

Script Idea for Sun Tzu Video

The “Art of War” was written by Sun Tzu – pronounced “SOON-shi” somewhere between 722-221 B.C. in China. What is known is that the book has been the authority on military strategy and has been utilized by the greatest military minds over and over again for the past 2300 years.

This video is important because the United States will be at war for the rest of our foreseeable future, but also because the words of Sun Tzu will help you in any conflict. It has been said that social occasions are merely disguises for war, and we are always in a state of conflict whether it is trying to pass a class, trying to get a relationship, trying to get a job and of course, in the worlds of sports and politics.

So as I read the sections of the book, I want you to try to relate it to your own life situations and things that you have seen, just as these students do.

The “Art of War” has 13 chapters and it is written almost like a poem with amazing efficiency and clarity. Its truths are simple and almost obvious, although I guarantee there will be something in here you never thought of. Taking the advice of this book can help you make mistakes and live a richer more thoughtful life. This book is one of the greatest ever written, and in this moment in history it is also one of the most important.

The book was probably written or at least influenced during the time of the great Chinese philosopher, Confucius. Confucius grew up in extreme poverty and yet grew up to become a great thinker, teacher, and political figure. Most of his writings have to do with the ideal man and how he should live his life and interact with others in which he generally teaches compassion or love for others. Most of his thoughts are summed up in sentences or sayings such as this quote from Confucius “He who learns but does not think is lost. He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger.”

Much of the style of the writing of Sun Tzu is very similar – succinct, deep, simple, and to the point. Sun Tzu always stresses that wisdom is at the root of skillful action.

The first of the 13 chapters is called “Calculations” this has to do with all the things one must think about before going to war, or to determine who will win the war or conflict.

Sonshi writes:

Warfare is a great matter to a nation.

It is the ground of death or life.

The word “or” is interchangeable with the word “and.” Warfare is the ground of death and life. We all must face conflict in whatever we do, victory in our conflicts is a great matter – the greatest of all matters facing the human being. Therefore, this book, this video contains some of the most important information you need to know to be successful in all endeavors.

It is the way or survival and of destruction and must be examined.

Therefore, go through it by means of five factors:

Compare them by means of calculation and determine their statuses:

One is the Way or the Dao, the second is Heaven or the atmosphere, three is the ground or earth, four is the General or leadership, five is the Law or organization.

So to determine victory or defeat, just ask yourself which side has the advantage of the way, or the Dao, of the atmosphere or heaven, of the earth or ground, which has the better leadership and who’s laws are clearer and duties more deeply understood. From this you will always know the victor.

[Student] The way or the dao is what causes people to have the same thinking as their superiors, they may be given death, or they may be given life, but there is no fear of danger or betrayal. I think if we look at the Vietnam war the Vietnamese definitely had the Dao, while in the Civil War I believe it belonged to south. This is when the people and the leader are in the same mind. I believe it usually will go to the people who must

defend their homes and families – such as in the American Revolution the Americans had the Dao.

Soonzah writes: Heaven is dark and light, cold and hot, and the seasonal constraints.

I also include atmosphere since modern warfare makes use of chemicals, nuclear and other atmospheric devices. For example, again in the Vietnam War, the Vietnamese again had control of Heaven – the climate, played into their hands, and it was often said that we controlled the day while they controlled the night. So all things being equal it was really the seasonal constraints, the US Army was really designed to fight in Europe and not in the jungle. In the Civil War the advantage of Heaven really went to the North. Due to the blockade of the South the soldiers from the Union were much better prepared to deal with the changes in weather.

Soonzah writes: Ground is high and low, far and near, obstructed and easy, wide and narrow, and dangerous and safe.

With ground and heaven we are getting more into tactical decisions that one has to look at in the actual battlefield. Height is an enormous advantage in war as in social politics. Home field advantage is a benefit, is the way to the enemy obstructed and difficult or wide and safe. All these factors must be considered when deciding who has the advantage of ground.

When speaking of the General Soonzah talks about wisdom, credibility, benevolence, courage and discipline of the leadership. I remember a speech by Winston Churchill when he stated that “Our sailors are working right now to root out those German submarines, I would like to say without mercy, but heaven help us if we lose that.” This really just boils down to which side has the better generals. While encouraging thoroughness, discipline and courage, Churchill was also aware of the need for mercy. Generals can be coaches, parents, presidents, anyone in authority of the troops themselves.

Finally the Law Soonzah writes “Law is organization, the chain or command, logistics, and control of the expenses.”

Which side is the most organized and has the most control over corruption, theft and graft? On which side do they care the most about the Law and whose laws are obeyed with enthusiasm and understanding for their transgression, from top to bottom. One question here is who lies the most.

Soonzah writes that All these five no general has not heard;

One who knows them is victorious, one who does not know them is not victorious.

Therefore compare them by means of calculation and determine their statuses

Ask:

Which ruler has the way,

Which general has the ability

Which has gained Heaven and Ground

Which carried out Law and commands,

Which army is strong,

Which officers and soldiers are trained,

Which reward and punish clearly,

By means of these I will know victory and defeat!

A general who listens to my calculations and uses them will surely be victorious, keep him;

A general who does not listen to my calculations and does not use them, will surely be defeated, remove him.

Calculate advantages by means of what was heard, then create force in order to assist outside missions.

In this way SunTzu connects victory with knowledge, awareness and truth. It is often said that the truth is in paying very careful attention to not only the specific but what is

going on all around. That by not paying careful attention, people can be guilty of half-truths or misperceptions surprised by the outcome of conflict because certain facts or thoughts are retained and others are rejected. We see that in the current war in Iraq by not paying attention to the lessons of history and the whole picture the United States currently finds itself between a rock and hard place.

Force is the control of the balance of power in accordance with advantages.

Warfare is the way of deception.

Therefore if able, appear unable.

If active, appear inactive,

If near, appear far,

If they have the advantage, entice them;

If they are confused, take them

If they are substantial, prepare for them

If they are strong, avoid them,

If they are angry, disturb them,

If they are humble, make them haughty

If they are relaxed, toil them

If they are united separate them.

In this section the writing is very specific and worth repeating, this is the way to deal with your enemy no matter who it is in any given conflict.

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If they are humble, make them haughty
If they are relaxed, toil them
If they are united separate them.

Attack where they are not prepared, go to where they do not expect.
This specialized warfare leads to victory and may not be transmitted beforehand.

Deception is the key in any conflict, if in football the other team thinks you are going to run, you must pass, and if pass you will be successful (all things being equal) if you run.
Tzu speaks many times about the value of deception in the art of war.

Before doing battle many calculations, victory, few calculations, no victory, then how much less so when no calculations?

By means of these I can observe them, beholding victory and defeat.

Again Tzu states that knowledge equals victory when coupled with deception.