



Which Card Will You Play?



Using universal strategic principles to anticipate threats and craft counteractions

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Agenda



1. Strategic Principles
2. Anticipating Threats
3. Crafting Actions and Counteractions
4. Non-Military Solutions
5. Conclusion



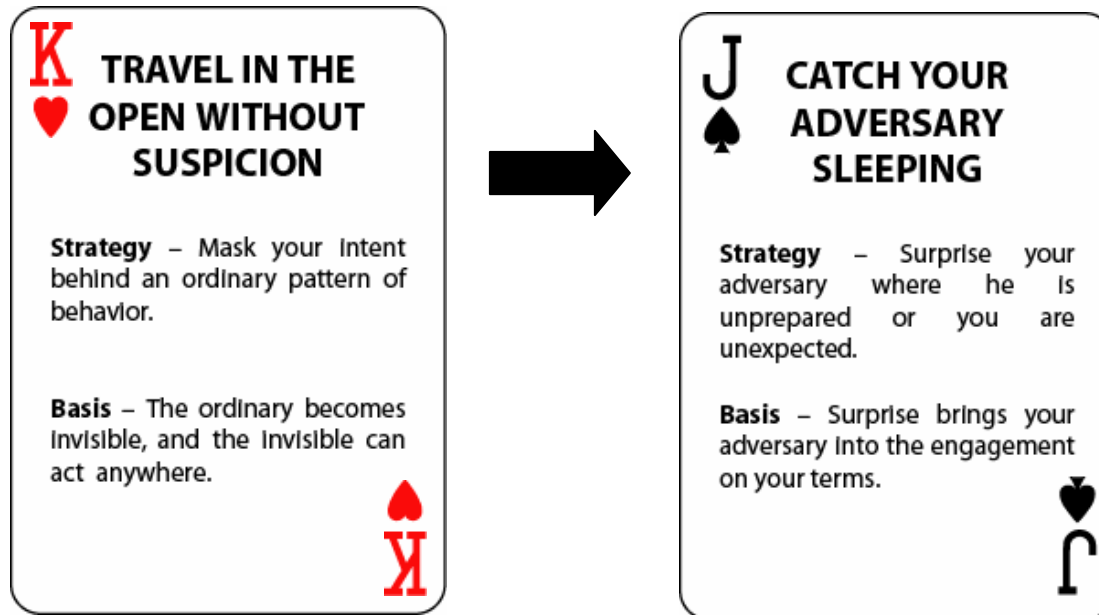
Cat and Rat

***An illustration of
strategic principles***

1. Strategic Principles

Strategic Principles

- A strategy is a synthesis of strategic principles
- Two key strategic principles illustrated by the *Cat and Rat* story work together in sequence



Strategy Card Layout

- **Title** – Name of the strategy
- **Strategy** – Definition of the strategy
- **Basis** – Why the strategy works
- **Suits** – Category
- **Number** – Positional strength



Example of a Strategic Principle

Strike With A Borrowed Hand

- “Strike With A Borrowed Hand” is a strategic principle that involves bringing about a conflict between your adversary and a force other than your own
- The underlying idea was used successfully to drive the Taliban from Afghanistan in 2001-2



The Core of Strategy

All strategy is an interplay between isolation and interaction

Isolation

A
♦

**ISOLATE
YOUR
ADVERSARY**

Strategy – Separate your adversary from the objective or the means to act on the objective.

Basis – Your adversary cannot shape the outcome of the engagement if he cannot affect the objective.

♦
A



Interaction

A
♣

**PROVIDE A
CENTER FOR
ADVANTAGE**

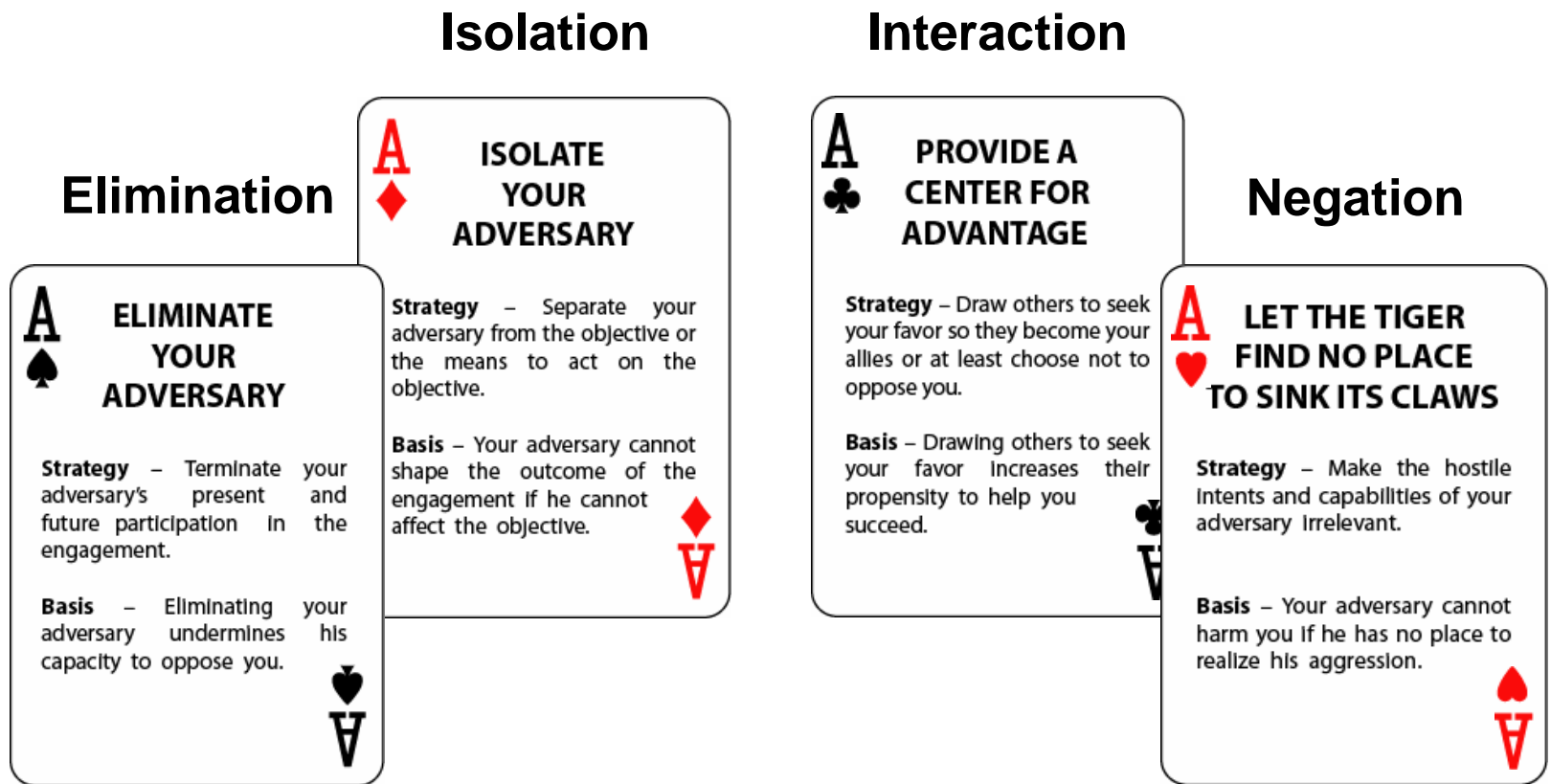
Strategy – Draw others to seek your favor so they become your allies or at least choose not to oppose you.

Basis – Drawing others to seek your favor increases their propensity to help you succeed.

♣
A

EIIN

The four standard effects of a strategic action



Four Critical Advantages

To win expediently, you need at least one of:

1. Overwhelming force
2. Surprise
3. Asymmetry
4. Sanctuary

9
♠ **ALLOW YOUR
ADVERSARY
NO SANCTUARY**

Strategy – Threaten your adversary everywhere and all the time.

Basis – The presence of a constant threat impedes your adversary's preparations and recovery.

♥
6

8
♦ **LURE THE TIGER
OUT OF THE
MOUNTAIN**

Strategy – Entice a formidable adversary to accept an engagement on your terms.

Basis – Engaging an adversary on your terms maximizes the advantages you have.

♦
8

J
♠ **CATCH YOUR
ADVERSARY
SLEEPING**

Strategy – Surprise your adversary where he is unprepared or you are unexpected.

Basis – Surprise brings your adversary into the engagement on your terms.

♥
♣

Q
♠ **USE
OVERWHELMING
FORCE**

Strategy – Act with more power and depth than your adversary can handle.

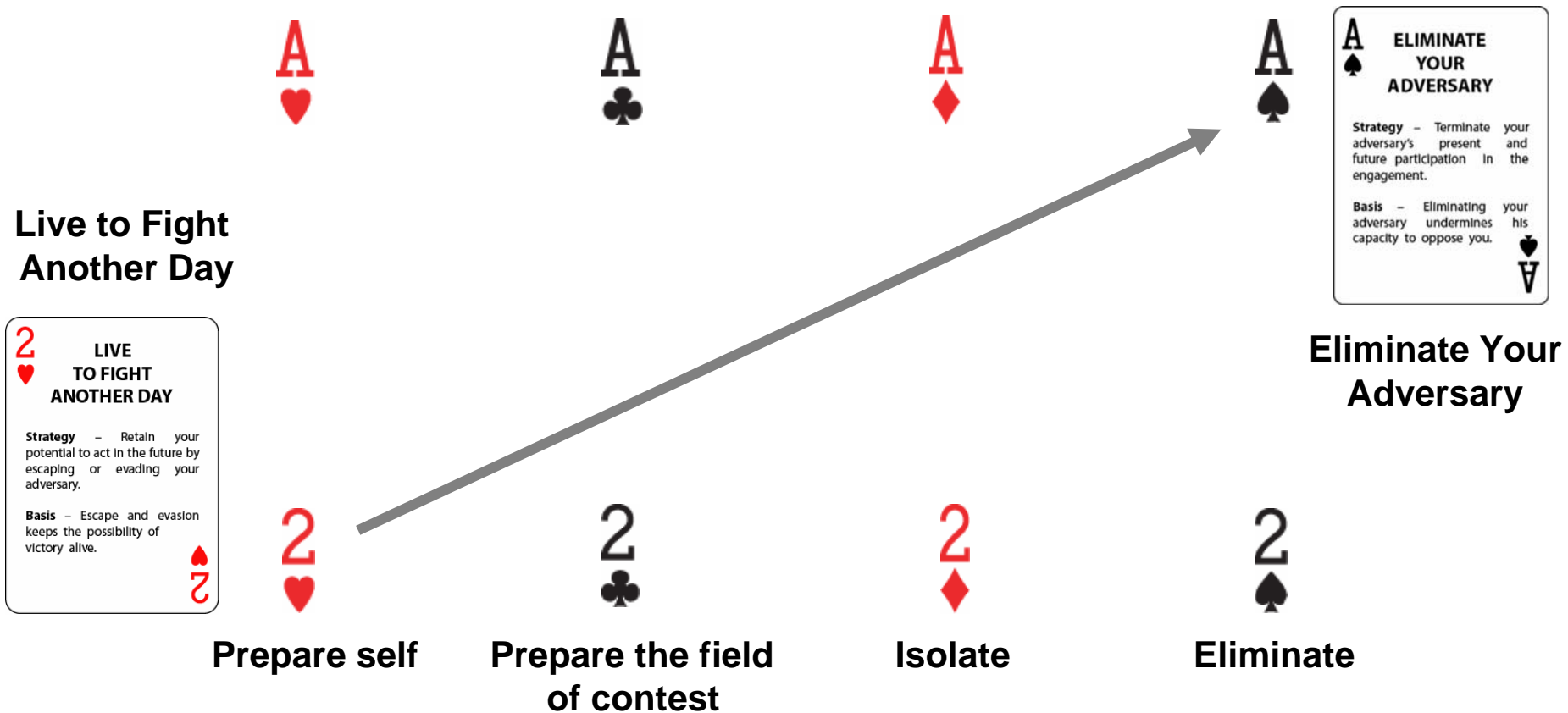
Basis – Every adversary has a breaking point through which his capacity to oppose you collapses.

♥
♣

Note: These four critical advantages include, but are not limited to, the representative principles above

Go from Weakness to Strength

Strategic action is directional, not linear. Seek to progress a series of actions from left, “Live to Fight Another Day,” to right and up towards “Eliminate Your Adversary.”



2. Anticipating Threats

Red Teaming

The Root of Conflict Described in One Sentence

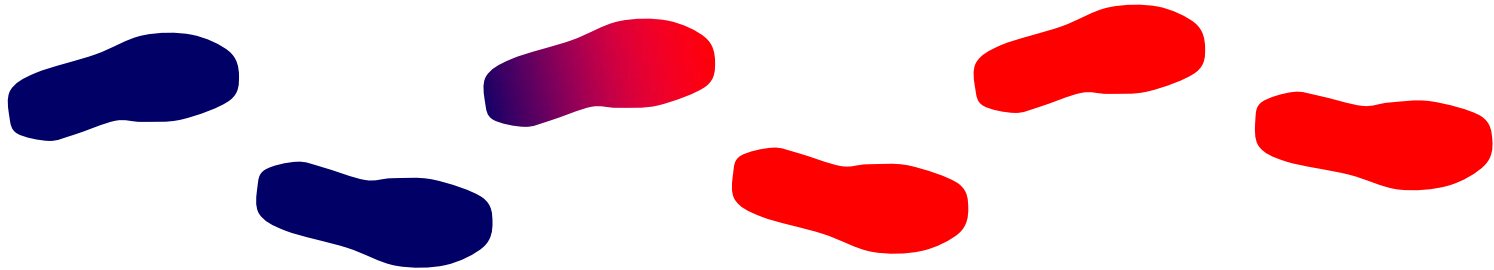
- ***Everything you do is evil to somebody.*** – Joseph Campbell, philosopher
- It is important to ask, “How are you “evil,” and what can or will somebody do about it?”



Friends and Enemies

An illustration about relationships

Taking a Step Beyond Analysis



Do more than play the role of the enemy. Psychologically become the enemy for the duration of the exercise. This requires a mental shift that can be difficult to make.



Disassociation From Your Base Orientation

Can you suspend your natural reaction to events like these in order to take the point-of-view of people who would celebrate them?



Why Play Red?

- Reduce your ignorance of what is not known but could be known
- Reduce error associated with taking the wrong course of action or missing important elements
- Counteract emotion driven decision-making and false rationality
- Challenge inappropriate priorities and beliefs
- **Eliminate bias toward your expected result by having others challenge that expectation**

So let's play Red as an insurgent in a small country called Union

- As a Red Unionite insurgent, what do we know?
 1. We want to raise our level of interaction in the population
 2. We want to raise the level of isolation for Blue
 3. Since the status quo does not suit us, we want to create disequilibrium until we achieve a more suitable environment

What else do we know?

- To succeed, we need any or all of
 - Overwhelming force
 - Surprise
 - Asymmetry
 - Sanctuary
- These will be in terms of any or all
 - People
 - Ideas
 - Tools

So if we are Red, then what are Blue's solutions to use against us?

- Blue needs stability (equilibrium) for Union to succeed. Let's suppose that Blue has emphasized a military solution to defeat our insurgency and create that stability. Blues other available solutions are:
 1. Alternative military solutions to defeat our insurgency and create stability
 2. Non-military solutions to defeat our insurgency and create stability
 3. Inverse solutions
 1. Example, using instability to defeat our insurgency
 2. Example, using elements of our insurgency to create the stability
 4. Reconfigure to function without stability

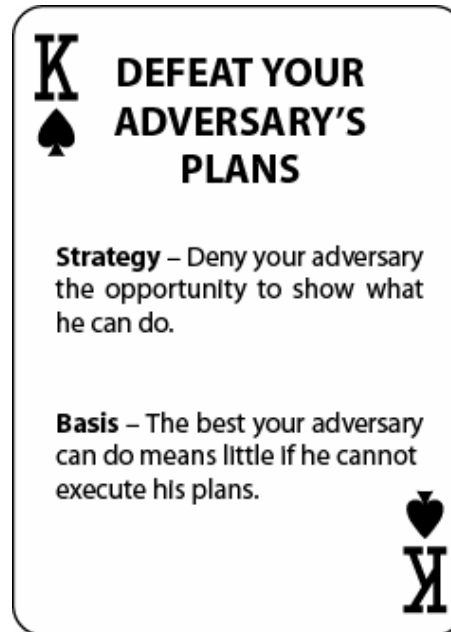
As Red, we need to see that all of these solutions fail

So as Red, what are our solutions?

- We need instability (disequilibrium) for Union to change. Our solutions are:
 1. Military solutions to create instability and defeat Blue
 2. Non-military solutions to create instability and defeat Blue
 3. Inverse solutions
 1. Example, using stability to defeat Blue
 2. Example, using elements of Blue to create the instability
 4. Reconfigure to function without instability

Defeating Plans

- All of these solutions line up with the key strategic principle to win by defeating Blue's plans



Common Insurgent Principles

- We can support defeating Blue's plans with another set of strategic principles that are standard fare for insurgents

2
♣

PROLONG THE FIGHT

Strategy – Do not allow your adversary to succeed within his capacity to endure the engagement.

Basis – Over time, not losing may produce the same result as winning.

♣
2

2
♥

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.

♥
2

2
♠

SCORE A SMALL VICTORY ALONG THE WAY

Strategy – Use a minor lapse in your adversary's attention to gain a minor prize.

Basis – Small victories can mean the difference between winning and losing.

♠
2

2
♦

BURDEN YOUR ADVERSARY WITH VICTORY

Strategy – Allow the consequences of attaining his objective to hinder your adversary.

Basis – An adversary that is hindered by a burdensome victory leaves other challenges unmet.

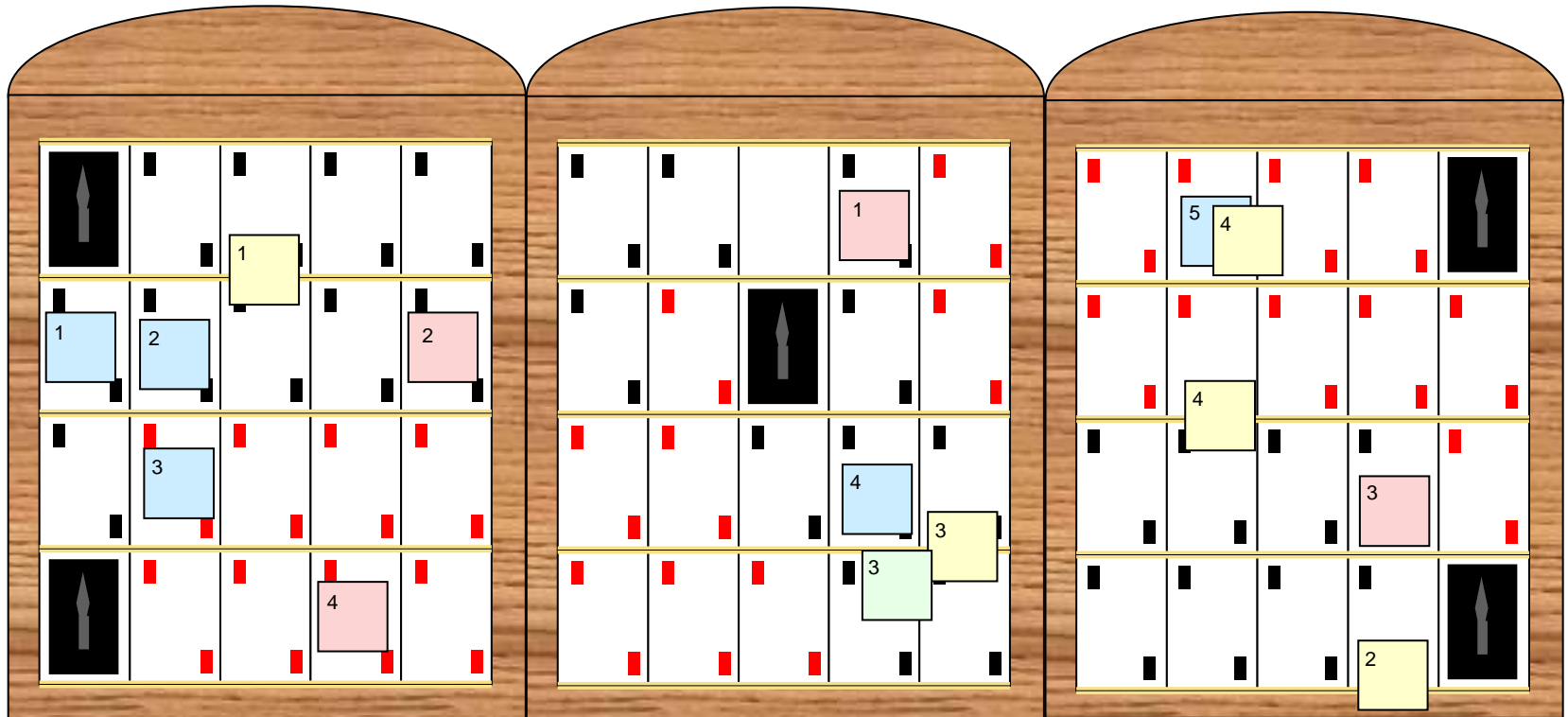
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3. Crafting Actions and Counteractions

Playing the Cards

- As Red, we can find the methods we will use to defeat Blue in the cards
- We begin with the Aces and ask if and how Blue can use each described principle against us
- We then ask what we can do to Blue plus what we can do to counter strategic principles Blue uses
- We can explore actions and counteractions for several iterations, and then use the insight to develop the Blue plan

Strategy Boarding



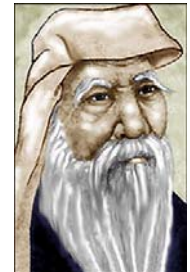
Red Post It® Notes = Red initial options
Blue Post It® Notes = Blue initial options
Yellow Post It® Notes = Red Responses
Green Post It® Notes = Blue Responses

What is our ideal strategy?

- Our ideal strategy achieves 100% of our desired result with 0% drawback
- This means that there is no underlying mechanism behind the result, yet the result is achieved
- To the extent that we can emulate this ideal, we can succeed while employing minimal resources

The master does nothing, yet nothing is left undone.

– Lao Tzu



Focus on the Real Problem

- Part of mastering strategy is knowing how to focus on the real problem
- If our plan is to go from A to B, and we encounter opposition, our real problem is not that opposition. It is the effect of not reaching B
- If we focus only on the opposition, then we will miss all the possible solutions associated with the effect
- Effects-based solutions tend to be more elegant and efficient than opposition focused solutions

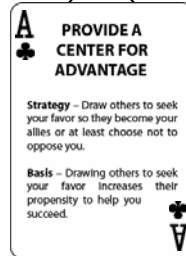
4. Non-Military Solutions

Non-Military Solutions

Bringing civilian business fundamentals into play

Military – Isolation Focus

Non-Military – Interaction Focus



Some Non-Military Strategic Principles

(Adapted Universal Sales Principles)



SECURE INFLUENTIAL ALLIES

Strategy – Gain the political support of Insiders by giving them a stake in your success.

Basis – Influential allies can provide information, advice, and access key to winning sales.

Sales Tip – Support the best interests of your allies so it is in their interest to support yours.

POSITION



SATISFY THE EGO

Strategy – Fill your prospect's personal need to be first, better, different, or the same.

Basis – The need to satisfy the ego predisposes individuals to make certain choices over others.

Sales Tip – Look beyond evident objectives to find the personal motives that will decide the sale.

SHAPE



TAKE A WALK IN THEIR SHOES

Strategy – Experience your solution from the point of view of your prospects and customers.

Basis – People respond to people who appreciate their requirements and concerns.

Sales Tip – Be a resource by teaching new or better ways to select and use your solution.

POSITION



ASK QUESTIONS AND LISTEN

Strategy – Seek answers that help you to both understand the situation and offer a solution.

Basis – Asking questions allows you to develop the insight and credibility to reach agreements.

Sales Tip – Ask “who, what, when, where, why, and how” questions that engage your prospect in the buying decision.

5. Conclusion

Murphy's Mathematical Law of Strategic Consequences

*While mathematically there is a definable upper limit of usefulness in a strategic result whereupon more usefulness adds no further benefit, there is absolutely no lower limit to how bad things can get...**which means it is really important to get things right***