

About *Weakness and Strength*

This chapter is about the unity of two seemingly opposing concepts. We can express these opposing concepts in a variety of ways: weakness and strength, emptiness and fullness, ignorance and knowledge, emptiness and satisfaction. While we express these opposing concepts in different ways, Sun Tzu sees them as a single idea. Weakness is the same as emptiness, ignorance, and neediness. Strength is the same as fullness, knowledge, and satisfaction. Both concepts—weakness and strength—are united and dependent upon each other, one continuous quality describing the structure of opportunity in the real world.

The unity of these opposing concepts is critical. Weakness and strength are combined in every competitor and every situation. We all have strengths and we all have weaknesses. More importantly, our strengths and weaknesses do not exist on their own; they arise from the strengths and weaknesses of others. Strength and weakness are relative values, defining by our relationship with our markets and competition.

We must understand the “structure of opportunity” in order to know when and how to move forward. The last chapter discussed the idea of innovation in direct competition. The present chapter shows how we find opportunities by leveraging our unique strengths in the marketplace.

Here, we learn the meaning of focus. We learn why there is one and one appropriate focus at any given point in time. We learn why size and resources do not give anyone a real advantage in competition.

Lesson 86

When should you stake out a new competitive position?

- A. Before anyone else realizes its value.**
- B. When others begin to suspect its value.**
- C. After its value begins to be recognized.**
- D. When its value is broadly accepted.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- A. Before anyone else realizes its value.

Nature abhors a vacuum; human nature prefers crowds. In Sun Tzu, the emptiness of the ground gives us a position of strength. When we see a new market that nobody wants, or a new customer no one is doing business with, or even a new method than no one else is using, we are likely to feel uncomfortable going after it. It takes courage to be the first to move to a new position. Most people don't have that courage.

Instead, people are happy to jump on the "me-too" bandwagon. They are more comfortable offering the new, "improved" version of an existing product, being the smallest and newest customer of the biggest supplier, or selling to the customer that everyone else is wooing. No matter how often we are told that we can't make money in the middle of a crowd, human nature loves to flock.

This is the first lesson of "emptiness." Empty areas offer greater opportunities than full ones. If we want to find opportunities, we must have the courage to avoid the crowds. The most important key in developing an unchallengeable position is to get to that position first, before others see its value.

Lesson 87

How do we move people into positions of weakness?

- A. By using force.**
- B. By deceiving them.**
- C. By understanding their needs.**
- D. By waiting.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- C. By understanding their needs.

People are never completely strong or completely full. If we didn't have weaknesses, we wouldn't have needs. Advantage exists because humans always have needs. No matter how strong we are (or think we are), we still have weaknesses and needs. If we were perfectly strong, we would be safe from all harm. Danger and disadvantage are also created by our needs.

Once we understand human needs, we can use those needs to move our opponents. Sun Tzu taught that people act either from greed or fear, that is, from their weaknesses. Our customers have needs. Our competitors have needs. If we understand these needs, we can use them as motivation to get people to do what we want.

Since position is critical in competition, the ability to move people where we want is fundamental to our success. This ability comes from our understanding of human needs. Notice: we do *not* get our ability to move people from our strength; we get it from the weakness of others. In other words, their emptiness, like the emptiness of the ground, is what gives us strength. Strength and weakness are united in a relationship. We get our strength from the emptiness of a position and our mastery of the needs of others.

Lesson 88

How can you use the strength of your opponents?

- A. You can block their strength.
- B. You can copy their strength.
- C. You can use their strength against them.
- D. You can convert their strength to weakness.

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- D. You can convert their strengths to weakness.

Not only do we all have weaknesses, but our strength (in the sense of fullness) is only temporary. This is true for our strengths and those of our competitors. Strength and weakness depend upon a specific place (Ground), *and* time (Heaven).

Strength is temporary because, even when we are satisfied, our needs eventually reassert themselves. Fullness (strength) is a temporary state. It constantly transforms back to emptiness. Think of this as Sun Tzu's law of entropy, an early and practical foreshadowing of the scientific principle.

When we work to undermine people's strength, we are working on the side of nature. Fullness and emptiness are feelings, and feelings are easily changed. We can use strength to create weakness in the same way that we use weakness to move people. People are temporarily satisfied, but this doesn't mean that they cannot easily be made dissatisfied with their condition. Their needs and their human nature are always lurking just below the surface. We can use time to change their feeling from contentment to need.

This temporary feeling of fullness is a target for our efforts. We want to work on people so that they feel their need. When they do, we can move them.

Lesson 89

How do we use emptiness and fullness to move to new positions?

- A. We empty areas quickly and fill them carefully.**
- B. We empty areas slowly and fill them quickly.**
- C. We move into strength and away from weakness.**
- D. We defend emptiness and attack fullness.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- B. We empty areas slowly and fill them quickly.

When we move, we want use emptiness (weakness) and fullness (strength) to our advantage, that is, to satisfy our needs.

Leaving an area creates an emptiness (weakness) that can make others stronger and weaken us. Leaving a position quickly deprives us of support. This is especially true for a business moving from an existing market to a new one. We want to be careful not to abandon existing customers too quickly. We must leave slowly.

On the other hand, we want to use all possible speed to move into new areas. The faster we move into a new area, the sooner we fill (strengthen) its emptiness (weakness). Speed, a form of strength itself, comes from the emptiness (weakness) of the land. We move through empty areas quickly.

Our ability to attack depends on the openings (emptiness) that the enemy leaves us. Our ability to defend depends on the fullness (strength) of our defenses.

Lesson 90

What is the single source of both strength and weakness?

- A. Vision.**
- B. Knowledge.**
- C. Action.**
- D. Position.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- B. Knowledge.

Emptiness and fullness, strength and weakness are not accidents. They arise from our knowledge. Knowledge leads to vision. Vision leads to action. Action creates position which results in new strengths and weaknesses.

Weakness is synonymous with ignorance. Ignorance is another form of emptiness, another form of need. Knowledge means strength. It is another form of fullness. It satisfies needs.

People's ignorance leaves us openings through which we can move against them. People's ignorance creates needs that we can identify and satisfy. Our ability to attack people in war or serve them in business depends upon our superior knowledge. This knowledge is focused in a specific area, making us strong in a specific time and place.

Strength in our position depends upon superior knowledge of our area. We must know every aspect of our business better than anyone else. If we are ignorant in any aspect of our position, we leave an opening for attack. Our ability to defend our position comes from the completeness of our knowledge.

Lesson 91

When entering new markets, how do you handle information?

- A. You should be quiet when you enter new markets.**
- B. You should promote only your existing products.**
- C. You should broadly promote your future products.**
- D. You should advertise heavily when entering new markets.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- A. You should be quiet when you enter new markets

When we initially move into a new area, we want to keep others ignorant of our intentions. When we are competing in a new area, we don't want anyone to know our strategy. If we succeed, the market will find out soon enough. If the new area doesn't prove to be successful, we want our failure to be unnoticed.

Since knowledge is the single source of both weakness and strength, we must learn how to control information. If we can control information, we can control the decisions others make and control the others have of us.

In our age of over-promotion, Sun Tzu's constant advice on keeping quiet speaks against the popular wisdom. Aren't the secret to success promoting and publicizing our ideas and plans?

The simple answer is no. Success depends upon profitability, not volume or size. Profitability depends upon having an empty market to sell to. If the market is there, it is there whether or not we publicize it. Markets are not created; they are discovered. We can win customers in a new market quietly at least at first when situations are sensitive.

Lesson 92

If the new area proves to be well defended, what do you do?

- A. You must put in more resources.**
- B. You must get creative.**
- C. You must be persistent.**
- D. You must withdraw quickly .**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- D. You must withdraw quickly.

When we move into new areas, we are looking for positions that have been overlooked by the competition. We are looking for emptiness and weakness. To be successful, we must see what others have missed. Success comes from going where people's needs have been unmet.

Exploration of new areas is always risky. If we discover that the new area is well defended, (strong and full in Sun Tzu's terms), we must withdraw quickly. We should think about movements into new areas as probes, tests for emptiness. If we don't find emptiness and need, we want to keep our expenses and commitments to a minimum. This is why we probe into new markets quietly. Moving into new areas secretly makes it much easier for us to withdraw should these areas not prove to be successful.

Speed is the essence of war. "Weakness" is closely related to speed. Speed is only possible if we are moving through emptiness and weakness, but small, "weak" forces move faster than large, strong ones. We can move quickly into new areas if they are open. We can also move quickly if we keep our probes small. If the new areas prove not to be open, we must be able to move quickly out of them. This means that our commitments to that area must also be weak.

Lesson 93

If you want to battle the competition, what do you do?

- A. You should go to the place they are.**
- B. You should go to the place they need.**
- C. You should avoid all battles.**
- D. You should welcome all battles.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- B. You should go to the place they need.

When the time is right to engage in direct competition, we use the principle of weakness and strength to do it correctly.

First, we never move directly against the competitor's strength. We never move against areas where they are expecting attack and therefore have defended well.

These defended areas of strength are relatively small and they are never self-supporting. Strength requires support. The resources that provide support are usually broad and plentiful. Because they are so numerous, all of the support resources are impossible to defend.

These resources are "weaknesses" in two ways. They are needed by the competition and need is weakness. Since they are also too numerous to defend, they are weaknesses.

To focus our attack on these needed resources, we must understand our opponent and their support network.

Lesson 94

What is the key to creating advantage?

- A. Imagination.
- B. Vision.
- C. Ability.
- D. Focus.

*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.*

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

D. Focus.

Once we identify the key area of a key weakness, we must focus all our resources on it. When we can focus on one key area, we are strong in that area and successful in filling it.

Focus is difficult for most people. There seem to be many different areas that need attention. Sun Tzu taught that, despite the complexities, there is always just one key opening. If we focus on it, we are able to break through and make progress. Then we can find the next need.

Instead of thinking of this focus point as an opening, we can think of it as a constraint. Business is a productivity pipeline. Work passes through many processes (marketing, sales, production, distribution, etc.); each has its own maximum capacity. One area is always the key constraint, limiting the total flow of business. For many businesses, it is marketing and sales. For the lucky few, it is the ability to produce. Identify the constraint and focus on it. Open it, and business grows (and another constraint appears).

Lesson 95

How do we overcome large opponents and large problems?

- A. Addition
- B. Subtraction.
- C. Multiplication.
- D. Division.

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

D. Division.

Again, ignorance is weakness and emptiness. Physical size is never a problem for Sun Tzu. Size is a matter of perspective. Anything that is large must have many parts. Instead of looking at the whole, we need to look at the parts. Since we can break large problems (or opponents) into many parts, we can choose the parts we want to tackle. For Sun Tzu, the ability to discern different parts was a necessary component of *vision*.

Our opponents will naturally divide their resources among different areas. We don't have to make this happen. It happens naturally because most people lack focus. Instead, they try to protect many areas at once.

We must keep *our* focus a secret. Our knowledge is strength. If our opponents know that we are focusing in a specific area, we are inviting them to unite their resources against us. Focus is usually a reaction not a plan. If opponents don't know where we are focusing, they cannot prepare to counter our efforts.

Lesson 96

How do we prevent weakness somewhere in our organization?

- A. We cannot prevent weakness.
- B. We can divide our resources evenly.
- C. We must train our people well.
- D. We must know our weaknesses.

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- A. We cannot prevent weakness.

Though Sun Tzu is talking about the opposition, the same is true for our own organization. We can't be everywhere. We can't do everything. Resources are limited. No matter how large or small our organization is, we must make choices about how we distribute our resources. If we ask any part of our organization, they will tell us that they have too few resources for what needs to be done. The world that we compete in is always much too large for the resources that we actually have. No matter how strong we are, we still have weaknesses.

Weakness and strength are part of every organization. Focus does not change this. We can focus on the bottlenecks in our organization, but in doing so we weaken other parts of our organization. We must be aware of this. We are always juggling resources, doing a balancing act.

This is also true for our competition. If we know where *they* are focusing their resources, we also know where their weaknesses might be. This is why Sun Tzu wants us to keep our own focus a secret. We don't want others to know where our weaknesses are.

Lesson 97

What do we want our opponents to defend?

- A. Their strengths.
- B. Their weaknesses.
- C. Their resources.
- D. Their decisions.

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

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- A. Their strengths.

If the competition defends their strengths, they leave their weaknesses open to attack. In the world of competition, our competitors have strengths and we have strengths. We both also have weaknesses. What matters in the outcome is how we focus our strengths in the competitive environment.

We must aim our strengths at the weaknesses of the competition, that is, at the needs of the market. We must not aim our strengths at the strengths of the competition. We should never seek to beat others at their own game. Our goal should be to turn the game around, taking what others see as unimportant and make it important.

In doing this, however, we don't want to have our competitors strengthen their weak points. Instead, they must feel as though their strengths are being threatened. People are naturally proud of their strengths. They are quick to defend them because they are confident in defending them. We want them to follow this natural inclination. We don't want to do anything to disturb this natural tendency.

People have weaknesses because they consider certain areas relatively unimportant. As challengers, we have to make those areas important, even critical to the contest, without our opponents realizing it.

Lesson 98

What gives us the ability to focus?

- A. Position.
- B. Innovation.
- C. Leadership.
- D. Knowledge.

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- D. Knowledge.

All competition is specific to a certain time and place. As business people, we may think that we face a vague, general competition in “the market” as a whole. Sun Tzu taught that general competition is an illusion. Competition is real. It occurs at real times and places. For a businessperson, the battle among competitors takes place whenever a customer makes a decision about what to buy and a judgment about the value of products and services.

The more we know about the specific battles we face, the more successful we will be. Ignorance is emptiness and weakness. We need to understand the specific decisions that customers make on a day-to-day basis. This is easiest for sales people because they work one-on-one, but no matter what our role, we must make it our business to know where and when buying decisions are made. The more details we have about the specifics, the more effective we will be.

We must choose where and when we want to compete. We choose the markets in which we compete and, perhaps more importantly, we choose where we don’t want to compete. Often it is what we avoid doing that makes us successful. We succeed when we compete under the best possible circumstances. When we waste efforts and resources on second rate opportunities, we lose too much in the long term.

Lesson 99

When do we know enough about the basis of competition?

- A. We never know enough.**
- B. When we know more than the customer.**
- C. When we know more than our competitors.**
- D. When we are satisfied with our knowledge.**

*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?*

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- C. When we know more than our competitors.

For Sun Tzu, all knowledge and ability are relative. There are an infinite number of facts, but knowledge is finite. We cannot know everything about our customers' decisions, but we must know more than our competitors know. Nothing is infinitely full. Ideally, we want our competition thinking that our threat takes one form when, in reality, the real competitive battle takes another form entirely.

This happens all the time in business competition. When Starbucks started their "coffee shops," did any existing coffee company or coffee shop understand how that term was being redefined? When Dell started selling computers directly to consumer, did the other major manufacturers realize that the ground of competition had changed?

Innovation can take many forms, but the most important innovation comes from re-defining the time and place of battle. We must see openings that our competitors are unable to see. When we focus on these areas, the size and strength of our competition simply don't matter. The competition is unable to succeed against us.

Lesson 100

When does size matter in a conflict?

- A. Size never matters.**
- B. Size matters in the opponents we choose.**
- C. Size matters over the long term.**
- D. Size matters at a specific time and place.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- D. Size matters at a specific time and place.

The general size of contestants doesn't matter at all. There are many times when choosing large opponents is generally advantageous. Especially since they have to defend many different areas and can easily overlook one of them.

Size does matter at a specific time and place. This is the meaning of focus. The secret of using strength and weakness, fullness and emptiness, and knowledge and ignorance is setting up the right contest. We want to put our resources where the competition has few resources. We want knowledge where they are ignorant. It is the balance of one against the other in a specific time and place that makes the difference.

We may want our initial contests to be relatively small, but in every specific competition we need to have overwhelming force on our side. Even the smallest companies can be "bigger" and more knowledgeable in a narrow situation. These narrow situations are what we are looking for to develop as stepping stones to success.

Lesson 101

When is balancing strength and weakness important?

- A. In your planning.
- B. In your actions.
- C. In your positioning.
- D. In all of the above.

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

D. In all of the above.

Strength and weakness (fullness and emptiness, knowledge and ignorance) are very useful concepts. We must continually ask ourselves about this balance at every phase of competition. We must ask about it when we are planning. We must ask about it when we are moving into new areas. We must ask about it when we are developing positions. We must ask about it whenever we confront a competitive opposition.

All strategies have weaknesses and strengths. It is easy to see what is good about our plans, but we must also know what the weaknesses of our plans are. It is these weaknesses that we must watch against.

This is even more important when we consider action. Often what we *don't* do is more important than what we do. Since time is limited, we are continually choosing what to do, but, when we make this choice, we are also choosing what we don't do, what we don't have time for. We should make this decision consciously instead of unconsciously. Choosing inaction (emptiness) is as important as choosing action (fullness).

Lesson 102

What should be your opponent's chief weakness?

- A. Emptiness in a needed position.**
- B. Ignorance of your position.**
- C. Need of resources.**
- D. Lack of forces.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- B. Ignorance of your position.**

At the end of his lessons, Sun Tzu always puts the specific lesson in a larger context. Positioning and knowledge are together the heart of his competitive system. Weakness takes many forms, but no form of weakness in the opposition is as critical to our success as ignorance. Positioning in Sun Tzu's system is the pay-off in competition. It is the step in competition that generates revenue and creates advantage. Our opponents should never understand how we plan to use our position against them to make ourselves successful. Ignorance of our position keeps them vulnerable.

In business, this specifically means that we don't let our competition know how we plan to make money out of a given market. If we envision new source of revenue, we must not let anyone else know about it. We should keep all revenue sources secret.

Lesson 103

What is the key to taking advantage of strength and weakness?

- A. Flexibility.**
- B. Organization.**
- C. Training.**
- D. Planning.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- A. Flexibility.

Water is Sun Tzu's great metaphor for change, and in the verse above our ability to adjust to change. We cannot predict where weakness and strength will appear. Openings can appear in an instant. We must be continually ready to take advantage of these opening when they occur.

In other words, no quality of our plan is as important as being opportunistic. When a weakness appears, we must be ready to take advantage of it. Perhaps more importantly, we must be patient and wait until openings appear. When those opportunities appear, we must reshape our plans and our organization to take advantage of these opportunities. We shouldn't wait for them to conform to our exact requirements. We must conform to the openings that we see.

Again, it is the market (ground) and our opponents that create these opportunities. We must naturally flow toward the needs of the market and the weaknesses of the competition. Our organization and training must support this ability. To a large degree, positioning and our ability to find advantages depends on flowing toward the needs of the market.

Lesson 104

What type of technique must you use to take advantage of your opponent's weaknesses?

- A. Proven techniques.**
- B. Best practices.**
- C. Deceptive techniques.**
- D. Opportunistic techniques.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- D. Opportunistic.

The lesson here echoes the previous chapter's innovation and momentum, but it focuses specifically on being creative in taking advantage of the openings that our opponents give us. We must follow our competition closely in order to see the openings develop. When they do occur, we must be ready to take advantage of them.

Shadowing also requires us to mimic our opponents while we are waiting for openings to develop. If they are direct competitors, we must make sure to meet their announcements and products with announcements and products of our own. If the contest depends on research and development, we must make sure that we never fall behind in the race for knowledge. We are waiting for an opening, but in keeping up with the competition and following their twists and turns, we practice a very active form of waiting.

While we are following our opponents, we avoid taking the initiative. We also avoid making a long term commitment to a plan of action. We don't take the initiative and make commitment until we see the opening that we need.

Lesson 105

If your approach has worked well in the past, what do you do?

- A. Look for an opportunity to use it again.**
- B. Keep using an approach until it stops working.**
- C. Use the same approach in different forms.**
- D. Find a new approach for each situation.**

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.

From *The Art of War*

Answer:

- D. Find a new approach for each situation.

The approach that worked the last time will not work again. The market reacts. Competitors adjust. Openings close. Every campaign demands new methods, new issues, and new approaches.

Speed and timing are critical here. Most organizations are too slow to change, too fond of past successes to try new ideas. If we want to succeed, we must never hesitate to try new ideas; adopt them if they work, and discard them if they don't work. We must always quickly adjust our methods to fit the emerging trends of the moment. New concepts and terminology emerge, especially in today's markets, and we must always be ready to adapt these changes to our needs. We must be able to adapt more quickly than the competition.

Change is the only constant. Sun Tzu's philosophy distrusts long-term, detailed plans. In the dynamic environment of competition, too many factors are changing too much of the time. Rather than lose time in planning, we should spend our time acting. We should act defending and keeping up until we see an opening, and when we see an opportunity, we must seize it quickly. The approaches we use can change radically from campaign to campaign, but we can act very consistently if we hold to a central philosophy, our guiding mission.