**The Principled Cat.**

“If you know your enemies and you know yourself, you will not be imperilled in a hundred battles…if you do not know your enemies nor yourself, you will be imperilled in every single battle” – Sun Tzu.

Still accurate as it was in the 6th Century BC, and not too much different in the commercial world, in fact like your former military skills, almost entirely transferable.

With apologies to Sun Tzu – If you know your competition and know yourself, you will not be imperilled in a hundred opportunities…if you do not know you competition nor yourself, you will be imperilled in every single venture.

To meet Armed Forces operational requirements, it is essential to provide realistic, mission-focused individual, unit and leader training. Personnel are trained to succeed across a wide range of military operations. The resulting product of military training is a highly skilled, confident and motivated individual and effective commander.

Let’s civilianise that last paragraph…

To meet the commercial objectives of the company, it must provide realistic training to its personnel and Managers. Personnel are trained to succeed across a wide range of skills. The resulting product of this investment in training is a highly skilled, confident and motivated individual and effective Managers.

Business and Military operations are very similar and both intensely competitive. No matter what business you are involved in, there is a hardened competitor who is ready to compete with you to win the business you want.

The Strategy and Tactics of the Military are very often relevant to the conduct of Business, and they are closely aligned with the thinking of Von Clausewitz.
The Nine Principles of Strategy can be understood as follows:

**1. Objectives**

All operations must have a clearly defined and actionable objective. Even minor initiatives and quick-wins must have objectives. Management sets the goals for employees, this is typically assessed quarterly by an individual performance evaluation, and measured by the bottom line.

**2. Offensive**

The attack is considered the primary means of achieving victory.
Like military operations, a business cannot be a success in defence alone. Successful companies take initiatives and reach objectives with the aggressive use of available resource.

**3. Mass**

Concentrate your resources at the right time and place for maximum effect. This principle of massing suggests that a business should focus resources to strike the market with the right product at the right time.

**4. Economy of Force**

Resources should deploy for maximum effect. No asset should be without a purpose. The resources used to achieve secondary objectives should be minimised. The allocation of resources should be continually measured and optimised.

**5. Manoeuvre**

Defeat an adversary by moving quickly and intelligently. Incapacitate their decision-making capabilities by surprising them with your movements.

**6. Unity of Command**

Responsibilities must be clear. Every objective must be the responsibility of exactly one Manager. Like Standard Operating Procedures, a business will have procedural manuals themselves, and like SOP’s they lay out procedures, process and responsibilities for different tasks and eventualities.

**7. Security**

Protect your resources. Do not allow a competitor to achieve an advantage. All companies have somebody responsible for security, the physical alarms, cameras, safes, and keys, but also information, Cyber Security, and especially intellectual property. The OPSEC you were once accustomed to in the Armed Forces, is no less important commercially. Companies will operate a management structure and will have procedures in place to ensure the protection Intellectual Property. Operational Security will be articulatedin company procedures from the handling of information to reviewing existing employment policies for employees, including the screening on suppliers and consultants. Cyber Security is now at the forefront of protecting the “Crown Jewels” of an enterprise. Even marketing collateral and Social Media output will, by necessity, be controlled so as not to break OPSEC.

**8. Surprise**

Strike at a time, place and manner that is likely to surprise the competition.

**9. Simplicity of Order**

The Armed Forces are the absolute masters of this. It is very rare that companies have a set format for a report, instruction or document, sometimes even the progression of ideas in a business can be unclear, and meetings muddled. Your military training equips you with a capability that few civilians possess.

Make your orders simple, succinct, clear and to the point. Intricate instructions can be misunderstood, mismanaged or botched.

**You are Trained, now you are on that Train…**

As the train goes through the tunnel, taking you to work in the morning. Imagine that your arrival is the light at the end of the tunnel creating a new rare and precious element, the collision is the fusion of your value as a Veteran and a Tiger, with your military training and experience in delivering the Nine Principles, and your transferable skills all colliding to form your worth to your employer.

Your training to become a Tiger and your experiences will help take you where you want to go, the train will take you to work.