannot recover.
You must always adjust your position to their position.



Manage your military position like water.
Water takes every shape.
It avoids the high and moves to the low.
Your war can take any shape.
It must avoid the strong and strike the weak.
Water follows the shape of the land that directs its flow.
Your forces follow the enemy who determines how you win.

Make war without a standard approach.
Water has no consistent shape.
If you follow the enemy's shifts and changes, you can
always win.
We call this shadowing.

Fight five different campaigns without a firm rule for
victory.
Use all four seasons without a consistent position.
Your timing must be sudden.
A few weeks determine your failure or success.



Note: Every word in Sun Tzu has a specific meaning. The "five campaigns" here refers to the five different type of attacks that he teaches. The "four seasons" is NOT the four seasons that we think of in a year. "Seasons" refers to the key element "weather" which, in the original text, is the Chinese character for "sky" or "heaven." This character means the hand of fate, the passage of time, as well as, changes in climate, but the "four" refers to the four steps in the competitive cycle. "Timing" is also a characteristic of heaven and is many respect the heavenly "partner" of the earthly, ground-based skill of momentum. Again, you miss not just a little, but most of the meaning hidden in the text by simply reading it. Its advice is universal, but very detailed, packed with hidden meanings.

ARMED CONFLICT

Sun Tzu said:

Everyone uses the arts of war.
You accept orders from the government.
Then you assemble your army.
You organize your men and build camps.
You must avoid disasters from armed conflict.

Seeking armed conflict can be disastrous.
Because of this, a detour can be the shortest path.
Because of this, problems can become opportunities.

Use an indirect route as your highway.
Use the search for advantage to guide you.
When you fall behind, you must catch up.
When you get ahead, you must wait.
You must know the detour that most directly accomplishes
your plan.

Undertake armed conflict when you have an advantage.
Seeking armed conflict for its own sake is dangerous.



ARMED CONFLICT

You can build up an army to fight for an advantage.

Then you won't catch the enemy.

You can force your army to go fight for an advantage.

Then you abandon your heavy supply wagons.

You keep only your armor and hurry after the enemy.

You avoid stopping day or night.

You use many roads at the same time.

You go hundreds of miles to fight for an advantage.

Then the enemy catches your commanders and your army.

Your strong soldiers get there first.

Your weaker soldiers follow behind.

Using this approach, only one in ten will arrive.

You can try to go fifty miles to fight for an advantage.

Then your commanders and army will stumble.

Using this method, only half of your soldiers will make it.

You can try to go thirty miles to fight for an advantage.

Then only two out of three get there.

If you make your army travel without good supply lines,
they will die.

Without supplies and food, your army will die.

If you don't save the harvest, your army will die.

Note: Again, you misunderstand Sun Tzu unless you understand that he teaches avoiding unnecessary conflict. He wants you to win without conflict. He sees direct conflict as unnatural and those that seek it in competition as foolish and worse for very specific reasons.

Do not let any of your potential enemies know of what you are planning.

You must not hesitate to meet the allies.

You must know the mountains and forests.

You must know where the obstructions are.

You must know where the marshes are.

If you don't, you cannot move the army.

If you don't, you must use local guides.

If you don't, you can't take advantage of the terrain.



You make war using a deceptive position.

If you use deception, then you can move.

Using deception, you can upset the enemy and change the situation.

You must move as quickly as the wind.

You must rise like the forest.

You must invade and plunder like fire.

You must stay as motionless as a mountain.

You must be as mysterious as the fog.

You must strike like sounding thunder.

Divide your troops to plunder the villages.

When on open ground, dividing is an advantage.

Don't worry about organization, just move.

Be the first to find a new route that leads directly to a winning plan.

This is the how you are successful at armed conflict.



Mmilitary experience says:

“You can speak, but you will not be heard.

You must use gongs and drums.

You cannot really see your forces just by looking.

You must use banners and flags.”

You must master gongs, drums, banners and flags.

Place people as a single unit where they can all see and hear.

You must unite them as one.

Then, the brave cannot advance alone.

The fearful cannot withdraw alone.

You must force them to act as a group.

In night battles, you must use numerous fires and drums.

In day battles, you must use many banners and flags.

You must position your people to control what they see and hear.



You control your army by controlling its emotions.

As a general, you must be able to control emotions.

In the morning, a person’s energy is high.

During the day, it fades.

By evening, a person’s thoughts turn to home.

You must use your troops wisely.

Avoid the enemy’s high spirits.

Strike when they are lazy and want to go home.

This is how you master energy.

Use discipline to await the chaos of battle.
Keep relaxed to await a crisis.
This is how you master emotion.

Stay close to home to await a distant enemy.
Stay comfortable to await the weary enemy.
Stay well fed to await the hungry enemy.
This is how you master power.



Don't entice the enemy when their ranks are orderly.
You must not attack when their formations are solid
This is how you master adaptation.
You must follow these military rules.
Do not take a position facing the high ground.
Do not oppose those with their backs to wall.
Do not follow those who pretend to flee.
Do not attack the enemy's strongest men.
Do not swallow the enemy's bait.
Do not block an army that is heading home.
Leave an escape outlet for a surrounded army.
Do not press a desperate foe.
This is the art of war.



Note: The first part of this chapter teaches the necessity of avoiding conflict. The last part teaches what to do when conflict cannot be avoided. Remember, the purpose of competition is not battle, but success which is specifically defined as financial success, not destroying the opposition. This makes The Art of War easy to adapt to all aspects of modern business.

ADAPTABILITY

Sun Tzu said:

Everyone uses the arts of war.

As a general, you get your orders from the government.

You gather your troops.

On dangerous ground, you must not camp.

Where the roads intersect, you must join your allies.

When an area is cut off, you must not delay in it.

When you are surrounded, you must scheme.

In a life-of-death situation, you must fight.

There are roads that you must not take.

There are armies that you must not fight.

There are strongholds that you must not attack.

There are positions that you must not defend.

There are government commands that must not be obeyed.

Military leaders must be experts in knowing how to adapt to win.

This will teach you the use of war.

Some commanders are not good at making adjustments to find an advantage.

They can know the shape of the terrain.

Still, they can not find an advantageous position.

Some military commanders do not know how to adjust their methods.

They can find an advantageous position.

Still, they can not use their men effectively.



You must be creative in your planning.

You must adapt to your opportunities and weaknesses.

You can use a variety of approaches and still have a consistent result.

You must adjust to a variety of problems and consistently solve them.



You can deter your potential enemy by using his weaknesses against him.

You can keep your enemy's army busy by giving it work to do.

You can rush your enemy by offering him an advantageous position.



You must make use of war.

Do not trust that the enemy isn't coming.
Trust on your readiness to meet him.
Do not trust that the enemy won't attack.
We must rely only on our ability to pick a place that the
enemy can't attack.



You can exploit five different faults in a leader.
If he is willing to die, you can kill him.
If he wants to survive, you can capture him.
He may have a quick temper.
You can then provoke him with insults.
If he has a delicate sense of honor, you can disgrace him.
If he loves his people, you can create problems for him.
In every situation, look for these five weaknesses.
They are common faults in commanders.
They always lead to military disaster.

To overturn an army, you must kill its general.
To do this, you must use these five weaknesses.
You must always look for them.



Note: Though very short, this chapter makes a critical point about using the advice in the next three chapters. It is impossible to understand this chapter unless you know what is coming. This is one of the many clues that demonstrate that the text was written for those who already understood Sun Tzu's system. The only place you can get training in that system is The Warrior Class, our on-line training site for our book owners. Buy any of our books to access it.

ARMED MARCH

Sun Tzu said:

Everyone moving their army must adjust to the enemy.

Keep out of the mountains and in the valleys.
Position yourself on the heights facing the sun.
To win your battles, never attack uphill.
This is how you position your army in the mountains.

When water blocks you, keep far away from it.
Let the enemy cross the river and wait for him.
Do not meet him in midstream.
Wait for him to get half his forces across and then take
advantage of the situation.

You need to be able to fight.
You can't do that if you are in the water when you meet an
attack.
Position yourself upstream, facing the sun.
Never face against the current.
Always position your army upstream when near the water.

ARMED MARCH

You may have to move across marshes.
Move through them quickly without stopping.
You may meet the enemy in the middle of a marsh.
You must keep on the water grasses.
Keep your back to a clump of trees.
This is how you position your army in a marsh.

On a level plateau, take a position that you can change.
Keep the higher ground on your right and to the rear.
Keep the danger in front of you and safety behind.
This is how you position yourself on a level plateau.

You can find an advantage in all four of these situations.
Learn from the great emperor who used positioning to
conquer his four rivals.



Armies are stronger on high ground and weaker on low.
They are better camping on sunny, southern hillsides than on
the shady, northern ones.
Provide for your army's health and place it well.
Your army will be free from disease.
Done correctly, this means victory.

You must sometimes defend on a hill or riverbank.
You must keep on the south side in the sun.
Keep the uphill slope at your right rear.

This will give the advantage to your army.
It will always give you a position of strength.



Stop the march when the rain swells the river into rapids.
You may want to ford the river.
Wait until it subsides.

All regions have dead-ends such as waterfalls.
There are deep lakes.
There are high cliffs.
There are dense jungles.
There are thick quagmires.
There are steep crevasses.
Get away from all these quickly.
Do not get close to them.
Keep them at a distance.
Maneuver the enemy close to them.
Position yourself facing these dangers.
Push the enemy back into them.

Danger can hide on your army's flank.
There are reservoirs and lakes.
There are reeds and thickets.
There are forests of trees.
Their dense vegetation provides a hiding place.
You must cautiously search through them.
They can always hide an ambush.



Note: This chapter is about the specific methods of moving into a new competitive arena. In understanding Sun Tzu, it can be difficult literally seeing the forest for the trees. The lessons here are about using terrain, evaluating enemy psychology, and guiding employees.

ARMED MARCH

Sometimes, the enemy is close by but remains calm.
Expect to find him in a natural stronghold.
Other times, he remains at a distance but provokes battle.
He wants you to attack him.

He sometimes shifts the position of his camp.
He is looking for an advantageous position.

The trees in the forest move.
Expect that the enemy is coming.
The tall grasses obstruct your view.
Be suspicious.

The birds take flight.
Expect that the enemy is hiding.
Animals startle.
Expect an ambush.

Notice the dust.
It sometimes rises high in a straight line.
Vehicles are coming.
The dust appears low in a wide band.
Foot soldiers are coming.
The dust seems scattered in different areas.
The enemy is collecting firewood.
Any dust is light and settling down.
The enemy is setting up camp.



Your enemy speaks humbly while building up forces.
He is planning to advance.

The enemy talks aggressively and pushes as if to advance.
He is planning to retreat.

Small vehicles exit his camp first and move to positions on
the army's flanks.
They are forming a battle line.

Your enemy tries to sue for peace but without offering a
treaty.
He is plotting.

Your enemy's men run to leave and yet form ranks.
You should expect action.

Half his army advances and the other half retreats.
He is luring you.

Your enemy plans to fight but his men just stand there.
They are starving.

Those who draw water drink it first.
They are thirsty.

Your enemy sees an advantage but does not advance.
His men are tired.

Birds gather.
Your enemy has abandoned his camp.

ARMED MARCH

Your enemy's soldiers call in the night.
They are afraid.

Your enemy's army is raucous.
They do not take their commander seriously.

Your enemy's banners and flags shift.
Order is breaking down.

Your enemy's officers are irritable.
They are exhausted.

Your enemy's men kill their horses for meat.
They are out of provisions.

They don't put their pots away or return to their tents.
They expect to fight to the death.

Enemy troops appear sincere and agreeable.
But their men are slow to speak to each other.
They are no longer united.

Your enemy offers too many incentives to his men.
He is in trouble.

Your enemy gives out too many punishments.
His men are weary.

Your enemy first attacks and then is afraid of your larger
force.
His best troops have not arrived.

Your enemy comes in a conciliatory manner.
He needs to rest and recuperate.

Your enemy is angry and appears to welcome battle.
This goes on for a long time, but he doesn't attack.
He also doesn't leave the field.
You must watch him carefully.



If you are too weak to fight, you must find more men.
In this situation, you must not act aggressively.
You must unite your forces, expect the enemy, recruit men
and wait.

You must be cautious about making plans and adjust to the
enemy.
You must increase the size of your forces.



With new, undedicated soldiers, you can depend on them if
you discipline them.
They will tend to disobey your orders.
If they do not obey your orders, they will be useless.

You can depend on seasoned, dedicated soldiers.
But you must avoid disciplining them without reason.
Otherwise, you cannot use them.

You must control your soldiers with *esprit de corp*.
You must bring them together by winning victories.
You must get them to believe in you.

Make it easy for them to obey your orders by training your people.

Your people will then obey you.

If you do not make it easy to obey, you won't train your people.

Then they will not obey.

Make your commands easy to follow.

You must understand the way a crowd thinks.



Note: Without understanding the context and the rich subtext, it is easy to race through the text itself, learning little from it. In the text, each chapter has a specific purpose and focus. We offer a video and audio seminar that explain the overall system and the specific focus of each chapter.

FIELD POSITION

Sun Tzu said:

Some field positions are unobstructed.

Some field positions are entangling.

Some field positions are supporting.

Some field positions are constricted.

Some field positions give you a barricade.

Some field positions are spread out.

You can attack from some positions easily.

Others can attack you easily as well.

We call these unobstructed positions.

These positions are open.

On them, be the first to occupy a high, sunny area.

Put yourself where you can defend your supply routes.

Then you will have an advantage.

Note: Though described as “field position,” this chapter is really about evaluating the opportunities you discover in moving into a new arena. The six “field position” are really different dimension you use to analyze new opportunities. The graphical map in our Amazing Secrets book looks like a pyramid.

FIELD POSITION

You can attack from some positions easily.
Disaster arises when you try to return to them.
These are entangling positions.
These field positions are one-sided.
Wait until your enemy is unprepared.
You can then attack from these positions and win.
Avoid a well prepared enemy.
You will try to attack and lose.
Since you can't return, you will meet disaster.
These field positions offer no advantage.

I cannot leave some positions without losing an advantage.
If the enemy leaves this ground, he also loses an advantage.
We call these supporting field positions.
These positions strengthen you.
The enemy may try to entice me away.
Still, I will hold my position.
You must entice the enemy to leave.
You then strike him as he is leaving.
These field positions offer an advantage.

Some field positions are constricted.
I try to get to these positions before the enemy does.
You must fill these areas and await the enemy.
Sometimes, the enemy will reach them first.
If he fills them, do not follow him.
However, if he fails to fill them, you can go after him.

Some field positions give you a barricade.
I get to these positions before the enemy does.
You occupy their southern, sunny heights and wait for the enemy.
Sometimes the enemy occupies these areas first.
If so, entice him away.
Never go after him.

Some field positions are too spread out.
Your force may seem equal to the enemy.
Still you will lose if you provoke a battle.
If you fight, you will not have any advantage.

These are the six types of field positions.
Each battleground has its own rules.
As a commander, you must know where to go.
You must examine each position closely.



Some armies can be outmaneuvered.
Some armies are too lax.
Some armies fall down.
Some armies fall apart.
Some armies are disorganized.
Some armies must retreat.

Know all six of these weaknesses.
They lead to losses on both good and bad ground.
They all arise from the army's commander.

FIELD POSITION

One general can command a force equal to the enemy.
Still his enemy outflanks him.
This means that his army can be outmaneuvered.

Another can have strong soldiers, but weak officers.
This means that his army will be too lax.

Another has strong officers but weak soldiers.
This means that his army will fall down.

Another has sub-commanders that are angry and defiant.
They attack the enemy and fight their own battles.
As a commander, he cannot know the battlefield.
This means that his army will fall apart.

Another general is weak and easygoing.
He fails to make his orders clear.
His officers and men lack direction,
This shows in his military formations.
This means that his army will be disorganized.

Another general fails to predict the enemy.
He pits his small forces against larger ones.
He puts his weak forces against stronger ones.
He fails to pick his fights correctly.
This means that his army must retreat.

You must know all about these six weaknesses.
You must understand the philosophies that lead to defeat.
When a general arrives, you can know what he will do.
You must study each one carefully.



You must control your field position.
It will always strengthen your army.

You must predict the enemy to overpower him and win.
You must analyze the obstacles, dangers, and distances.
This is the best way to command.

Understand your field position before you go to battle.
Then you will win.
You can fail to understand your field position and still fight.
Then you will lose.

You must provoke battle when you will certainly win.
It doesn't matter what you are ordered.
The government may order you not to fight.
Despite that, you must always fight when you will win.

Sometimes provoking a battle will lead to a loss.
The government may order you to fight.
Despite that, you must avoid battle when you will lose.

You must advance without desiring praise.
You must retreat without fearing shame.
The only correct move is to preserve your troops.
This is how you serve your country.
This is how you reward your nation.



Note: How do the six weaknesses of general's relate to the six different field positions? Each weakness is tied to and accentuated by a specific position, or type of opportunity.

Think of your soldiers as little children.
You can make them follow you into a deep river.
Treat them as your beloved children.
You can lead them all to their deaths.

Some leaders are generous, but cannot use their men.
They love their men, but cannot command them.
Their men are unruly and disorganized.
These leaders create spoiled children.
Their soldiers are useless.



You may know what your soldiers will do in an attack.
You may not know if the enemy is vulnerable to attack.
You will then win only half the time.
You may know that the enemy is vulnerable to attack.
You may not know if your men are capable of attacking them.
You will still win only half the time.
You may know that the enemy is vulnerable to attack.
You may know that your men are ready to attack.
You may not know how to position yourself in the field for battle.
You will still win only half the time.

You must know how to make war.
You can then act without confusion.
You can attempt anything.

We say:

Know the enemy and know yourself.

Your victory will be painless.

Know the weather and the field.

Your victory will be complete.



Note: The last part of this chapter cannot be properly understood unless you can relate it specifically to the six field positions and six weaknesses that start this chapter. You cannot understand the first part of this chapter unless you understand the relationships between the competitive unit and its environment and between the leader and his organization that are defined in the very first chapter.

TYPES OF TERRAIN

Sun Tzu said:

Use the art of war.

Know when the terrain will scatter you.

Know when the terrain will be easy.

Know when the terrain will be disputed.

Know when the terrain is open.

Know when the terrain is intersecting.

Know when the terrain is dangerous.

Know when the terrain is bad.

Know when the terrain is confined.

Know when the terrain is deadly.

Warring parties must sometimes fight inside their own territory.

This is scattering terrain.

When you enter hostile territory, your penetration is shallow.

This is easy terrain.

Some terrain gives me an advantageous position.

But it gives others an advantageous position as well.

This will be disputed terrain.

I can use some terrain to advance easily.
Others, however, can use it to move against me.
This is open terrain.

Everyone shares access to a given area.
The first one there can gather a larger group than anyone else.
This is intersecting terrain.

You can penetrate deeply into hostile territory.
Then many hostile cities are behind you.
This is dangerous terrain.

There are mountain forests.
There are rugged hills.
There are marshes.
Everyone confronts these obstacles on a campaign.
They make bad terrain.

In some areas, the passage is narrow.
You are closed in as you enter and exit them.
In this type of area, a few people can attack our much larger force.
This is confined terrain.

You can sometimes survive only if you fight quickly.
You will die if you delay.
This is deadly terrain.

Note: this chapter title is also very misleading. It more accurately describes the stages that a competitive campaign goes over time through rather than physical positions.

TYPES OF TERRAIN

To be successful, you control scattering terrain by not fighting.

Control easy terrain by not stopping.

Control disputed terrain by not attacking.

Control open terrain by staying with the enemy's forces.

Control intersecting terrain by uniting with your allies.

Control dangerous terrain by plundering.

Control bad terrain by keeping on the move.

Control confined terrain by using surprise.

Control deadly terrain by fighting.



Go to an area that helps you in waging war.

Use it to cut off the enemy's contact between his front and back lines.

Prevent his small parties from relying on his larger force.

Stop his strong divisions from rescuing his weak ones.

Prevent his officers from getting his men together.

Chase his soldiers apart to stop them from amassing.

Harass them to prevent their ranks from forming.

When joining battle gives you an advantage, you must do it.

When it isn't to your benefit, you must avoid it.

A daring soldier may ask:

"A large, organized enemy army and its general are coming.

What do I do to prepare for them?"

Note: You must understand the chapter's larger organization. After the introduction, each individual section explains one stage of competition (type of terrain) in more detail. Without knowing which stage is being examined, you miss the point of the advice.

Tell him:

“First seize an area that the enemy must have.

Then they will pay attention to you.

Mastering speed is the essence of war.

Take advantage of a large enemy’s inability to keep up.

Use a philosophy of avoiding difficult situations.

Attack the area where he doesn’t expect you.”



You must use the philosophy of an invader.

Invade deeply and then concentrate your forces.

This controls your men without oppressing them.

Get your supplies from the riches of the territory.

It is sufficient to supply your whole army.

Take care of your men and do not overtax them.

Your *esprit de corps* increases your momentum.

Keep your army moving and plan for surprises.

Make it difficult for the enemy to count your forces.

Position your men where there is no place to run.

They will then face death without fleeing.

They will find a way to survive.

Your officers and men will fight to their utmost.

Military officers that are committed lose their fear.

When they have nowhere to run, they must stand firm.

Deep in enemy territory, they are captives.

Since they cannot escape, they will fight.

TYPES OF TERRAIN

Commit your men completely.
Without being posted, they will be on guard.
Without being asked, they will get what is needed.
Without being forced, they will be dedicated.
Without being given orders, they can be trusted.

Stop them from guessing by removing all their doubts.
Stop them from dying by giving them no place to run.

Your officers may not be rich.
Nevertheless, they still desire plunder.
They may die young.
Nevertheless, they still want to live forever.

You must order the time of attack.
Officers and men may sit and weep until their lapels are wet.
When they stand up, tears may stream down their cheeks.
Put them in a position where they cannot run.
They will show the greatest courage under fire.



Make good use of war.
This demands instant reflexes.
You must develop these instant reflexes.
Act like an ordinary mountain snake.
Someone can strike at your head.
You can then attack with your tail
Someone can strike at your tail.
You can then attack with your head.
Someone can strike at your middle.
You can then attack with both your head and tail.

A daring soldier asks:

“Can any army imitate these instant reflexes?”

We answer:

“It can.”

To command and get the most of proud people, you must study adversity.

People work together when they are in the same boat during a storm.

In this situation, one rescues the other just as the right hand helps the left.

Use adversity correctly.

Tether your horses and bury your wagon's wheels.

Still, you can't depend on this alone.

An organized force is braver than lone individuals.

This is the art of organization.

Put the tough and weak together.

You must also use the terrain.

Make good use of war.

Unite your men as one.

Never let them give up.



The commander must be a military professional.

This requires confidence and detachment.

You must maintain dignity and order.

You must control what your men see and hear.

They must follow you without knowing your plans.

TYPES OF TERRAIN

You can reinvent your men's roles.

You can change your plans.

You can use your men without their understanding.

You must shift your campgrounds.

You must take detours from the ordinary routes.

You must use your men without giving them your strategy.

A commander provides what his army needs now.

You must be willing to climb high and then kick away your ladder.

You must be able to lead your men deeply into your enemy's territory and then find a way to create the opportunity that you need.

You must drive men like a flock of sheep.

You must drive them to march.

You must drive them to attack.

You must never let them know where you are headed.

You must unite them into a great army.

You must then drive them against all opposition.

This is the job of a true commander.

You must adapt to the different terrain.

You must adapt to find an advantage.

You must manage your people's affections.

You must study all these skills.



Always use the philosophy of invasion.
Deep invasions concentrate your forces.
Shallow invasions scatter your forces.
When you leave your country and cross the border, you must take control.

This is always critical ground.
You can sometimes move in any direction.

This is always intersecting ground.
You can penetrate deeply into a territory.

This is always dangerous ground.
You penetrate only a little way.

This is always easy ground.
Your retreat is closed and the path ahead tight.

This is always confined ground.
There is sometimes no place to run.
This is always deadly ground.

To use scattering terrain correctly, we must inspire our men's devotion.

On easy terrain, we must keep in close communication.

On disputed terrain, we should try to hamper the enemy's progress.

On open terrain, we must carefully defend our chosen position.

On intersecting terrain, we must solidify our alliances.

On dangerous terrain, we must ensure our food supplies.

On bad terrain, we must keep advancing along the road.

On confined terrain, we must barricade a stronghold on the high ground.

On deadly terrain, we must show what we can do by killing the enemy.

TYPES OF TERRAIN

Make your men feel like an army.
Surround them and they will defend themselves.
If they cannot avoid it, they will fight.
If they are under pressure, they will obey.



Do the right thing when you don't know your different enemies' plans.
Don't attempt to meet them.

You don't know the local mountains, forests, hills and marshes?
Then you cannot march the army.
You don't have local guides?
You won't get any of the benefits of the terrain.

There are many factors in war.
You may lack knowledge of any one of them.
If so, it is wrong to take a nation into war.

You must be able to dominate a nation at war.
Divide a big nation before they are able to gather a large force.
Increase your enemy's fear.
Prevent his forces from getting together and organizing.

Do the right thing and don't try to compete for outside alliances.
You won't have to fight for authority.
Trust only yourself and your own resources.
This increases the enemy's uncertainty.
You can force one of his allies to pull out.
His whole nation can fall.

THE ART OF WAR

Distribute plunder without worrying about agreements.
Halt without the government's command.
Attack with the whole strength of your army.
Use your army as if it was a single man.

Attack with skill.
Do not discuss it.
Attack when you have an advantage.
Do not talk about the dangers.
When you can launch your army into deadly ground, even if it stumbles, it can still survive.
You can be weakened in a deadly battle and yet be stronger afterward.

Even a large force can fall into misfortune.
If you fall behind, however, you can still turn defeat into victory.
You must use the skills of war.
To survive, you must adapt yourself to your enemy's purpose.
You must stay with him no matter where he goes.
It may take a thousand miles to kill the general.
If you correctly understand him, you can find the skill to do it.



Manage your government correctly at the start of a war.
Close your borders and tear up passports.
Block the passage of envoys.
Encourage politicians at headquarters to stay out of it.
You must use any means to put an end to politics.
Your enemy's people will leave you an opening.
You must instantly invade through it.

TYPES OF TERRAIN

Immediately seize a place that they love.

Do it quickly.

Trample any border to pursue the enemy.

Use your judgment about when to fight.

Doing the right thing at the start of war is like approaching a woman.

Your enemy's men must open the door.

After that, you should act like a streaking rabbit.

The enemy will be unable to catch you.



Note: In our various books, we have even been able to apply Sun Tzu advice to a variety of competitive challenges. We have even been able to adapt it line for line to winning love in the battle between the sexes. Here, Sun Tzu says specifically (in his own subtle way) that competition in war is no different from competition in romance.

ATTACKING WITH FIRE

Sun Tzu said:

There are five ways of attacking with fire.

The first is burning troops.

The second is burning supplies.

The third is burning supply transport.

The fourth is burning storehouses.

The fifth is burning camps.

To make fire, you must have the resources.

To build a fire, you must prepare the raw materials.

To attack with fire, you must be in the right season.

To start a fire, you must have the time.

Choose the right season.

The weather must be very dry.

Choose the right time.

Pick a season when the grass is as high as the side of a cart.

You can tell the proper days by the stars in the night sky.

You want days when the wind rises in the morning.

Everyone attacks with fire.

You must create five different situations with fire and be able to adjust to them.

You start a fire inside the enemy's camp.

Then attack the enemy's periphery.

You launch a fire attack, but the enemy remains calm.

Wait and do not attack.

The fire reaches its height.

Follow its path if you can.

If you can't follow it, stay where you are.

Spreading fires on the outside of camp can kill.

You can't always get fire inside the enemy's camp.

Take your time in spreading it.

Set the fire when the wind is at your back.

Don't attack into the wind.

Daytime winds last a long time.

Night winds fade quickly.

Every army must know how to deal with the five attacks by fire.

Use many men to guard against them.



Note: How do you use fire in your competitive battles? Again, this chapter is not really about fire but about leveraging environmental forces. Notice how the topic of fire seems to go away after this point, but the real topic doesn't change. It is all about environment.

When you use fire to assist your attacks, you are clever.
Water can add force to an attack.
You can also use water to disrupt an enemy.
It doesn't, however, take his resources.



You win in battle by getting the opportunity to attack.
It is dangerous if you fail to study how to accomplish this achievement.
As commander, you cannot waste your opportunities.

We say:

A wise leader plans success.
A good general studies it.
If there is little to be gained, don't act.
If there is little to win, do not use your men.
If there is no danger, don't fight.

As leader, you cannot let your anger interfere with the success of your forces.
As commander, you cannot fight simply because you are enraged.
Join the battle only when it is in your advantage to act.
If there is no advantage in joining a battle, stay put.

Anger can change back into happiness.
Rage can change back into joy.
A nation once destroyed cannot be brought back to life.
Dead men do not return to the living.

This fact must make a wise leader cautious.
A good general is on guard.

Your philosophy must be to keep the nation peaceful and
the army intact.



USING SPIES

Sun Tzu said:

Altogether, building an army requires thousands of men.
They invade and march thousands of miles.
Whole families are destroyed.
Other families must be heavily taxed.
Every day, thousands of dollars must be spent.

Internal and external events force people to move.
They are unable to work while on the road.
They are unable to find and hold a useful job.
This affects seventy percent of thousands of families.

You can watch and guard for years.
Then a single battle can determine victory in a day.
Despite this, bureaucrats hold onto their salary money too
dearly.
They remain ignorant of the enemy's condition.
The result is cruel.

They are not leaders of men.
They are not servants of the state.
They are not masters of victory.

USING SPIES

You need a creative leader and a worthy commander.
You must move your troops to the right places to beat others.

You must accomplish your attack and escape unharmed.
This requires foreknowledge.

You can obtain foreknowledge.

You can't get it from demons or spirits.

You can't see it from professional experience.

You can't check it with analysis.

You can only get it from other people.

You must always know the enemy's situation.



You must use five types of spies.

You need local spies.

You need inside spies.

You need double agents.

You need doomed spies.

You need surviving spies.

You need all five types of spies.

No one must discover your methods.

You will be then able to put together a true picture.

This is the commander's most valuable resource.

You need local spies.

Get them by hiring people from the countryside.

You need inside spies.

Win them by subverting government officials.

You need double agents.

Discover enemy agents and convert them.

THE ART OF WAR

You need doomed spies.
Deceive professionals into being captured.
We let them know our orders.
They then take those orders to our enemy.

You need surviving spies.
Someone must return with a report.



Your job is to build a complete army.
No relations are as intimate as they are with spies.
No rewards are too generous for spies.
No work is as secret as that of spies.

If you aren't clever and wise, you can't use spies.
If you aren't fair and just, you can't use spies.
If you can't see the small subtleties, you won't get the truth
from spies.

Pay attention to small, trifling details!
Spies are helpful in every area.

Spies are the first to hear information, so they must not
spread it.
Spies who give your location or talk to others must be killed
along with those to whom they have talked.



Note: This chapter, though it comes at the end, is in many respects the foundation of Sun Tzu's complete system. The five types of spies tie directly to the five factors of competitive system in the first chapter. Can you match them up on your own? Our books and training make it easy!

USING SPIES

You may want to attack an army's position.
You may want to attack a certain fortification.
You may want to kill people in a certain place.
You must first know the guarding general.
You must know his left and right flanks.
You must know his hierarchy.
You must know the way in.
You must know where different people are stationed.
We must demand this information from our spies.

I want to know the enemy spies in order to convert new spies into my men.
You find a source of information and bribe them.
You must bring them in with you.
You must obtain them as double agents and use them as your emissaries.

Do this correctly and carefully.
You can contact both local and inside spies and obtain their support.
Do this correctly and carefully.
You create doomed spies by deceiving professionals.
You can use them to give false information.
Do this correctly and carefully.
You must have surviving spies capable of bringing you information at the right time.

THE ART OF WAR

These are the five different types of intelligence work.
You must be certain to master them all.
You must be certain to create double agents.
You cannot afford to be too cheap in creating these double agents.



This technique created the success of ancient emperors.
This is how they held their dynasties.

You must always be careful of your success.
Learn from the past examples.

Be a smart commander and good general.
You do this by using your best and brightest people for spying.
This is how you achieve the greatest success.
This is how you meet the necessities of war.
The whole army's position and ability to move depends on these spies.



Note: To properly understand and really use what you just read, you would need to re-read the book a dozen or so times and even then, unless you could study the original Chinese characters, you will still miss half of what is hidden in the book. Even then, it would be nearly impossible to remember all the details in the book unless you first understand the graphical maps that provide its foundation. It is much easier to buy one of our books and get access to our training site. If your investment in time to mean something, go now to www.clearbridge.com and order one of our books.