

## Sun Tzu and the Golden and Platinum (GaP) Rules

**You Mean the Art of War?**



Of course I mean the Art of War. I mean practical ways of applying the Art of War by taking a leaf or two out of the “Book” of applying the Golden Rule and the Platinum Rule. Proper application of these Rules simultaneously Builds Better Businesses and brings Sustainable Profits.

### **Golden Rule**



Most of know are quite familiar with the Golden Rule and we do by and large apply it at least to some degree. Not many are familiar with the other Rule, though. The Platinum Rule.

## Platinum Rule



The Platinum Rule is simply applying the Golden Rule to others according to their own tastes and preferences. Some have stated that the Platinum Rule is superior to the Golden Rule. This is not the case. In fact, if the Golden Rule were applied in the right spirit, the Platinum Rule would not need to exist. For example, consider the following statements.

Everyone wants to be loved. Differently.

Everyone wants to be respected. Differently.

Everyone wants to be appreciated. Differently.

Everyone wants to be empowered. Differently.

All four are aspects of the Golden Rule. The Platinum Rule is found in the word “Differently.” Individualized Consideration is important.

### **What do the Golden Rule and Platinum Rule have to do with the Art of War?**

More than you might think. Sun Tzu’s “The Art of War” comprises Thirteen Chapters of Principles and Precepts expressed in different ways. Some “case law” is included for illustration. What is most helpful are the remarks of several notable commentators. They expand on what is written in the basic text. The commentators provide examples of how the Principles have been applied by different personalities in the past. The effects of ignoring these same Principles are also outlined.

The Principles and Precepts in “The Art of War” may be likened to the Golden Rule. Specific applications describe how the Platinum Rule operates. For example, in verse 23 of Chapter 1, it is simply written:

## ***Pretend inferiority and encourage his arrogance***

This is followed by Tu Mu giving an example of its application:

Tu Mu: Toward the end of the Ch'in dynasty, Mo Tun of the Hsiung Nu first established his power. The eastern Hu were strong and sent ambassadors to parley. They said: 'We wish to obtain T'ou Ma's thousand-li horse.' Mo Tun consulted his advisers, who all exclaimed: 'The thousand-li horse! The most precious thing in this country! Do not give them that!' Mo Tun replied: 'Why begrudge a horse to a neighbour?' So he sent the horse.

Shortly after, the Eastern Hu sent envoys who said: 'We wish one of the Khan's princesses.' Mo Tun asked advice of his ministers who all angrily said: 'The Eastern Hu are unrighteous! Now they even ask for a princess! We implore you to attack them!' Mo Tun said: 'How can one begrudge his neighbour a young woman?' So he gave the woman.

A short time later, the Eastern Hu returned and said: 'You have a thousand li of unused land which we want.' Mo Tun consulted his advisers. Some said it would be reasonable to cede the land, others that it would not. Mo Tun was enraged and said: 'Land is the foundation of the State. How could one give it away?' All those who had advised doing so were beheaded. Mo Tun then sprang on his horse, ordered that all who remained behind were to be beheaded, and made a surprise attack on the Eastern Hu. The Eastern Hu were contemptuous of him and had made no preparations. When he attacked he annihilated them. Mo Tun then turned westward and attacked the Yueh Ti. To the south he annexed Lou Fan...and invaded Yen. He completely recovered the ancestral lands of the Hsiung Nu previously conquered by the Ch'in general Meng T'ien.<sup>1</sup>

The text is liberally sprinkled with similar examples of varying length. Study and application straightens out our thinking about business operations, marketing, sales, customer experience, supply chain and strategic directions.

Although of course focused on applications to warfare, "The Art of War" is also applicable to business intercourse and even to everyday life. A simple precept like "All warfare is based on deception" seems obvious but is not. Another oft-misquoted one is "Therefore I say: Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril." Learn how to read and apply!

### **Workshop Outline**

This one-day workshop has two components. Verse 27 of Chapter I says, "These are the strategist's keys to victory. It is not possible to discuss them beforehand." In like spirit, the morning will focus on levelling-up on "The Art of War" in general and in discussing three applications:

1. Strengths of Your Business.
2. Marketing, Sales and Customer Experience.
3. Competition, Collaboration and the Business Environment.

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<sup>1</sup> From "The Illustrated Art of War" by Samuel B Griffith, pp 97-98

The afternoon will focus on working out directions and/ or solutions to specific business issues using participants' actual situations or case studies. All participants leave with at least one viable solution to a challenge they are facing, or are given handles for a few other possible challenges.

Post-workshop coaching is available and can be requested for separately.

### **Investment**

Fee for participants is \$179.00. A minimum of 10 participants is required for a workshop to be confirmed. Contact me for more details!