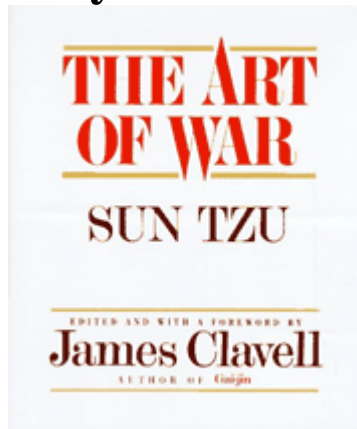


PRESENTS
INSIDE THE GURU MIND SERIES

The Art of War

By Sun Tzu



**Edited and with a Foreword by
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“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles”

Sun Tzu

I. Laying Plans

Five constant factors that govern the art of war

- **The Moral Law**- causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they may follow him any time at any circumstances.
- **Heaven**- signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.
- **Earth**- comprises great and small distances, danger and security, open ground and narrow passes, the chances of life and death.
- **The Commander**- the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage and strictness.
- **Method and Discipline**- marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the gradations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.

Seven military conditions that can be used as predictors of victory or defeat:

- Which of the two sovereigns is imbued with the Moral Law?
- Which of the two generals has the most ability?
- With whom lie the advantages derived from Heaven and Earth?
- On which side is discipline more rigorously enforced?
- Which army is the stronger?
- On which side are officers and men more highly trained?
- In which army is there the most absolute certainty that merit will be properly rewarded and misdeeds summarily punished?

Warfare is based on deception. When able to attack – must seem unable; when using forces – must seem inactive; when near – must seem far away; when far away – must seem near. Entice enemy with baits. Feign disorder and crush him. If enemy is secure at all points, be prepared. If enemy is superior in strength, evade him. If your opponent is of choleric temper, irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them. Attack when enemy is unprepared, appear when not expected.

Make many calculations before the battle is fought. When ordinary rules don't apply in the situation, modify plans accordingly.

II. On Waging War

- Bring war to a close with rapidity to prevent long delays. Cleverness has never been associated with long delays. If victory is long in coming, the men's weapons will grow dull and their ardor will be dampened, your strength will be exhausted.
- Be ahead of your opponent. This counts for more than either numerical superiority or the nicest calculations- this is the value of time.
- Forage on the enemy. One cartload of the enemy's provision is equivalent to twenty of one's own.
- In order to kill the enemy, the warriors should be roused to anger.
- Reward the men who defeat the enemy so that they may have a keen desire to fight and be victorious.
- In war, let your great object be victory and not lengthy campaigns. The leader of the armies is the arbiter of the people's fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril.

III. The Sheathed Sword

Policies to remember in generalship (in the right order)

- Balk the enemy's plans
- Prevent the junction of the enemy's forces
- Attack the enemy's army in the field

The worst policy is to besiege walled cities, because the preparation of mantlets, movable shelters, and various implements of war will take up three months; piling up of mounds over against the walls will take over three months.

The general should control his irritation. Otherwise, he will launch his men to the assault like swarming ants, with the result that one third of his men are slain, while the town remains untaken. Such is the disastrous effects of a siege.

A good leader subdues the enemy without any fighting; he captures cities without laying siege; he overthrows the kingdom without lengthy operations in the field; he manages his forces to remain intact so his triumph is complete without losing a man.

The rule in war: if forces are ten to the enemy's one, surround him; if five to one, attack him; if twice as numerous, divide the army into two, one to meet the enemy in front, and the other to fall upon his rear; if he

replies to the frontal attack, crushed from behind; if to the rearward attack, crushed in front.

If equally matched, offer battle; if slightly inferior in numbers, avoid the enemy; if quite unequal in every way, flee from him.

Three ways in which a sovereign can bring misfortune upon his army:

- By commanding the army to advance or retreat, being ignorant that it cannot obey. This is called hobbling the army.
- By attempting to govern an army in the same way he administers a kingdom. Humanity and justice are the principles on which one governs a state, while opportunism and flexibility are the military virtues needed in leading an army.
- By employing the officers of his army without discrimination, through ignorance of the military principle of adaptation to circumstances. This shakes the confidence of the soldiers.

Five essentials to victory:

- Know when to fight and when not to.
- Know how to handle both superior and inferior forces.
- Animate by the same spirit throughout all its ranks.
- Being prepared while waiting to take the enemy unprepared.
- Has the military capacity and not interfered with by the sovereign.

IV. Tactics

Security against defeat implies defensive tactics; ability to defeat the enemy means taking the offensive. Standing on the defensive indicates insufficient strength; attacking means abundance of strength.

The general who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret places; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus, a skillful general has the ability to protect himself and his army without losing the ability to gain complete victory.

True excellence is to plan secretly, to move surreptitiously, to foil the enemy's intentions and balk his schemes to win without shedding a drop of blood. A good fighter wins the battle by making no mistakes. Making no mistakes is a certainty of victory, for it means conquering an enemy that is already defeated. He puts himself into position that makes defeat impossible and does not miss the moment for defeating the enemy.

The consummate leader cultivates the Moral Law and strictly adheres to method and discipline. The power to control success is in his hands.

V. Energy

Sun Tzu believes that the principle used to control a large force is similar to that of a few men. Fighting with a large army is not different from fighting with a small one; it is just a matter of instituting signs and signals. In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect method will be needed to secure victory.

In battle, there are only two methods of attack – the direct and the indirect, yet combinations of these two give rise to an endless series of maneuvers. The possibilities of their combination can not be exhausted; it is like moving in a circle - it never comes to an end.

The good fighter will be terrible in his onset and prompt in his decision. The clever combatant looks at the effect of combined energy, and does not require too much from individuals. He takes individual talent into account, and uses each man according to his capabilities; he does not demand perfection from the untalented.

When he applies combined energy, his fighting men become like rolling stones. Thus the energy developed by good fighting men is as the momentum of a round stone rolled down a mountain thousands of feet in height.

VI. Weak Points and Strong

In war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak. He who can modify his tactics correctly in relation to his opponent is ensured of victory.

Whoever is first in the field and awaits the coming of the enemy will be fresh for the fight; whoever is second in the field and has to hasten to battle will arrive exhausted.

If the enemy is taking his ease, harass him; if quietly encamped, force him to move; if well supplied with food, starve him out. Appear at points that the enemy must hasten to defend; march swiftly to places not expected.

Success in attacks is sure if they are done in places that are undefended. Ensure the safety of defense by holding positions that cannot be attacked. A general skillful in attack makes his opponent not know what to defend; and he who is skillful in defense makes his opponent not know what to attack.

He who is good in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven, making it impossible for the enemy to guard against his moves. He who is skilled

in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth, making it impossible for the enemy to estimate his whereabouts.

One may advance and be irresistible if you make for the enemy's weak points; may retire and be safe from pursuit if movements are more rapid than those of the enemy. Attack places that the enemy will be obliged to relieve. If the enemy is the invading party, cut his line of communications and occupy the roads by which he will have to return; if invaders, direct the attack against the sovereign himself.

If not ready to fight, prevent the enemy from engaging by throwing something odd and unaccountable in his way.

Keep the forces concentrated while the enemy's divided by remaining invisible while discovering the enemy's dispositions. Form a single united body while forcing the enemy to split up into fractions. Hence there will be a whole, which is more superior, pitted against separate parts of a whole. The intended spot to fight must not be made known so that the enemy will have to prepare against possible attack at several different points, this will force the enemy to distribute his forces in many places; thus, the number to face at any given time will have to be proportionately few. If the opponent sends reinforcement everywhere, he will everywhere be weak.

Though the enemy is stronger in numbers, it is possible to prevent him from fighting by scheming to discover his plans. Rouse him, and learn the principle of his activity or inactivity. Force him to reveal himself to find out his vulnerable spots. Compare the opposing army with own to know where strength is abundant and where it is deficient.

In making tactical dispositions, the highest pitch one can attain is to conceal them.

VII. Maneuvering

In war, the general receives his commands from the sovereign. First thing to do is to build an army and concentrate his forces, blend and harmonize the different elements before pitching the camp.

The next thing to do is tactical maneuvering which is the most difficult part. The difficulty lies in turning the devious into direct, and misfortune into gain. Ponder and deliberate before making a move. A good general should master the artifice of deviation, where he entices the enemy to get out of the way, start before the enemy to contrive to reach the goal before the opponent.

Maneuvering with an army is advantageous; with an undisciplined multitude, most dangerous. If a fully equipped army is set to march in order to snatch an advantage, there are big chances that it will be late. On the other hand, if a flying column is detached, it means sacrifice of its baggage and stores.

One cannot enter into alliances until he is acquainted with the designs of his neighbors; not fit to lead an army on the march unless he is familiar with the face of the country – its mountains and forests, its pitfalls and precipices, its marshes and swamps.

Practice dissimulation. Move only if there is a real advantage to be gained. Let circumstances decide whether to concentrate or to divide the troops. Let rapidity be like that of wind, compactness that of the forest; in raiding and plundering, be like fire; in immovability be like a mountain. Let the plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and move like a thunderbolt. When a countryside is plundered, divide the spoil among the soldiers; when a new territory is captured, allot it for the benefit of the soldiery.

On the field of battle, the spoken word does not carry far enough; hence the institution of gongs and drums. Nor can ordinary objects be seen clearly enough; hence the institution of banners and flags. In night fighting, use signal fires and drums, and in fighting by day, use flags and banners, as means of influencing ears and eyes of the army. **This is the art of handling large masses of men.**

A soldier's spirit is keenest in the morning; and in the evening, his mind is bent on returning to camp. Avoid an army when its spirit is keen and attack when it is sluggish and inclined to return. **This is the art of studying moods.** Disciplined and calm, he awaits the appearance of disorder among the enemy – **this is the art of self-possession.**

Be near the goal while the enemy is still far from it, wait at ease while the enemy is toiling and struggling, be well-fed while the enemy is famished – **this is the art of husbanding one's strength.** Refrain from intercepting an enemy while whose banners are in perfect order, refrain from attacking an army drawn up in calm and confident array – **this is the art of studying circumstances.**

When surrounding an army, leave an outlet free to make him believe there is a road to safety, and thus, prevent his fighting with the courage of despair. Do not press a desperate foe too hard – **such is the art of warfare.**

XIII. Variation of Tactics

The general who understands the advantages that goes with variation of tactics knows how to handle his troops. Considerations of advantages and of disadvantages should be blended together.

When in difficult country, do not encamp. Where high roads intersect, join hands with your allies. Do not linger in dangerously isolated positions. In hemmed-in situations, you must use stratagem; in desperate position, you must fight. There are roads that must not be followed, towns that must not be besieged. There are armies that must not be attacked, positions that must not be contested, and commands of the sovereign that must not be obeyed.

Reduce the hostile chiefs by inflicting damage on them; trouble them, keep them constantly engaged; hold out specious allurements, and make them rush to any given point.

The art of war teaches to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy's not coming, but on own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of the enemy's not attacking, but rather on the fact that own position has been made unassailable.

There are five besetting sins of a general that are ruinous to the conduct of war: recklessness which leads to destruction; cowardice which leads to capture; delicacy of honor which is sensitive to shame; hasty temper which can be provoked by insults; and over-solicitude for his men which exposes him to worry and trouble.

IX. The Army on the March

Sun Tzu asserts that a general who exercises no forethought but makes light of his opponents is sure to be captured by them. When encamping the army, pass quickly over mountains, and keep in the neighborhood of valleys. Camp in high places facing the sun; not on high hills, but on knolls or hillocks elevated about the surrounding country. Never climb heights in order to fight. After crossing a river, get far away from it. When an invading force crosses a river in its onward march, do not advance to meet it in midstream. It is best to let half the army get across, and then deliver the attack.

If anxious to fight, never meet the invader near a river he has to cross. Moor your craft higher up than the enemy, and facing the sun. Never move upstream to meet the enemy.

In crossing salt marshes, the sole concern should be to get over them quickly without any delay, because of the lack of fresh water, the poor quality of the herbage, and because they are low, flat, and exposed to attack. If forced to fight in a salt marsh, position self near water and grass and keep back positioned against a clump of trees.

In dry, level country, take up easily accessible position with rising ground to your right and on your rear, so that the danger may be in front, and safety lie behind.

All armies prefer high ground to low and sunny places to dark. Low ground is not only damp and unhealthy, but also disadvantageous for fighting. Camp on hard ground so that your army will be free from disease of any kind. When in a hill or a bank, occupy the sunny side, with the slope on your right rear. Always utilize the natural advantages of the ground.

X. Terrain

Six kinds of terrain

Accessible ground- can be freely traversed by both sides. With ground of this nature, beat the enemy by occupying the raised and sunny spots; carefully guard the line of supplies to fight with advantage.

Entangling ground- can be abandoned but is hard to reoccupy. With this ground, you may sally forth and defeat enemy if he is unprepared. But, disaster will ensue if the enemy is prepared for your coming.

Temporizing ground- when the position is such that neither side gains by making the first move, and the situation remains at a deadlock. In this position, it is advisable not to stir forth, but rather to retreat even though the enemy offers an attractive bait, thus enticing the enemy in his turn; then when part of his army has come out, attack with advantage.

Narrow passes- occupy them first then garrison them strongly and await the advent of the enemy. If the enemy occupies a pass, do not go after him if the pass is fully garrisoned.

Precipitous ground- if you precede your adversary, occupy the raised and sunny spots, and there wait for him to come up. If the enemy has occupied precipitous heights first, do not follow him, but retreat and try to entice him away.

Positions at a great distance from the enemy- if the strengths of the two armies are equal, do not provoke a battle as fighting will be to your disadvantage.

Faults for which the general is responsible: flight, insubordination, collapse, ruin, disorganization, and rout.

Regard the soldiers as own sons, and they will follow into the deepest valleys, and they will stand by even unto death.

XI. The Nine Situations

The art of war recognizes nine varieties of ground

Dispersive- when the chieftain is fighting in his own territory, the soldiers being near to their homes are likely to seize the opportunity to see their wives and

children, and scatter in every direction. On this ground, inspire the men to be with unity of purpose, but fight not!

Facile- when the chieftain has penetrated into hostile territory, but to no great distance. On this ground, see that there is close connection between all parts of the army, and halt not!

Contentious- ground that is of great advantage to either side. On this ground, hurry up the rear guard, but attack not!

Open- ground on which each side has liberty of movement. On this ground, keep a vigilant eye on the defenses, fearing a surprise attack, and do not try to block the enemy's way!

Ground of intersecting highways- this forms the key to three contiguous states, so that he who occupies it first has most of the empire at his command. On this ground, consolidate alliances and join hands with them!

Serious ground- when the army has penetrated into the heart of a hostile country, leaving a number of fortified cities in its rear. On this ground, ensure a continuous stream of supplies, and gather in plunder!

Difficult- mountain forests, rugged steeps, marshes and fens- all places that are hard to traverse. On this ground, keep pushing on along the road, and keep steadily on the march!

Hemmed-in- ground that is reached through narrow gorges, and from which one can only retire by tortuous paths, so that a small number of the enemy would suffice to crush a large body of men. On this ground, block any way of retreat to make it seem that the army intends to defend the position, whereas the real intention is to burst suddenly through the enemy's line, and resort to stratagem!

Desperate- ground on which one can only be saved from destruction by fighting without delay. On this ground, proclaim to the soldiers the hopelessness of saving their lives, and then fight!

The principle on which to manage an army is to set up one standard of courage that all must reach. How to make the best of both strong and weak is a question involving the proper use of ground. The skillful general leads his army as though he were leading a single man by the hand.

Success in warfare is gained by carefully accommodating to the enemy's purpose.

XII. Attack by Fire

Five ways to attack with fire

- Burn soldiers in their camp
- Burn stores
- Burn baggage trains
- Burn arsenals and magazines
- Hurl dropping fire among the enemy

To attack with fire, there should be means available; the materials for raising fire should always be kept in readiness.

Five possible developments that one should be prepared to meet: when fire breaks out inside the enemy's camp, respond at once with an attack from without; if there is an outbreak of fire, but the enemy's soldiers remain quiet, bide time and do not attack; when the force of the flames has reached its height, follow it up with an attack, if that is possible, if not, stay at the present place; if it is possible to make an assault with fire from without, do not wait for it to break out within, but deliver attack at a favorable moment.

When starting a fire, be to the windward of it; do not attack from the leeward. If the wind is in the east, begin burning to the east of the enemy, and follow up the attack from that side.

The enlightened ruler is heedful and full of caution.

XIII. The Use of Spies

Five classes of spies

Local- employing the services of the inhabitants of a district. In the enemy's country, win people over by kind treatment and use them as spies.

Internal or inward- making use of officials of the enemy. They could be worthy men who have been degraded from office, men who are aggrieved at being in subordinate positions, fickle turncoats who always want to have a foot in each boat. Officials of these kinds should be secretly approached and bound to one's interests by means of rich presents. In this way the state of affairs in the enemy's country and the plans that are being formed can be ascertained. However, it is necessary to take extreme caution when dealing with inward spies.

Converted- getting hold of the enemy's spies and using them for own purposes by means of heavy bribes and liberal promises, detaching them from the enemy's service and inducing them to carry back false information and to spy in turn on their own countrymen.

Doomed- doing certain things openly for purposes of deception, and allowing own spies to know of them and, when betrayed, report them to the enemy. Things are done to deceive own spies and when they are captured in the enemy's lines, they will make an entirely false report, and the enemy will take measures accordingly, only to find out that the information given is wrong. The spies then will be put to death.

Surviving- those who bring back news from the enemy's camp. Your surviving spy must be a man of keen intellect, though in outward appearance a fool; of shabby exterior but with a will of iron. He must be active, robust, endowed with physical strength and courage; thoroughly used to all sorts of dirty work, able to endure hunger and cold, and to put up with shame and ignominy.

When these five kinds are all at work, none can discover the secret system. This is called "divine manipulation of the threads", and it is the sovereign's most precious faculty. Spies are the most important elements in war. The wise general will use the highest intelligence of the army for purposes of spying to achieve great results.

There must be no more intimate relations and more liberally rewarded in the whole army than those maintained with spies. Before using spies, their integrity of character and the extent of their experience and skill should be established first. Manage the spies with benevolence and straightforwardness. Be subtle to know the truth of their reports. Use the spies for every kind of business. They must be commissioned to find out the names of the attendants, aides-de-camp, doorkeepers, and the sentries of the general in command. If a secret piece of news is divulged by a spy before the time is ripe, he must be put to death together with the person to whom the secret was told.

Tempt the converted spy into service by treating him with utmost liberality because it is he who knows which of the local inhabitants are greedy of gain, and which of the officials are open to corruption. It is through the information brought by this spy that the army can acquire and employ local and inward spies. It is through his information that can cause the doomed spy to carry false tidings to the enemy. It is also by his information that the surviving spy can be used on appointed occasions.