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## THE WUZI'S ANALYSIS FROM THE MANAGERIAL POINT OF VIEW

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One of the most prominent figures of the era Warring States period can be called the strategist Wu Qi. Whatever kingdom he served, it grew stronger and expanded its domains. Among the 76 wars he has fought in his entire life, he won 64, drew 12 and never lost [1, p. 207].

This is probably why the treatise on the art of war the Wuzi is as popular as the famous book «The Art of War» by another Chinese strategist, Sun Tzu. Both books are included in the Seven Military Classics of Ancient China. They are recognized as classical since the 11th century and included in most military encyclopedias. Some analysts even believe that modern China is developing according to the canons described in the Wuzi [2].

Despite the fact that, according to one of the versions, this text was written not by Wu Qi himself, but by his students, and only 6 chapters out of 48 have come to this day, you can find there many thoughts that are applicable in modern management practice.

The first chapter, «Planning the State» begins with a section that describes how Wu Tzu (as Wu Qi was called by later generations) tells Marquis Wen of Wei about military affairs. Despite the fact that the ruler, in his words, is «not interested in military affairs», Wu Tzu shows that it is necessary to maintain a balance between domestic and foreign policy.

Despite the fact that the Chinese strategist spoke about government management, the same logic is applicable in modern business. You can take care of your subordinates as much as you want, but if you do not notice changes in the market in time, the company is doomed to failure. And in the same way, if a manager closely monitors what is happening with the external environment of the organization, but does not notice the signals indicating a crisis inside the enterprise, this means that he is not performing part of his functions, in particular, planning.

In the next paragraph, Wu Tzu says that «In antiquity those who planned government affairs would invariably first instruct the hundred surnames and gain the affection of the common people» [1, p. 207]. This is also a very revealing moment, which indicates that he understood the importance of caring for people, and not only the military (once he even risked his own life to save an ordinary soldier), but also the citizens of the country as a whole.

In management, the team is also very important, because the successful achievement of the goal depends on it. And the difference between a team and a group of people working together lies precisely in unity, mutual support and common interests. Therefore, for a leader of any level, it is important at the first stage to form a team, and then direct efforts – both his own and those of subordinates – to achieve the goals.

Wu Tzu recommends to «stimulate [people] with righteousness» [1, p. 208], that is, through moral behavior. Indeed, even today, in the age of liberalism and pluralism, there are some values that are shared by almost all people around the world. And if a manager professes such values and, moreover, manages based on them, this will help to strengthen his positive image both within the company and in the external environment.

Further, Wu Tzu said «The enlightened kings of antiquity always exerted every effort to maintain the forms of propriety between themselves and their ministers, manifest the distinctions of rank, settle and assemble the officials and people, accord with their customs to instruct them, and select and recruit the talented in order to prepare for the unexpected. ... Thus, the ruler of a strong state must evaluate his people» [1, p. 209].

At first sight, it may seem that we are talking exclusively about a rigid hierarchy. However, these ideas can be viewed from the other side. It is very important that the person is in the company in his/hers place. It is often still possible to observe the practice when the best employee is appointed to a managerial position, after which his/her work efficiency sharply declines. In this situation, the question is often not that his/her duties, status, powers, etc. have changed. The problem lies in the discrepancy between the qualities that a person possesses and the position that he/she occupies.

Of course, a person can acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in order to take up a managerial position, but even today, when the number of

opportunities is greater than the list of restrictions, the basis for this should be the person's desire to change himself/herself. Because it is not enough just to learn the principles of management or types of motivation, you need to determine how to apply them correctly for you, and for this, first of all, you need to study yourself and understand what qualities you have, which ones you lack, and which you need to get rid of, or even would reduce their share. Not everyone is capable of this.

The «importance of choosing the capable» is discussed in the next section, as if continuing the idea that was started. Here, Wu Tzu tells the following story: «Once in antiquity when King Chuang of Ch'u was planning state affairs, he discovered none of his ministers could equal his talents. After he had dismissed the court he wore a troubled countenance. Duke Shen inquired: 'Why does your lordship have a troubled countenance?' He replied: 'I have heard it said that there is no lack of Sages in the world and no shortage of Worthies in a state. One who can get them to be his teachers will be a king, while one who has them as his friends can become a hegemon. Now I am not talented, yet none of my ministers can even equal me in ability. Our state of Ch'u is in deep trouble» [1, pp. 209-210].

Almost 2,500 years later, a similar principle is applied in modern companies. Today, a manager is not a person who knows everything better than anyone else; often his knowledge can be very superficial. He can professionally understand one direction, but not all at once. That is why he needs people who will be specialists in certain areas, whose knowledge, skills and abilities will far exceed him. And the task of a manager in such a situation is not to say how to complete a particular task, but to provide the best conditions for employees so that they do their job quickly and efficiently.

Chapter 2, «Evaluating the Enemy», begins by explaining why it is important to be cautious and to know and take into account the strengths and weaknesses of opponents. For the 21st century manager, these skills will also be useful, because problems are often easier to prevent than deal with their consequences. Knowing your competitors will help you not to repeat their mistakes and improve your own activities.

Basically, the second chapter is devoted to describing the signs of whether or not you can attack the enemy. The common thread here is also the idea of how important it is to choose the right moment, which can be the merit of both great experience and developed intuition.

The third chapter, «Controlling the Army», begins with the Wu Tzu's talks about «four heaviness, two weights and the one of belief» [1, p. 214]. «Lightness» in his understanding means correct preparation: the terrain should be flat, then the horses will seem light to the ground; the horses themselves must be well fed, then the chariots will seem light to them, and so on. That is, victory is determined not in the battle itself, but long before that, on the basis of preparation for it. Likewise, in management, in order for a project to be

successfully implemented, it is necessary not only to efficiently and on time do your work during the project, but also to carry out through preparation so that all subsequent actions do not end up in vain.

Heaviness, in turn, implies rewards and penalties, and they should both be properly implemented so that they will be believed in.

In the next paragraph the ancient Chinese strategist expresses another very important idea: it is not quantity that matters, but quality. If you have a lot of people who can't work together productively, their product will end up worse than the work of a team of like-minded people. And here the art of management comes to the fore.

Another section of this chapter notes the following guideline: do not violate the correct order of movement and stops, do not miss the right hour to eat and drink, and do not deplete people and animals. Already at that time, the leaders realized that it takes a certain time to regain their strength, and neither man nor animal can work for too long, otherwise they will take a long time to regain their strength later. It should be noted and clarified here that today many companies (especially large corporations) have gone even further, and provide the opportunity for employees to work in the schedule that suits them the most. Of course, this is impossible in the army, both modern and ancient, but earlier a unified approach was also justified by the rigid hierarchy that existed in society, because of which people belonging to the same social group were often viewed as carriers of the same personal qualities and characteristics.

In the last chapter, «Stimulating the Officers», Wu Tzu gives the advice: «You should identify men of accomplishment and honor them with a grand feast while also stimulating those who failed to accomplish anything notable» [1, p. 223-224]. This principle in the field of business management has been in effect for a long time and refers to the socio-psychological methods of management.

That's why the study of texts like the Wuzi from a managerial point of view makes it possible to rethink the approach to enterprise management and, in particular, human resources. However, when introducing these tips into modern management practice, it should be remembered that they were originally created for a more rigid and aggressive structure, and first they need to be comprehended and interpreted. Otherwise, there is a high probability that today they will be inapplicable, because over 2.5 thousand years, both the world around us and the worldview of a person have changed.

### **References:**

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