

The Strategic Art Of Patience.

Many of us are very action-oriented. We want to get things done right now. We want to be seen to be doing something. Doing something is better than doing nothing. And many of us like to quote General George Patton, "A good plan, vigorously executed right now, is far better than a perfect plan next week." And of course, being in the camp of those who believe in swift and decisive action, I thoroughly agree.

However, take a step back and consider that General George Patton mentioned two things. One, a plan. When you get into action, do you have a plan? Or are you one of those people who say "I'll make it up as I go"? Well, if you're Indiana Jones maybe you can, but I wager that for most people, that's not really a very good thing to do. It's not a good plan, you shouldn't go that way, all right. So don't make things up as you go. Stop, come up with some planning, at least a rudimentary one, make sure your people know, and have a plan! Don't just jump in for the sake of being seen to be doing something! Usually it doesn't work.

Secondly, General George Patton said, "Vigorously. Executing it vigorously." Now, people usually can only execute vigorously if they know what they are doing. In other words, is there a foundation laid? Are they well trained? Have they gone through various scenarios? Do they come together and know how each other works as a team? Are they cohesive? And only if you have these two things - a good plan, it doesn't have to be perfect, and the ability to execute it vigorously. Then you're gonna have success. You know, patience, waiting. Patience is waiting for the right moment, and then you spring into action with all your strength and all your resources and - if need be.

The story is told, you know, in ancient China, this is told in the Thirteen Chapters by Sun Zi. One of the barbarian kings and his kingdom. One day he was approached by one of the Chinese states, and they said, "Hey, you know, we want your horse. You know that special horse that can be ridden for a thousand miles?"



And the barbarian king of course conferred with his councillors and they all said, "Hey, how can he ask for that horse? The one-thousand-mile horse is the most precious thing in our kingdom, how can you give it away?" And the king looks at the councillors and he says "How can a man begrudge his neighbour a horse?" And so he gives them the horse. A couple of weeks later, they come back and they said "Now we want a Princess."



And the councillors came to the king and said "This is outrageous! First they take the horse, now they want the Princess, what next? We have to go attack them, O King!" And the king looks at the councillors again and he says "Why should we begrudge a neighbour a Princess?" And so he gave them a Princess. Couple of weeks later, the Chinese come back and they said "You have about a thousand acres of land that you are not using. Give it to us, we want it." And the king calls all the councillors together, and by now, they must be thinking "Hmmm...I think he's gonna give it away..." and so they advise the king and they said "Ah...you know...it's only a thousand acres of land, we've got plenty more, you know, and we don't really use it anyway." And so they said "Give it away." The king was enraged. He became infuriated and he said "All those who advised to give away the land...you are to be beheaded! How can you give away

land? Land is the foundation of a State!" And with that, he ordered them to be beheaded, jumped on his horse and he said "Everyone is to follow me or you will beheaded as well." So of course everyone follows him. The Chinese were



contemptuous of him by this time, they made no preparations and he inflicted a ruinous defeat upon them. He attacked them when they least expected and he went on to annex other lands which the Chinese had taken from his father, grandfather and before, and restored those lands to his own people.

That is the strategic art of patience. It is deliberate. It is waiting for the right time to spring into action. Do you have patience? Would you like to be able to develop patience? Call me or email me now if you'd like to develop more patience in yourself and in your people. Don't delay! I am waiting for you!