

# Getting started

## Chapter 6

20 min read

I often talk about that wise executive that I met in the Arts hotel of Barcelona. I'll jump ahead in the story and let you into a little secret. He didn't have a clue either and I wasn't the only person faking at being an executive. However, I didn't find this out until six years after I had started mapping when someone pointed it out to me. I had always assumed that there was some secret tome out there and mapping was just my poor man's way of emulating what everyone else was already doing. It turned out that most of the industry was instead fighting battles with little to no understanding of the landscape. It's like generals fighting without maps. It boils everything down to luck and individual heroism.

When I discovered this, and it was an almighty shock, I started to question the trove of business strategy books in my small library. I had an onerous task of going through it all and categorising individual pieces as doctrine, climatic pattern, context specific or just plain luck. These days, when someone tells me they know strategy then I ask them for a map of their business. If they can't show me it, then regardless of their claims I take a skeptical position. They probably don't know as much as they hope they do. They might even be more dangerous than this as it's rarely the unknown that gets you but what we think we know but don't.