

User's Guide Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck

Center For Advantage™

Art of War
Sun Tzu
Strategy Card Deck

Attack your
enemy where
he is unprepared,
appear where
he does not
expect you

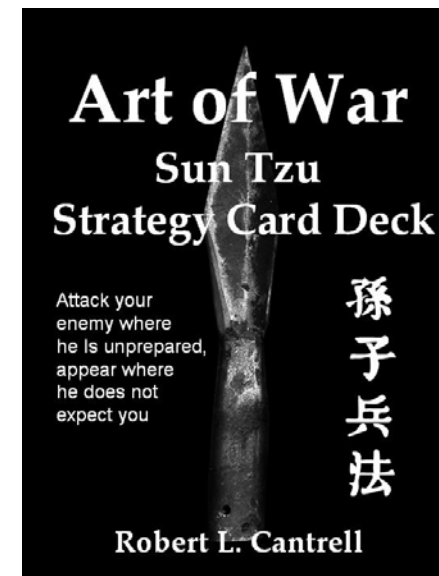
孫子兵法

Robert L. Cantrell



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Introduction

What is the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck*?

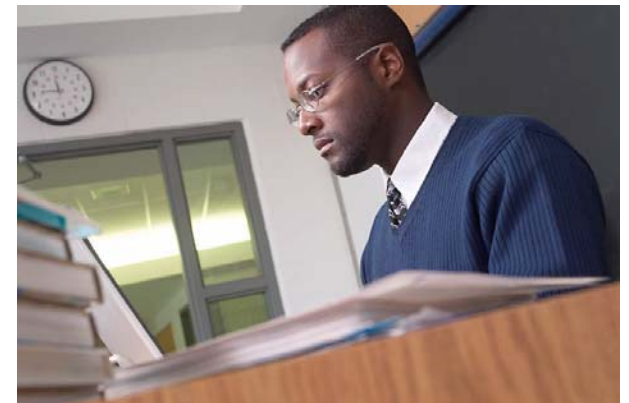
- The *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* is a card set of winning strategies designed to improve your ability to succeed when faced with adversaries

It is also a playing card deck made from casino grade card stock



Qualifications

- The *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* has been rigorously reviewed by professional strategists to include instructors of the National Defense University at Ft. McNair, Washington, D.C.



Why was the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* written?

- Because your plans need to survive contact with your adversaries...



...and the first key to winning is staying in the game

Who is the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* for?

- Military
- Business
- Law
- Politics
- Sports



Anyone who wants to train their competitive mind to be at its very best

Why is the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* Necessary?

- Many anthropologists believe that human intelligence evolved to make us better able to deceive and defeat our neighbors
- The *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* contains the strategies men and women have used to deceive and defeat their neighbors since the dawn of time



Knowing the strategies is to your advantage

Why should I use the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck*?

- The better you are at applying conflict strategies, the less likely you are to need them
- This means you can better focus your attention on positive efforts...
- ...and act in accord with your conscience



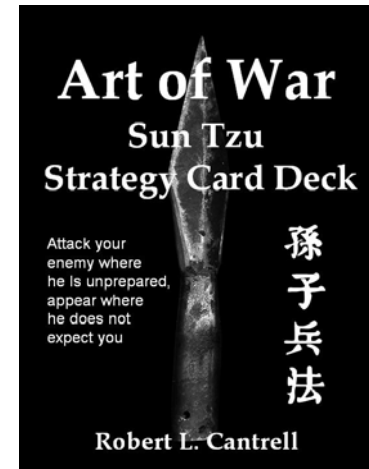
Why should I use the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck*? 2

- It is also a matter of survival
- Other people will use these strategies against you
- The best way to ensure that your adversaries succeed is for you not to appreciate what they are doing to you



Practice

- The key to applying the strategies in the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* is to practice, practice, and practice
 - ☐ Review the cards in training
 - ☐ Review the cards before addressing a challenge
 - ☐ Review the cards after a contest to improve your performance next time
- Use the cards in your weekend card games; your unconscious mind will process the ideas while you have fun



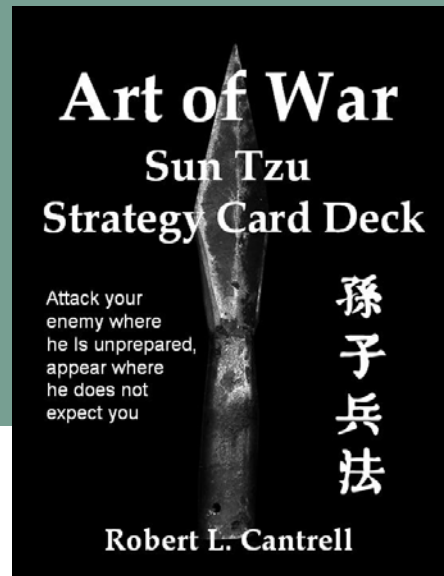


*Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card
Deck* makes training easy and fun...

*...and as rigorous as you want your
training to be*



Card Set Description

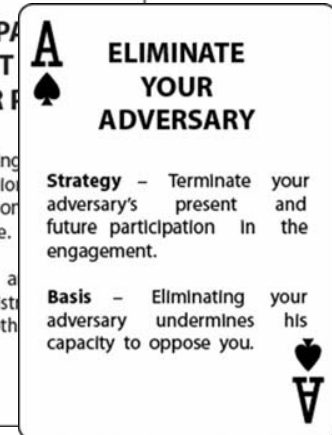
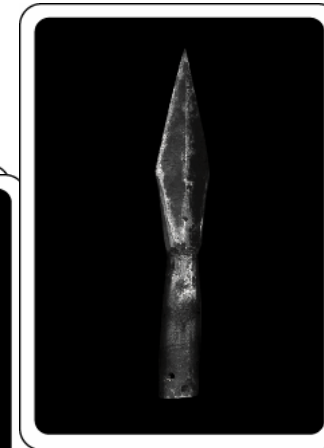
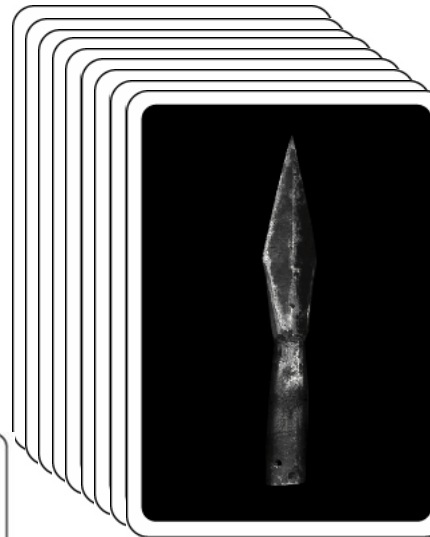




54 Cards: 54 Strategies

3 points of advice
per card

162 points of advice
In total





Card Layout

- **Title** – Name of the strategy
- **Strategy** – Definition of the strategy
- **Basis** – Why the strategy works

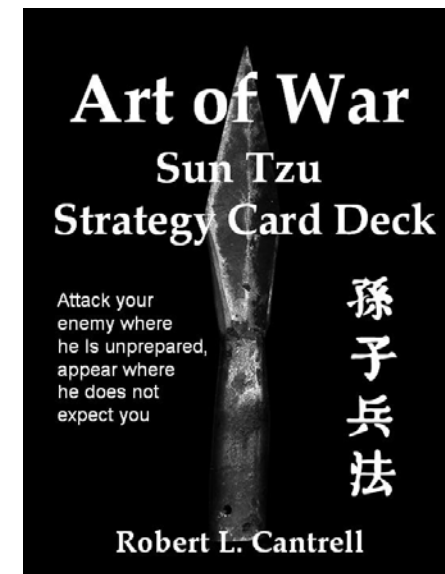
Number & suit



Four Categories

- Each suit represents a category
- All contests involve an interplay and progression of the categories as follows:

- ♥ **Prepare self**
- ♣ **Prepare field of contest**
- ♦ **Isolate**
- ♠ **Eliminate**





Cause

- The categories represent causes
- Causes are what you do to effect something else
- That something else is material (to include people), space, time, and/or safety

- **What you do (Cause)**

- ☐ **Prepare self**
- ☐ **Prepare field of contest**
- ☐ **Isolate**
- ☐ **Eliminate**



- **What you effect**

- ☐ **Material**
- ☐ **Space**
- ☐ **Time**
- ☐ **Safety**



A Natural Pattern

- A universal pattern of progress from beginning to end can be seen in how a salesperson wins a sale, a lawyer wins a case, an innovator captures an idea, a predator captures its prey, etc. For example:
 1. **Prepare self** – A wolf learns how to be the best hunter it can be
 2. **Prepare field of contest** – The wolf seeks the best position between itself and its quarry
 3. **Isolate** – The wolf isolates one animal from the herd
 4. **Eliminate** – The wolf goes in for the kill



A Natural Pattern (Part 2)

- In comparison, for example:
 1. **Prepare self** – A lawyer educates himself as best he can about a case
 2. **Prepare field of contest** – The lawyer seeks the best jury at jury selection, and selects and prepares the right witnesses
 3. **Isolate** – The lawyer finds an inconsistency on the part of the opposing side and steers the focus of that case to that inconsistency
 4. **Eliminate** – The lawyer uses the inconsistency to create reasonable doubt in the jury and gets an acquittal

Effect

- The effect you want to achieve is to:

- ☐ **Eliminate;**
- ☐ **Isolate;**
- ☐ **integrate or;**
- ☐ **negate**

your adversary or
something important
for his or her
success

Eliminate



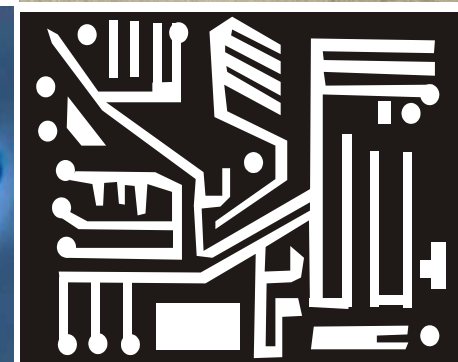
Isolate



Negate



Integrate





Direct

- You achieve this directly
 - ☐ Eliminate by eliminating
 - ☐ Isolate by isolating
 - ☐ Integrate by integrating
 - ☐ Negate by negating

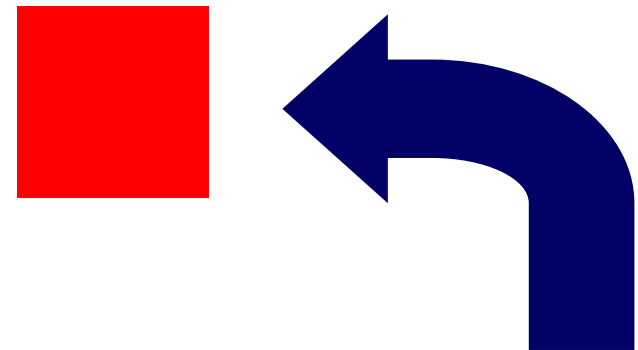





Indirect

■ You achieve this indirectly

- ☐ Eliminate by isolating, integrating or negating
- ☐ Isolate by eliminating, integrating or negating
- ☐ Integrate by eliminating, isolating or negating
- ☐ Negate by eliminating, isolating or integrating





Remembering that by executing your strategy you can effect...

Material



Space



Time



Safety



Mutually Supportive

- Each card offers advice
- You may or may not know how to enact that advice
- If you do not know how to enact advice from one card, you can find an answer on another card



Example of Mutual Support

- For example, a common way to “Provoke Your Adversary’s Reaction” is to bluff, which may be done in accord with “Create Something From Nothing”



Example Mutual Support

For example, an attorney might explore how an opponent will react to a real threat by presenting and then withdrawing a threat of no actual substance

8 PROVOKE YOUR ADVERSARY'S REACTION

Strategy – Test your adversary's response before committing to an action.

Basis – An adversary's prior response to an action lessens the guesswork in your planning.

Q CREATE SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

Strategy – Demonstrate your willingness to bluff so your adversary doubts your real actions.

Basis – An adversary that doubts the reality of your actions may leave your initiatives unchallenged.





Card Use

*Structured yet flexible
approach that models
real life*

Review tool

- A simple but effective way to use the cards is to just read them and think about the ideas
- There are only 1,700 words in the entire card deck, so you can read it in under twenty minutes
- Do this a few times, and your strategic performance will improve

Like any art form, repetition improves performance

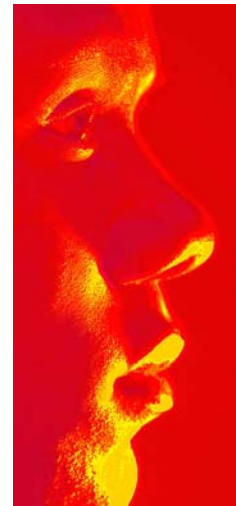




Card Logic



- For more sophisticated use, you can use other aspects of the cards, such as the rank, as well
- The cards are organized logically, but unlike a book, the cards can also be arranged in any fashion suitable to a situation
- This flexibility helps you to take advantage of opportunities



Rank

- Higher ranked cards tend to denote stronger strategies than lower ranked cards;
- however, any strategy, no matter the rank, could be the right and strong strategy for a given situation

You need to make all the strategies a part of you so you can use them naturally without thinking about them too much





Opportunity Management

- As you plan and execute an action, you seek to rely on strategies described in the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* from higher and higher ranks
- If your action is grounded on strategies at the top, for example, the four aces, then you are in a strong position
- If your action is grounded on strategies of low ranked cards, for example, the threes, then you are in a comparatively weak position



Card Rank as a Predictor of Success

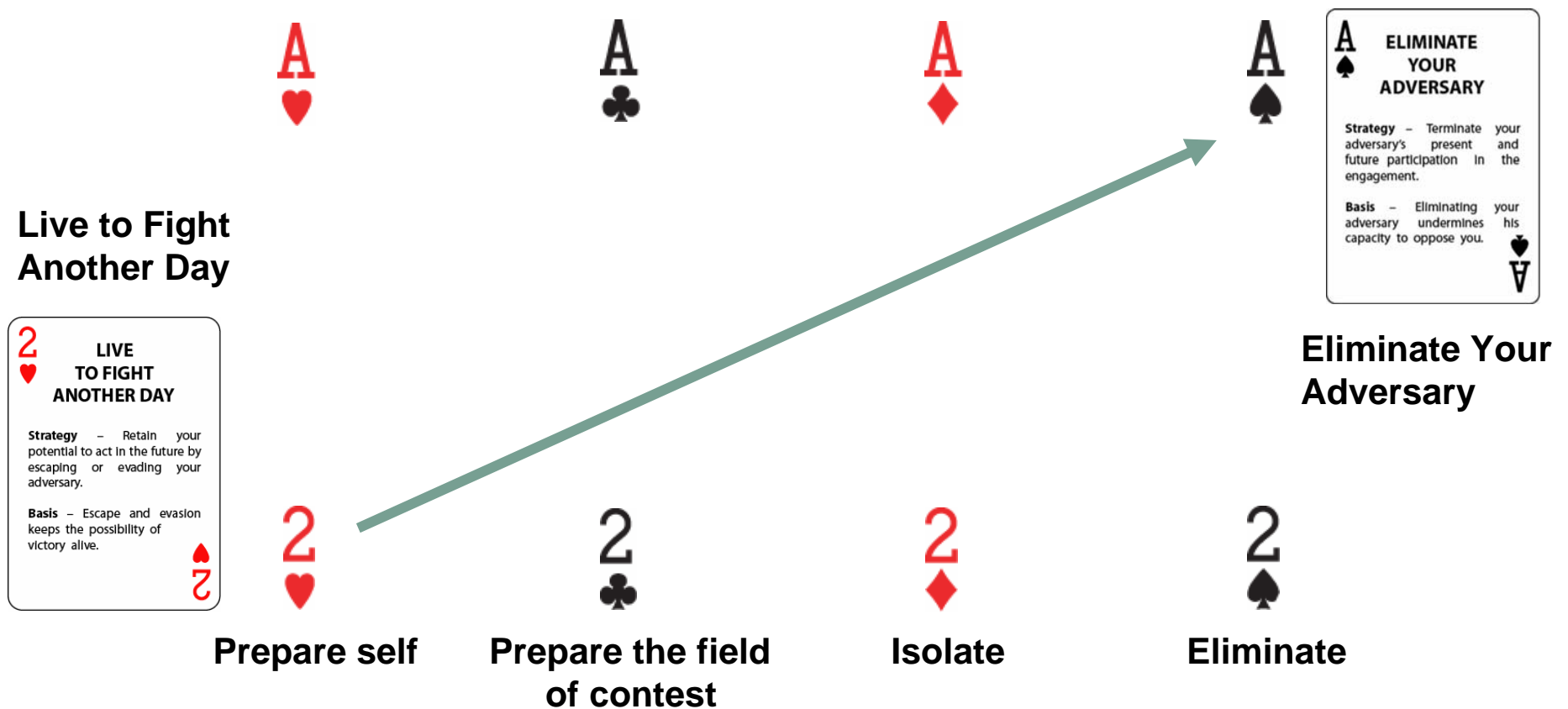
- If the success of your action depends upon a higher ranking strategy, then you generally have a better chance of winning than if your success depends upon a lower ranking strategy...
- ...provided you execute the strategy well enough to succeed

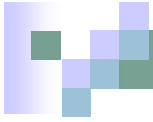




Go from Weakness to Strength

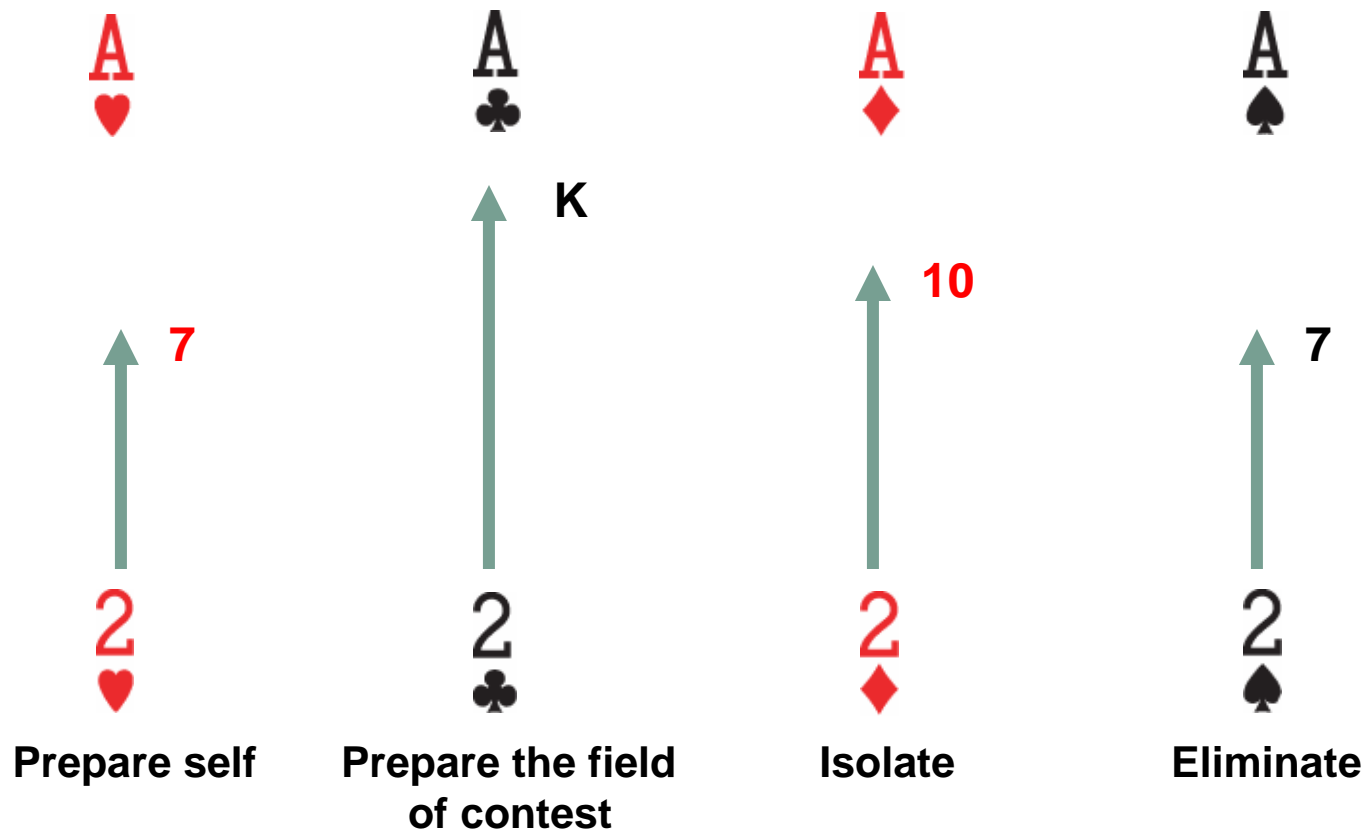
Seek to progress a series of actions from left, “Live to Fight Another Day,” to right and up, “Eliminate Your Adversary”





Steadily Strengthen Your Options

Seek to be able to use strategies from cards with higher ranks





Gray Division

- Strength by rank is a gray division, not black and white
- **Any strategy could prove the winning strategy**

With the principles of strategy in mind, have the flexibility to use whichever strategy makes sense at the time



Best/Worst Situation

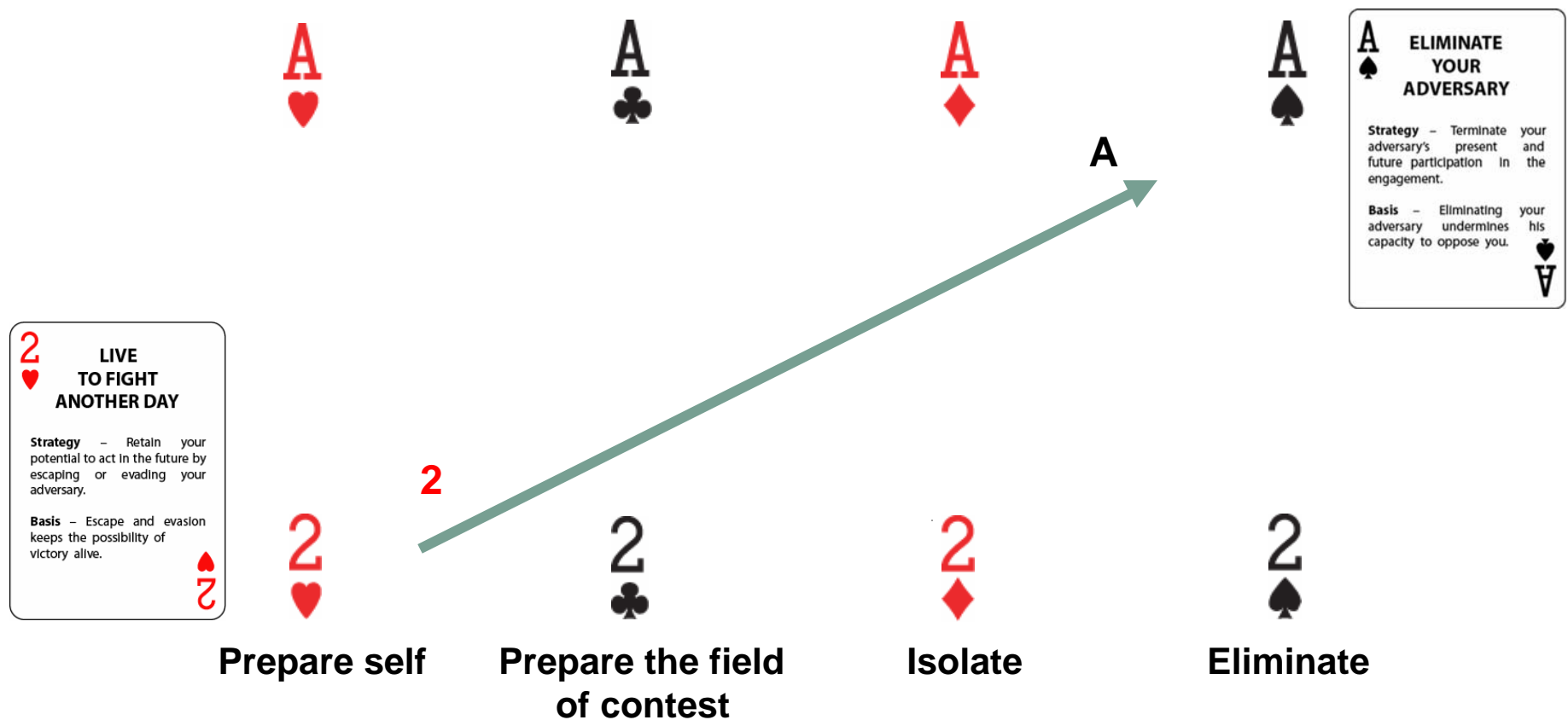


- Your best position is to have the power needed to execute any of the aces, even if you do not actually use them
- Your least favorable position is to have only the power to enact one of the twos or other lower ranked cards



Command the Whole Process

The longest path to victory starts at “Live to Fight Another Day”² where you must build from weakness to strength





Then Seek Accelerators

The shortest path to victory begins right at  “Eliminate Your Adversary” since having that power, even if you choose not use it, gives you considerable leverage over your adversary




**ELIMINATE
YOUR
ADVERSARY**

Strategy – Terminate your adversary's present and future participation in the engagement.


Basis – Eliminating your adversary undermines his capacity to oppose you.



**LIVE
TO FIGHT
ANOTHER DAY**

Strategy – Retain your potential to act in the future by escaping or evading your adversary.

Basis – Escape and evasion keeps the possibility of victory alive.





Prepare self

**Prepare the field
of contest**

Isolate

Eliminate

Deuces Wild



- **Keep in mind that you make a given strategy a winner or loser!!!**

- A master strategist might make his adversary believe the he (the adversary) has won because the master strategist has run away, and then strike when that adversary lets his guard down – a win from a weak position
- In contrast, eliminating an adversary might cause a more formidable adversary to take his place – a loss from a strong position



Combinations

- The strategy described on each card is like a single note on a piano
- Combinations of strategies create the most power

- For example, you might “Raise the Stakes” by “Striking With a Borrowed

Hand” and make that the only part of your plan you show before a surprise strike – which is yet a fourth card, “Catch Your Adversary Sleeping”

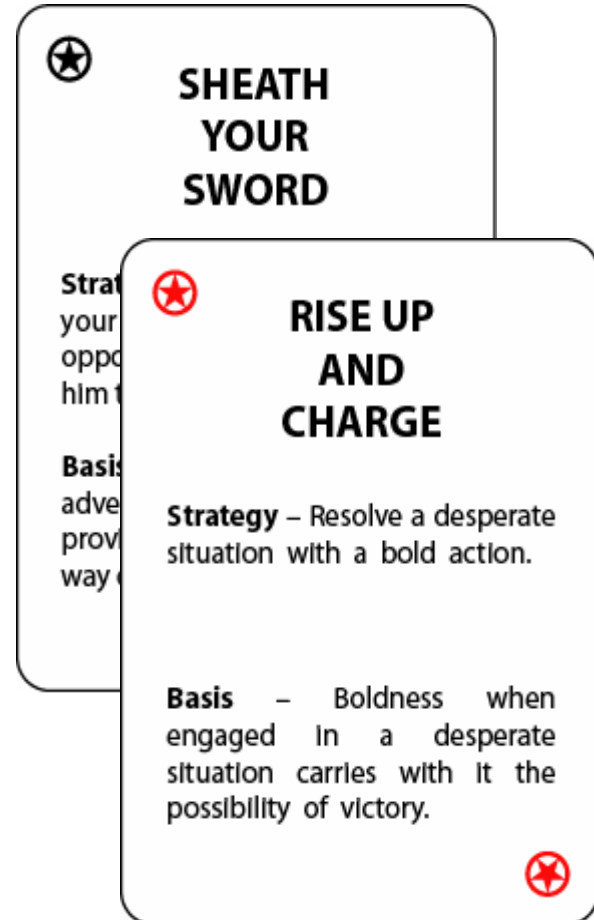




Wild Cards

- Wild cards provide a way to resolve issues, one way or the other
- They do not belong in any specific suites or ranks
- At any point in the strategic process, you can enact a wild card
- However, do so for good reason because they represent risky moves

Which for dramatic purposes is one reason Hollywood portrays them so often



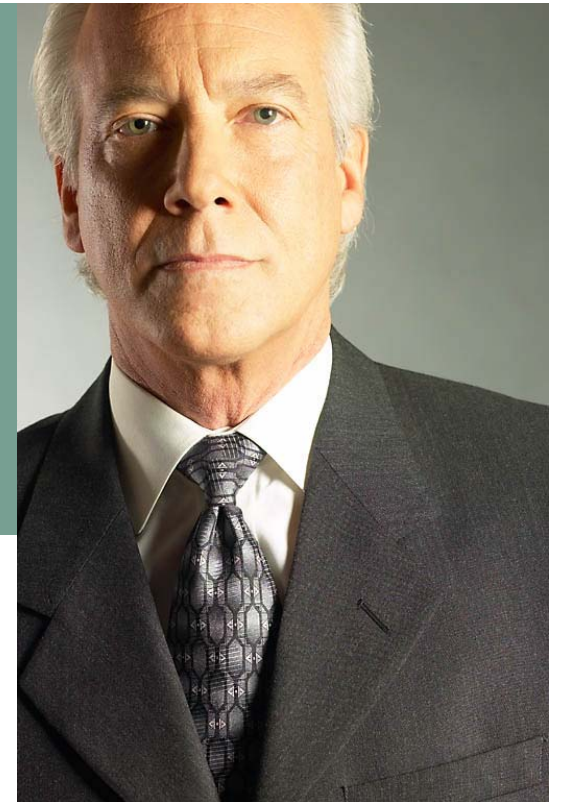


Crisis Action Planning (CAP)

- During a crisis, people tend to fall back on the strategies they know or strategies that worked before
- Familiar strategies are not necessarily the best strategies for a given situation
- *The Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* allows you to quickly consider strategies that you might recognize, but that might not otherwise be at the top of your mind

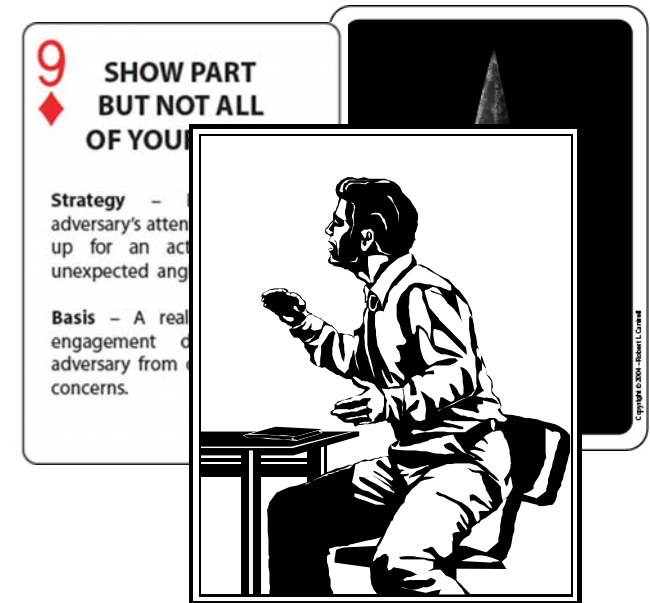


For the
Leadership



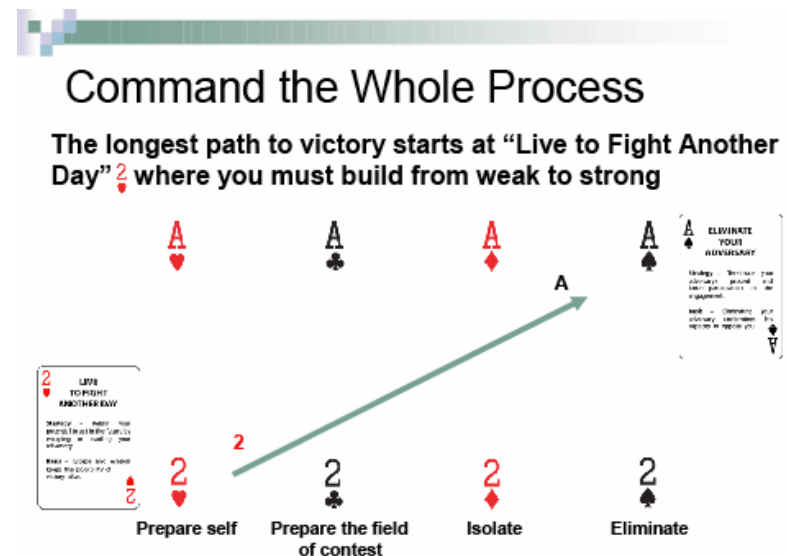
Training Tool

- The *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* is a ready made training tool you can employ anywhere and anytime
- Select a specific card, or pull one at random, and you have material to discuss
- Use the cards to critique during an after action review



Opportunity Management

- As per the “Card Use” section, you can track the progress of people working for you through a campaign from the lower left position of weakness to the upper right position of strength





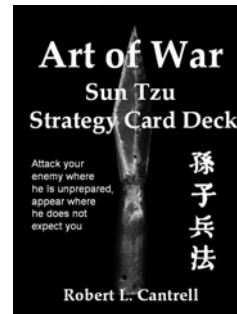
Strength and Weakness Perception

- Challenge the perception of strength and weakness from those responsible for carrying out actions

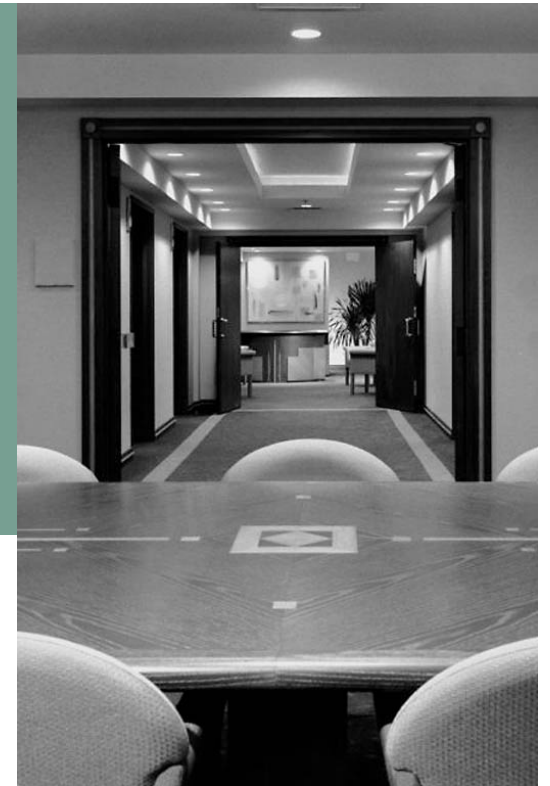


Other Advantages

- Leaders, by and large, are doers that prefer to get out there and make things happen
- The cards are geared toward the doer mentality; people of action will read them
- Results are immediate; by reading just one card before a contest, your people will likely do better at that contest



Strategy Training





Teaching Points

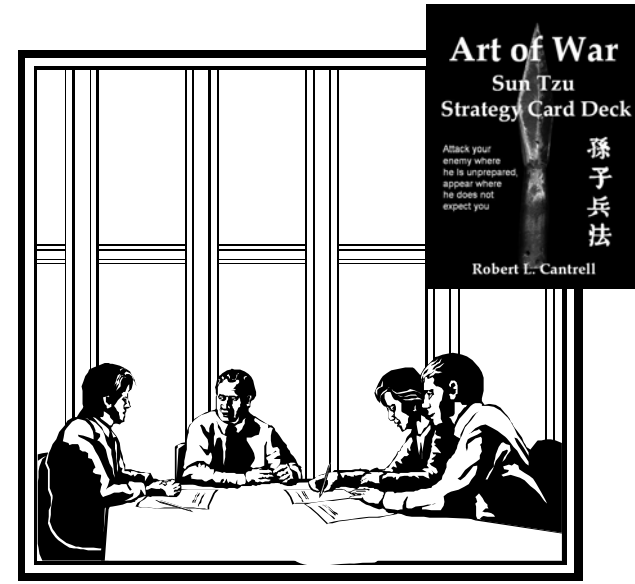
- Each card has three points you can talk to
- There are 162 teaching points in total within all 54 cards



Group Discussion

- Shuffle the cards
- Have a participant draw a card at random
- Discuss the strategy as it pertains to your profession or situation
- Each card tends to produce at least seven minutes of discussion

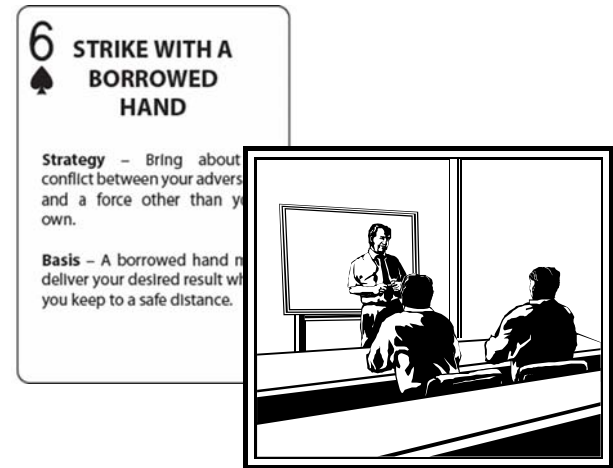
This is a very simple technique, but extremely effective



Strategy Review

- Record and discuss an action that required strategic thought to succeed
- Discuss the action and identify the strategies used by the leadership
- Discuss each strategy, the wisdom of its choice, and how well it was executed

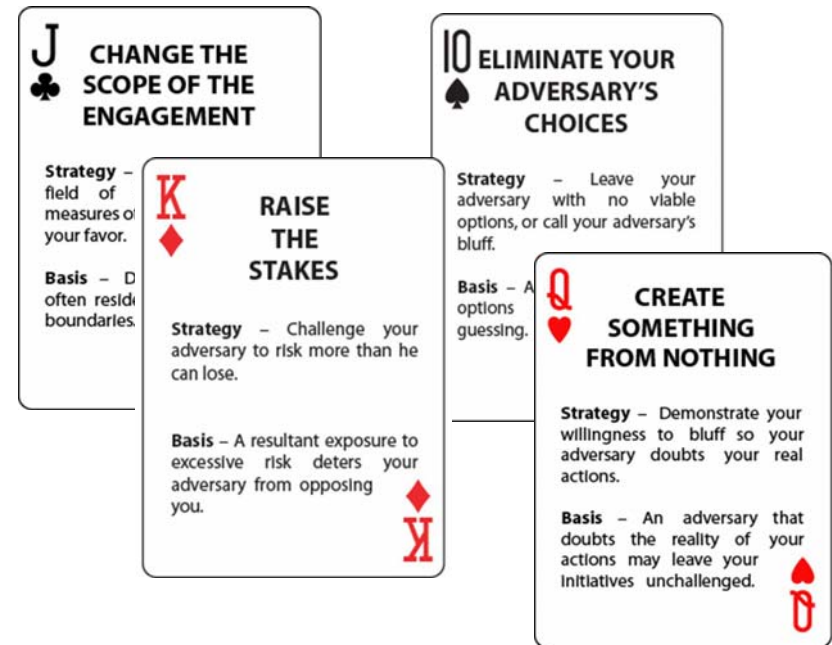
You can break down an entire action into strategy segments



Scenario Play

- Shuffle cards and draw until you have one card from each suit – 4 cards in total
- Use the combination to describe a situation and ask students what they should do to enact or counter the combined strategy

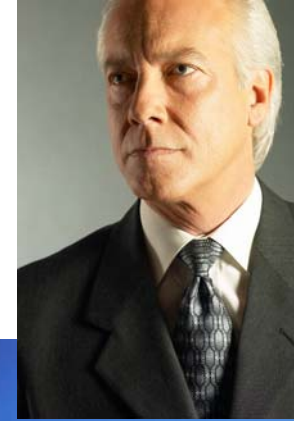
This requires some creativity on your part as a trainer





Training Continuity

- Unlike most strategy training material, the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* is so compact it should never end up on a shelf
- You and your people can review the deck in a few minutes just about anytime and anywhere they have a few moments to spare



Interview Tool

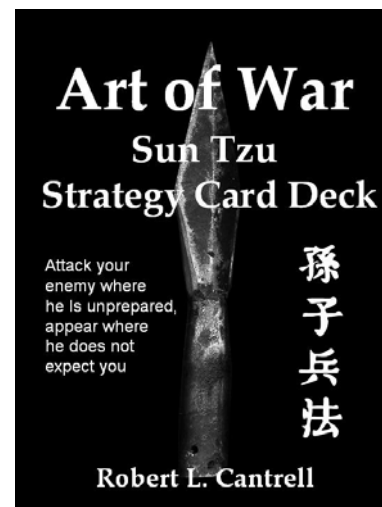
- Since 2004, when the *Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck* was released, one thing has been very clear
 - Executives get it
 - The less upwardly mobile, on the whole, do not
- If you are trying to recruit people with executive potential, their reaction to these cards can prove telling



When given a chance to review the cards, executives tend to ask where they can get a set; non-executives tend to ask what they are for or what is the game

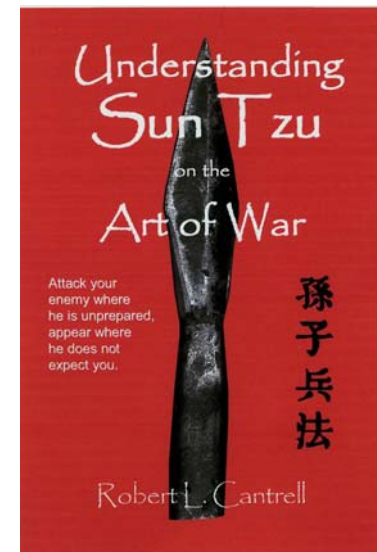


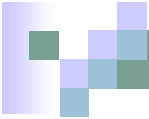
These are the cards you play when it's not a game



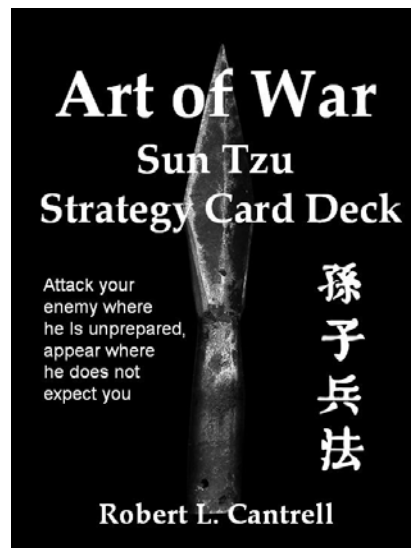
Further Details on Strategy

- If you want to know more about strategy, consider purchasing the card companion book *Understanding Sun Tzu on the Art of War*
- Or contact Center For Advantage at info@centerforadvantage.com





All the best
on
your endeavors!!!



Contact Details

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Book by Robert Cantrell

www.artofwarsuntzu.com

Heartland Reviews

As a retired military intelligence professional and conflict theorist, I must say this is the best interpretation of Sun Tzu's classic work I have read. The author focuses on the meanings behind this ancient Chinese war philosopher's writings. He puts them into a modern context, making them easy to understand. Apparently the Department of Defense agrees with me on this, since they have selected Mr. Cantrell's book as a text for the National War College in Washington DC. This is a must read for all military officers and business leaders. It rated a perfect five hearts.

Bob Spear

*Publisher and Chief Reviewer for
Heartland Reviews, Leavenworth, KS*

