

# SUN-TZU: The Art of Warfare

## Chapter I: On Assessments.

➔ To gauge the outcome of war we must appraise the situation on the basis of the following five criteria, and compare the two sides by assessing relative strengths.

1. The Way (tao) is what brings the thinking of the people in line with the superiors.
2. The Climate
3. The Terrain
4. Command (matter of wisdom, integrity, humanity, courage and discipline)
5. Regulation (organizational effectiveness).

➔ **He who masters these criteria shall take victory** ←

➔ Warfare is the art of deceit. Therefore:

- When able, seem to be unable.
- When ready, seem unready
- When nearby, seem far away.
- When far away, seem near.
- If the enemy seeks advantage, entice him with it
- If he is in disorder, attack and take him
- If he is formidable, prepare against him
- If he is strong, evade him
- If he is incensed, provoke him.
- If he is humble, encourage his arrogance
- If he is rested, wear him down.
- If he is internally harmonious, sow divisiveness ranks
- Attack when he is not prepared.
- Go by way of places where it would not occur to him you would go.

## Chapter II: On Waging Battle.

➔ In joining battle, seek the quick victory. If battle is protracted, your weapons will be blunted and your troops demoralized. A state has never benefited from an extended war.

➔ A state is impoverished by its armies when it has to supply at a great distance. Therefore, a wise commander does his best to feed his army from enemy soil.

## Chapter III: Planning the Attack.

➔ It is best to keep one's own state (and army) intact; to crush the enemy's state (and army) is only second best.

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- ➔ The best military policy is to:
  - First, attack strategies
  - Second, attack alliances
  - Next attack soldiers
  - Worst, walled cities.
  
- ➔ The expert will use his military to subdue the enemy without going into battle.
  
- ➔ There are five factors in anticipating which side will win:
  1. The side that knows when to fight and when not to fight will take the victory.
  2. The side that understands how to deal with numerical superiority and inferiority in the deployment of his troops will take the victory
  3. The side that has superiors and subordinates united in purpose will take the victory.
  4. The side that prepares fields a fully prepared army against one that is not will take victory
  5. The side on which the commander is able and the ruler does not interfere will take victory

### Chapter IV: Strategic Positions

- ➔ The battle is won or lost before it is even fought!
  
- ➔ Invincibility depends on one's self; vulnerability lies with the enemy. Therefore, the expert in battle can make himself invincible, but cannot guarantee for certain the vulnerability of the enemy. Hence it is said: Victory can be anticipated, but it cannot be forced.

### Chapter V: Strategic Advantage.

- ➔ Use the "straightforward" to engage the enemy and the "surprise" to win victory.

### Chapter VI: Weak Points and Strong Points

- ➔ He who first occupies the field of battle to await the enemy will be rested; he who comes later and hastens to battle will be weary.
  - Thus the expert in battle moves the enemy, and is not moved by him
- ➔ Against the expert in the attack, the enemy does not know where to defend, and against the expert in the defense, the enemy does not know where to strike.
  - One is weak because he makes preparations against others; he has strength because he makes others prepare against him
- ➔ Analyze the enemy's battle plan to understand its merits and its weaknesses; provoke him to find out the pattern of his movements; make him show himself to discover the viability of his battle positions; skirmish with him to find out

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where he is strong and where he is vulnerable

→ Avoid the enemy's strong points and strike where he is weak.

### Chapter VII: Armed Contest

→ Unless you know the intentions of the rulers of the neighboring states, you cannot enter into preparatory alliances with them; unless you know the lay of the land – its mountains and forests, its passes and natural hazards, its wetlands and swamps – you cannot deploy an army on it; unless you can employ local scouts, you cannot turn it to your advantage.

- In warfare rely on deceptive maneuvers to establish your ground, calculate advantages in deciding your movements, and divide up and consolidate your forces to make your strategic changes.

→ The art of using troops is this:

- Do not attack the enemy who has the high ground
- Do not go against an enemy that has his back to a hill
- Do not follow an enemy that feigns retreat
- Do not attack the enemy's finest
- Do not swallow the enemy's bait
- Do not obstruct an enemy returning home
- In surrounding the enemy, leave him a way out
- Do not press an enemy that is cornered

### Chapter VIII: Adapting to the Nine Contingencies

→ The art of using troops is this:

- The commander should not make camp on difficult terrain
- He should join with allies at strategically vital intersections
- He should not linger on cutoff terrain
- He should have contingency plans on terrain vulnerable to ambush
- He should take the fight to the enemy on terrain from which there is no way out
- There are roadways not to be travelled, armies not to be attacked, walled cities not to be assaulted, territory not to be contested, and commands from the ruler not to be obeyed

### Chapter IX: Deploy the Army

→ In positioning your armies and assessing the enemy:

- Pass through the mountains keeping to the valleys; when battling in the hills, do not ascend to engage the enemy.
- Crossing water – attack your enemy when he is halfway across. Do not meet his invading force near water. Take the high facing the sunny side that is not down stream from your enemy
- Crossing salt marshes – get through them as soon as possible without delay
- On flatlands – position yourself on open ground, with your right flank

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backing on high ground, and with dangerous ground in front and safe ground behind

- ➔ Avoid steep river gorges, natural wells, box canyons, dense ground cover, quagmires, or natural defiles

### Chapter X: The Terrain

- ➔ These are the six guidelines governing the use of terrain:
  - When the strategic advantages of both sides is about the same, for an army to attack an enemy ten times its size will result in flight.
  - If the troops are strong but the officers weak, the result will be insubordination.
  - If the officers are strong but the troops weak, the result will be deterioration.
  - If your ranking officers are insubordinate, the result will be ruin.
  - If the commander is weak, his officers and troops undisciplined, and his formations in disarray, the result will be chaos.
  - If the commander, unable to assess his enemy, sends a small force to engage a large one, sends his weak troops to attack the enemy's best, and operates without a vanguard of crack troops, the result will be rout.

### Chapter XI: The Nine Kinds of Terrain.

- ➔ Nine kinds of terrain:
  - Scattering terrain: battle on ones own terrain.
  - Marginal terrain: where one has barely penetrated enemy terrain.
  - Contested terrain: ground that gives the advantage to whoever occupies it.
  - Intermediate terrain: ground accessible from both sides.
  - The strategically vital intersection: the point at which the borders of several neighboring states meet.
  - Critical terrain: when an army has penetrated deep into enemy territory and has town and cities at its back.
  - Difficult terrain: mountains and forests, passes and natural hazards.
  - Terrain vulnerable to ambush: ground that gives access through a narrow defile, and where exit is tortuous, allowing an enemy in small numbers to attack our main force.
  - Terrain from which there is no way out: must fight or die.

### Chapter XII: Incendiary Attack.

- ➔ There are five kinds of incendiary attack:
  - Setting fire to personnel.
  - To stores.
  - To transport vehicles and equipment.
  - To munitions.
  - To supply installations.

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## Chapter XIII: Using Spies.

→ Five kinds of spies:

- Local spies-
- Inside agents
- Double agents
- Expendable spies — our own agents who leak false info.
- Unexpendable spies