

TheImportanceofDistancing PDF转换可能丢失图片或格式，建议阅读原文

https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/501/2021_2022_TheImportanc85_501233.htm One of the most important principles underlying the conduct of war has to be pro-activeness. This is aptly captured by the following saying by Sun Tzi: "In the conduct of war, one must not rely on the enemys failure to come, but on ones readiness to engage him. One must not rely on the enemys failure to attack, but on ones ability to build an in-vincible defence. In war, as appropriately pointed out by Sun Tzi, one cannot rely on the failure of the enemy to attack us. Instead, one must be ever ready to take on the enemy. In addition, the defence must be so strong that the enemy would not even dare to contemplate an attack. This proactiveness is thus not on-ly in defence, but in offence as well. This is a principle that is well understood by any military commander. By being proactive, he is able not only to gain the initiative, but will also have ample time and opportunity to deal with the enemy. On the other hand, if he is placed on the defensive, he is unlikely to come up with effective strategies. In fact, he will be under severe pressure, resulting in tension and even disunity within his rank-and-file. While proactiveness is well understood in military warfare, it tends to be easily over-looked in the context of business. More of-ten than not, many companies tend to adopt a "follower" strategy. To begin with, they hope that by following, they can reduce the risks involved. At the same time, they can copy the successful strategy of the leader and avoid his mistakes. There is nothing wrong with adopting a follower

strategy, provided one chooses the right leader! The significance of the above quotation by Sun Tzi would be better understood in terms of its applications. Let me illustrate by posing a question. When you are number two or three in your line of business (whether it is in terms of market share, profitability, quality standing, etc.), what would you like to be? I am sure many readers would have very little problem answering the question -- we all want to be number one! Now, if you are now ranked number one, what would be your goal or objective? This is where I often get very interesting answers. Typically, I would get the following answers from executives around the world: 1. Defend the number one position. 2. Protect the number one position (whether this is in terms of profits, market share or some other criteria). 3. Guard against the competitors. 4. Maintain the leadership position. 5. Sustain the number one position. 6. Try to remain as number one. 7. Stay number one. Now if you happen to hold one of the above responses, let me say that you are only half-right. By saying half-right, I mean you are half wrong! This is because all the above answers are passive, defensive and reactive responses! In actual fact, being number one, you are effectively the leader. As a leader, your main role is to lead. Unfortunately, if you have a passive, defensive and reactive mindset, you are likely to end up following instead. This effectively violates the principle of proactiveness as advocated by Sun Tzi. What then should the appropriate answer be? Of course, in war, we can destroy our enemies. In business, however, we do not go about destroying our competitors. This would project the company as very ruthless and

without moral principles. However, while we do not go about destroying our business competitors, it does not mean that they do not wish that we are out-of-business. Without doubt, many companies wish that there are fewer and weaker com-petitors around. In this way, they would not have to work so hard for their market shares and profits! A more appropriate stance would be for the leader to distance itself from the com-petitors. Note that the key phrase is to dis-tance from ones competitors, not from ones own followers! By distancing itself from the rest of the field, it would be harder and harder for the competitors to catch up. In fact, if the gap becomes too big, the com-petitors may even give up chasing! More importantly, the concept of distancing can be applied to a company which is not in the number one position. For example, if the company is in the number two position, its goal would be to catch up and overtake the leader. However, it is equally important that it distances itself from the rest of the competitors. In this way, it is assured of the runner-up position while going for the champion! Interestingly, there are several reasons why it is so important to distance oneself from the rest. Let me illustrate through the game of basketball. When the score is 62 to 60, 64 to 62, 66 to 64, and so on (that is, the difference between the two teams is only two points apart), what would your answers be to the following questions: 1. Which team do you think will be under greater stress? 2. Which team is more willing to take risks? 3. Which team will be afraid of making mistakes? 4. Which team is likely to be more innovative and creative? Think of the answers carefully. Not sur-prisingly, many of you will

say that the team that is behind by only two points is likely to be more willing to take risks and to innovate. Conversely, the team that is marginally ahead is more afraid to make mistakes, is less willing to take risks, and is under more stress and tension! The logic is very simple! The guy behind is too close for comfort! As a result, the team that is leading is forced to take a more conservative posture to defend its position. This is where the irony lies. To be a leader, there is a need to continue to innovate and be creative. This implies the necessity to take risks and the ability to tolerate mistakes. Only then can the people in the organisation be willing to experiment, develop new ideas and concepts. All these can flourish much better if the organisation has enough "capital" and "buffer" to do so. This is where distancing becomes so crucial. It allows the leading company to have sufficient breathing space to develop new ideas and innovations, and accomplish them with minimal tension and stress. It is such a very simple, yet powerful concept that only the enlightened companies are able to practise it. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com