

Sun Tzu's
THE
ART
OF
WAR

Plus

The Art of Career Building

孫
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兵
法



Chapter 1

計

Analysis (Career Planning)

Although Sun Tzu named his first chapter 計 in Chinese, which translates to “plan” or “planning” in English, his meaning is much closer to what we would call competitive analysis. As you manage your career, you must perform this type of analysis frequently.

In the chapter’s first section, Sun Tzu describes the major components that make up competitive systems.

In the next section, he describes how to directly compare your competitive situation with that of your competitors.

He stresses in the next section the need for good information for competitive analysis, especially information from outsiders.

The discussion in the following section moves from the value of information to the value of controlling information, or what Sun Tzu calls the use of deception. By “deception,” he doesn’t mean dishonesty—on the contrary, honesty is one of the necessary characteristics of a leader. His idea of deception would equate much more closely to consciously controlling other people’s perceptions.

In the chapter’s final section, Sun Tzu introduces the idea that competitive analysis is a quantitative art: a balancing of pros and cons.

All of these ideas are covered in more detail in later chapters, but here he provides an introductory overview.



Analysis

SUN TZU SAID:

This is war. **I**

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.

⁶Your skill comes from five factors.

Study these factors when you plan war.

You must insist on knowing your situation.

1. Discuss philosophy.
2. Discuss the climate.
3. Discuss the ground.
4. Discuss leadership.
5. Discuss military methods.

¹⁴It 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.

Career Planning

I This is career building.

It is the central focus of your professional life.

It is the foundation of prosperity or poverty.

It is the basis of your progress or stagnation.

You must analyze your career.

Five factors determine your professional success.

Evaluate these factors when planning your career.

You must insist on understanding your situation.

1. Think about your professional goals.
2. Think about the trends in the job market.
3. Think about your career options.
4. Think about your job skills.
5. Think about your career-building methods.

Career building begins with your professional goals.

You must see your working life as having a higher purpose than simply earning a paycheck.

Your decisions can lead to failure.

Your decisions can lead to success.

You must be careful and never lie to yourself.