

easy mark for any would be consultant peddling snake oil. I would have gladly bought it. An entire crate of the stuff.

## **Serendipity**

By chance, I had picked up a copy of the “Art of War” by Sun Tzu. Truth be told I picked up several different translations as the bookseller had advised that none of them were quite the same. That was serendipity and I owe that bookseller a debt of thanks because it was whilst reading through my second translation that I noticed something that I had been missing in my understanding of strategy. Sun Tzu had described five factors that matter in competition between two opponents. Loosely speaking, these are: — purpose, landscape, climate, doctrine and leadership. I’ve drawn them as a circle in figure 1.