

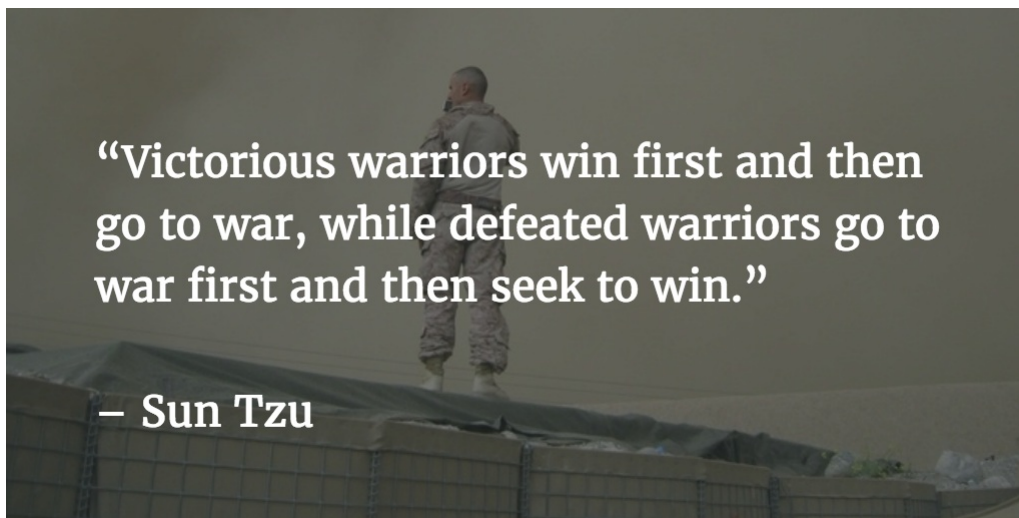
The Art Of War Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/the-art-of-war-summary/

1-Sentence-Summary: *The Art Of War* has been considered the definitive text on military strategy and warfare ever since being written in ancient China around 500 BC, inspiring businesses, athletes, and of course generals to beat their opponents and competition the right way until today.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Here's a great promotion tip: Whenever you create something, where you draw inspiration from someone else, let them know. For example, I always tweet at the authors of the books I read and write about here, to let them know I wrote something about their work. Sometimes, they share it.

I'm afraid that won't be possible today because the author of this book died 500 BC. His name is Sun Tzu, and he was a Chinese general, philosopher and military strategist. His book, *The Art Of War*, is the most influential strategy text in all of East Asia. It is divided into 13 chapters, each dedicated to a different aspect of warfare.

The reason it's been so popular all around the world is that most of the lessons can be translated directly to other, competitive fields, like sports or business. In order to make it more actionable, we'll look at it in a business context.

Here are 3 lessons from Master Sun Tzu:

1. Only enter battles you know you can win.
2. Deceive your competition to make them do what you want.
3. Lead your team as if you were leading a single man by the hand.

Are your mental faculties sharpened? Let's win the battle of business!

Lesson 1: Only enter battles you know you can win.

Winners know when to fight and when not to fight. Losers always fight and thus often end up losing.

Fools enter battles and then start thinking about how to win. Strategists know how they're going to win before they even start to battle.

Have you ever thought about the fact that **the most skillful fighters often avoid battles** and that that's why they're never defeated?

Take Bobby Fischer, for instance. The most brilliant chess player of all time instantly retreated, after he won the world championship, not playing again for 20 years.

So if you're starting a business, look at the industry first. Can you even win against your biggest competitors? And if not, is there a different niche you can fill?

Creating a soda brand to compete with Coca-Cola would certainly be an effort in vain, given that over 1 billion drinks of the brand are consumed every single day.

But maybe you can create a higher-priced, eco-friendly alternative, that targets single mums. That could make a fortune!

Only enter battles you know you can win.

Lesson 2: Deceive your competitors to impose your will on them.

Mask strength with weakness, courage with timidity and order with disorder, Sun Tzu says.

A clever army will win not with their bodies, but with their minds.

Making it seem like you're miles away when you're close to the enemies base with distractions, or surprise attacking in several places to splinter opposing forces are common tactics in the battlefield.

They're based on deceit and supposed to **make your enemy do what you want them to do**.

In business, you can do the same. I'm always baffled to discover insanely profitable and dominating businesses, which, on the front-end, appear like they're a mom-and-pop store.

Take Appsumo, for example. There's not much to discover, it seems like a small daily deal site, right?

Here's the kicker: Appsumo is an 8-figure business. If you have to count, that's north of \$10 million/year. They have over 1 million email subscribers and made \$1 million in their first year (2010).

There are endless examples like this one on the web, and this humbleness and modesty are a great way to throw off competitors – even if they might be your default setting, like Noah's, who's the founder.

Lesson 3: Lead your team as if you were leading a single man by the hand.

Eventually, your business will need a team. And eventually, that team will have to grow. But as companies get bigger, they get more complex.

Every single human adds an infinite amount of feelings, thoughts and ideas to the business, and all of those have to be managed.

When talking about armies, Sun Tzu says:

“A skilled general leads his army, as if he was leading a single man by the hand.”

Whether you're managing a big army or a small one, the tools are the same: **Break them down into smaller groups and then use clear signals to steer them into the right direction.**

In business, that means teams should stay small, 3-4 people are often a good number to cooperate, before things get too complicated.

Then you can set clear signals, like sales targets, tools to use, and a daily morning briefing, to make sure everyone's on track.

Never forget 1-on-1 interaction with everyone on your team, because if you treat your employees like family, they'll be just as loyal.

The Art Of War Review

Wow. When I started typing I didn't know I'd end up here. I have learned a ton about business in the past 50 minutes. Yet, this book is about, well, war.

The Art Of War is absolutely staggering. I thought I'd get a kick out of this, because I'm a big fan of The War Of Art, and just wanted to see where Steven Pressfield came from, regarding the title of his book.

I didn't expect the advice to be so practical. Brilliant read. I'm not sure the 7 blinks cover all of the 13 chapters, but there are definitely lessons from all of them in there.

Let the blinks inspire you and then take the ideas into an entirely different field. You'll be surprised how much you learn.

[Read full summary on Blinkist](#)

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- The 7 questions any general must ask himself before even thinking about waging a war
- Which 5 rules are essential to victory
- What 6 calamities can befall an army if the general is too weak and how he and his sovereign must cooperate
- The 3 tactics that'll help you conserve your resources
- How to adapt to the terrain at hand, like water

Who would I recommend The Art Of War summary to?

The 21 year old athlete, who wants to go professional in a competitive sport, the 37 year old founder, who just came up with his business plan and is still in the research phase, and anyone who ever had to lead a team, even if it was just in high school.