

prepare. You've probably heard part of this story before in the tale of King Leonidas and the "three hundred" Spartans.

In this singular example, the why of movement and purpose was crystal clear to me. Certainly Themistocles had a purpose in saving the Greek states but he also had choices of where to defend. He must have decided why to defend using the "Hot Gates" over defending around Athens. There was a why of movement as in why defend here over there in much the same way that in a game of Chess that I will decide to move this chess piece over that. Themistocles had chosen a deliberate set of actions that exploited the terrain to his advantage. Situational awareness, use of terrain and maps appeared to be vital techniques in the outcome of any conflict.

But I wasn't doing any of this in our company strategy. I didn't have any form of maps or understanding of the landscape. I was instead using tools like SWOT diagrams. For those uninitiated in the arcane language of modern business "strategy", a SWOT diagram — strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats — is a tool to assess whether some course of action makes sense.

Now, imagine for a second that you were part of that Greek army on the eve of battle preparing to face overwhelming odds. Imagine that Themistocles is standing before you rallying the troops. He is inspiring you with purpose, to defend the Greek states against a mighty foe. You're all highly trained, excellent soldiers and have outstanding technology for that time. But imagine that just before the blood of battle, you hear him declare that he has no understanding of the