choose a favorable moment and start it yourself. 5 When you initiate a conflagration be in such a position that it will naturally move away from you and towards a vital of the enemy. Don't attack when a conflagration could engulf both armies. Winds that arise with the morning generally persist but evening breezes usually fade away. Careful watch must be maintained for potential fires, both in the enemy's appropriate camp and in your own. And preparations must be kept in constant readiness. The use of this special knowledge as a method of attack brings about an all consuming fire. But the use of direct force as a method of attack is like a flood of water which requires a superabundance of strength.

Through use of brute force the enemy may be assaulted but he will rarely be robbed of his vitals, for he will withdraw to safety before disaster ensues. Unhappy are those who attempt attacks without cultivating this special knowledge of the art of war, for they will be impeded by poor timing and reluctance in the field. There is a saying, The wise sovereign makes preparations well in advance and the wise general develops his capability before he fights.' Don't mobilize your army necessity for it. Don't send your troops to the field until there are specific securities to be acquired. Don't fight unless the soldiers are desperate. War is dangerous! Don't resort to war except when