

team combined with lots of shouts for “What is going on?” or “Where is everyone?” or “Should I grab their flag?”. In all likelihood, the Alliance team will be quickly broken into a panicked rabble. I know, I’ve been on that team and watched the mayhem.

The point I want to emphasise is that principles are fine and yes strategy has to adapt to the game but don’t confuse the two. A set of principles does not make a strategy. Though it’s certainly better to have a set of principles than to have no principles and no strategy. This is equally applicable in business.

There is however another aspect to consider. Within World of Warcraft there are many teams of Horde and Alliance players. Imagine that the Alliance players not only have no map, they’re not even aware of the concept of a map. All they can do is try some principles and share them from one team to another as “Secrets of success”. Imagine the Horde players understand the concept of maps, use them and share between them. Pretty soon, every Horde team will be winning using a wide variety of strategic plays. The Alliance doesn’t stand a chance until every player in the Alliance has built some mental model of the world (an internal map). Of course, every new player that joins the Alliance reduces this shared understanding. The best the Alliance can do is to tell the new player to “apply the principles and follow Morgana the Wizard. Just do what she does” in the hope the new player will build up some mental map.

Principles aren’t going to save you against vastly higher levels of situational awareness. Now ask yourself, what do we do in business?