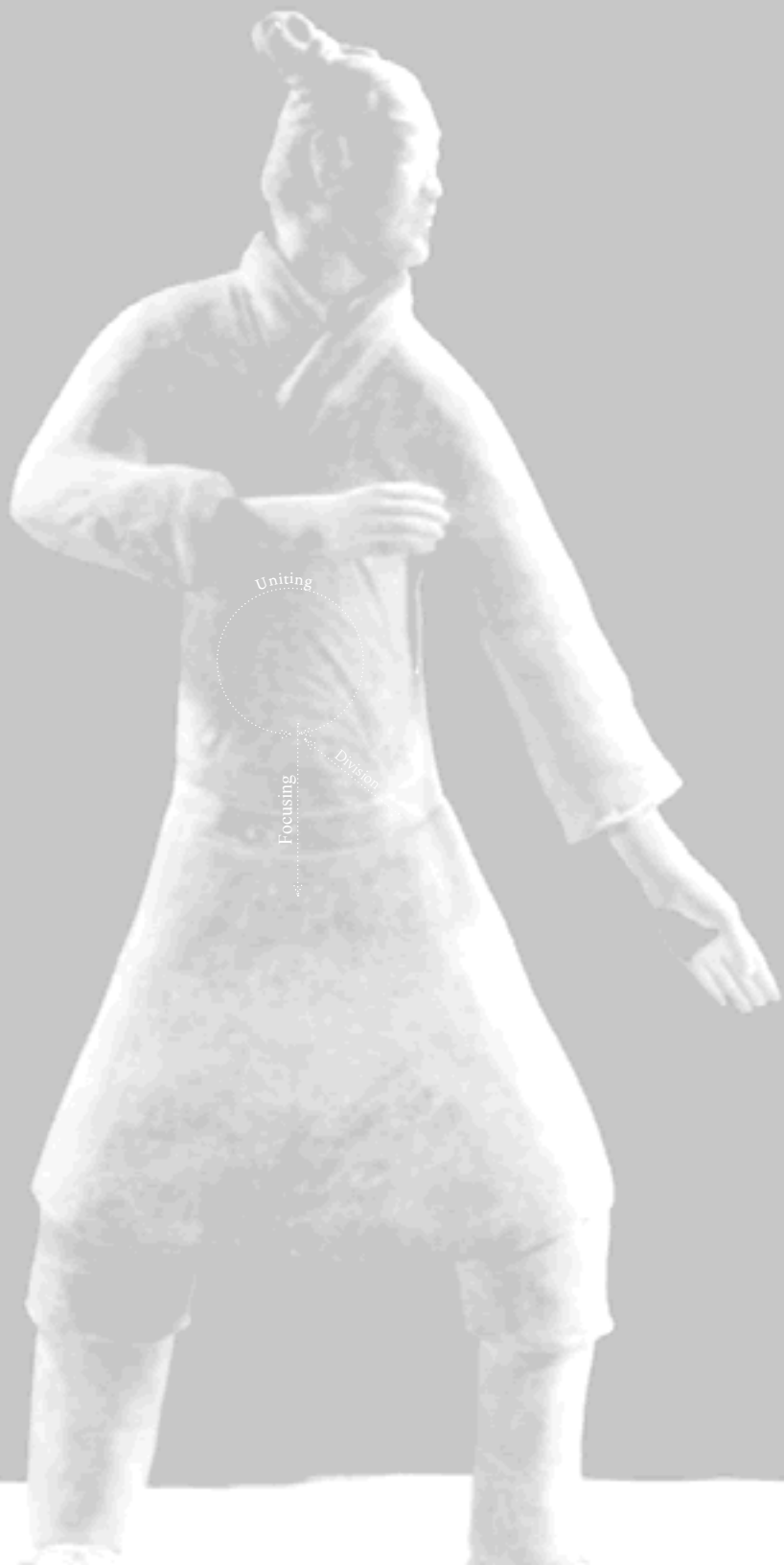


Sun Tzu's
THE
ART
OF
WAR

Plus

The Art of Sales

孫
子
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法



Chapter 3

謀攻

Planning an Attack (Planning Your Territory)

The central topic of this chapter is unity and focus and their effect on the relative strength of an organization. If you are serious about a successful career in sales, this chapter offers invaluable lessons on focusing your efforts within your territory.

In the chapter's first section, Sun Tzu says that unity and focus are required at every level of an organization. The goal of unity is not to win battles, but to succeed without battle.


Sun Tzu then lists the basic forms of attack in descending order of importance. The text warns against the worst of these: laying siege to another's strong position.

In the third section, Sun Tzu suggests an incremental approach to success: fighting small, focused battles where you have the clear advantage. He explains how the relative strength of competitive forces determines your basic tactics.

The text then warns against political divisions within an organization and how these divisions weaken its competitive strength.

Sun Tzu then details the five areas of knowledge that determine your ability to unite and concentrate your forces.

He ends with a warning about the dangers in miscalculating the relative strength of your organization or facing competition.



Planning an Attack

SUN TZU SAID:

Everyone relies on the arts of war. **1**

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.

¹²Unity 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. **2**

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.

Planning Your Territory

- 1** Everything depends on your selling skills.
A focused company is superior.
A diverse company is inferior.
A single product line is easy to sell.
Many different product lines are difficult to sell.
A concentrated effort is successful.
A divided effort fails.
A small territory is strong.
A spread-out territory is weak.
A unified message works well.
A mixed message works poorly.

You can meet a hundred objections and overcome them to win sales.

This doesn't make you a great salesperson.

You want to win sales without raising a single objection.

This is your highest goal.

- 2** It's best to sell before the prospect starts shopping.
The next best is to sell through referrals.
The next best is to show better value than the alternatives.
The worst is to attack a customer's past decisions.

⁵This 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.
It takes three months and still you cannot win.
Then you try to encircle the area.
You use three more months without making progress.
Your command still doesn't succeed and this angers you.
You then try to swarm the city.
This kills a third of your officers and men.
You are still unable to draw the enemy out of the city.
This attack is a disaster.

Make good use of war. **3**
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.

⁸You 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.

What happens when you try to change customers' minds?

You create resistance that works against you.

First, you must prepare arguments against their decisions.

You need to find leverage to change their thinking.

This can take months.

You must be persistent enough to turn them around.

After months of talking, most prospects will still not agree.

When you can't get agreement, you become frustrated.

You try to pressure customers into agreement.

You waste your limited time trying to persuade them.

The result is that you fail to win sales.

This type of selling is a disaster.

3 Make good use of your time.

You can win new customers.

You can do it without a single disagreement.

You can win customers away from their current suppliers.

You don't have to attack their past decisions directly.

You must focus your efforts on avoiding resistance.

You must find ways to win customers quickly.

In sales, you commit everything to winning customers.

Never stop selling when you are with prospects.

You can gain the advantage if you focus.

To do this, you must plan your sales strategy.