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Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen

First published in Great Britain by Milet Publishing Limited in 2000
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ISBN 1 84059 227 3

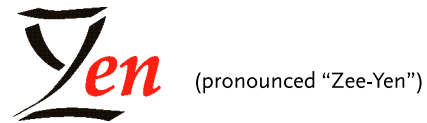
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Z/Yen website: www.zyen.com

Design: LOOK AT ME
Illustrations: James Verschoye





ACCORDING TO LEGEND, the Z/Yen chop – symbol of the quest for Z/Yen enlightenment – was inherited by Chao Kli Ning's most fervent disciple, Lo Fan. Given Lo Fan's Z/Yen, a philosophical desire to make money, he began a chain of successive sales of the Z/Yen chop to faithful disciples through the centuries. Legend has it that the chop was lost in a fairly messy takeover battle in the early late Middle Ages. However, there are dark rumours that the chop still survives, wielded by modern disciples who continue to spread the Z/Yen creed, for a quick buck.

MICHAEL MAINELLI and **IAN HARRIS** are founders/directors of the risk/reward management firm Z/Yen and the modern scions of Chao Kli Ning's dynasty. Before reaching total Z/Yen enlightenment, Michael and Ian's monastic duties included service as management consultants and corporate strategists, advising businesses and organisations on the one true path(s), as well as writing and contributing to numerous business publications.

CHAO KLI NING (499BC TO 401BC?): Quasi-mythological, proto-businessman from the late Zhou period in ancient China. Said to have had an uncanny knack for spotting an opportunity to make a quick buck. Legend has it that the Z/Yen business philosophy (see opposite), which later came to dominate the Early Imperial Eastern Mercantile Period, was founded as the result of a massive endowment from Chao Kli Ning's stupendous fortune (although some accounts attribute the Z/Yen Institution to Lo Fan, protégé of Chao Kli Ning, patriarch of the powerful Lo family and holder of Chao Kli Ning's subsidiary rights in perpetuity). The only evidence of Chao Kli Ning's existence is a rich oral tradition of case studies.

Z/YEN (PRONOUNCED "ZEE-YEN"): A mystical philosophy that encompasses enlightenment in business and enlightenment in life. Z/Yen is based on a unique blend of Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, decadent subcultures, arrogant supra-cultures and humour. The philosophy, which highlights the duality in all business problems and solutions, is sometimes summarised as "a philosophical desire to make money." Z/Yen is believed to have been founded by Chao Kli Ning (see opposite), although only fragmentary evidence of the origins of Z/Yen survives in its rich oral tradition. Historians have long sought documentary evidence of Chao Kli Ning, the origins of Z/Yen and the zest for enlightenment which made the ancient business world what it is today.

EXCERPTS FROM THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BUSINESS ARCHAEOLOGY PRIOR TO
THE DISCOVERY OF THE Z/YEN PAPERS – THE ANCIENT EASTERN BUSINESS TEXT
CONTAINED HEREIN.





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WHEN THE TIGER FIGHTS THE
LION, THEY BOTH USE THEIR FANGS.
DOES THE HUNTER NOTICE THE
DIFFERENCE IN THEIR TEETH?

SUN TZU KNEW MY GRANDSON

THE TRULY SELFISH MAKE PEOPLE
HAPPY FOR THEIR OWN ENDS

(TRULY BELIEVED TO BE FROM) THE TRULY PROFOUND
THOUGHTS OF CHAO KLI NING



CHAPTER THREE: HUMAN RESOURCES

PEOPLE ARE FOR TURNING

In the course of which many character flaws are revealed under the stress of competition. Yet, as always, our heroes eventually emerge victorious, or at least profitable.

IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, it was the worst of times. Everyone was happy, everyone was sad. Not only that, everyone had a hangover. It had been a great New Year celebration. It had been a terrible year. It had been a pig of a year. This is the story of that terrible year.

It was the year of the Pig. Spring. The snow had melted. The birds were singing. The workers were busy. The competition was hotting up. Chao Kli Ning had his first meal in the village's newest restaurant. The new restaurant had received rave reviews. It was the "in" place for the "in" crowd. Very few civil servants could afford to eat there. Kli Ning cursed the new owner's name with every mouthful. This left a rather unsavoury mess around him. "Chung Chong Chop." At least, that's what it sounded like when Chao Kli Ning said it.

Chung Chong Chop had everything. He had inherited a small fortune, although it didn't look so small to Chao Kli Ning. With the fortune, Chung had acquired a winsome wife, Lin. And a dubious reputation for wooing



beautiful mistresses. And he lived in a ravishing house. Kli Ning could cope with the thought of the wife and the dubious reputation, but the thought of the house gave him heartburn and the damage to Chao's own restaurant trade hurt his pride.

Chung Chong Chop had recruited most of Chao Kli Ning's staff. Chung paid the best wages in town. Kli Ning knew that Chung paid the best wages because Lo Fan, his restaurant manager, continually wanted to raise wages to keep Chao's staff. Since working for Chung, Kli Ning's former staff had all acquired absurd pretensions. In fact, in the service of Chung they had all acquired identical absurd pretensions. Character was contrary to Chung's restaurant policy. It wasn't just the wages, pretensions and conformity. Chung's staff also had exquisite uniforms. Kli Ning took pains to point out to Lo Fan that the uniforms were not pure silk, just a silk/cotton mixture. Lo Fan praised the leather shoes. Personally, Kli Ning preferred composite soles. Kli Ning also felt that if he had invented the sombrero, it would not look that way.

Lo Fan had his own problems with the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry. Kli Ning's restaurant had lost all the best staff. Lo Fan had hired some temporary staff. Some of them didn't cut the mustard. Some of them couldn't chop ginger. One who could cut neither the mustard nor the ginger did try to cut the customers. He wielded a handy cleaver when two local dignitaries said they wanted to split the bill. No matter how shabbily dressed, both old and new staff demanded clothing allowances and persistently wanted to dress up in preposterous ethnic outfits. Further, Lo Fan had many sleepless nights after

a particularly vivid nightmare in which each member of staff, accompanied by Lo Fan's wife Lo Tzu, all dressed in increasingly bizarre costumes, poured a vial of rat poison into the soup of the day (hot and sour with pork dumplings and a hint of ginger).

High on a mountain top in the groves of a secluded retirement home, a bleary-eyed Lo Fan sought counsel from the wisest source he knew. His mother listened carefully. Then, in the incessant, unbearably loquacious verbosity of the old, she asked the long-winded question, "Does the bullock change course when beaten?" As Lo Fan walked down the mountain he thought long and hard on his mother's question. He kicked a few sheep out of his path as he descended. Suddenly he recalled the ancient Way of the Stick at which his mother was so adept. His childhood training flooded back in an overwhelming rush. He remembered the arts in which he had been schooled – beating, flogging, cursing, kicking, blaming, and other such facilitation skills which guide subordinates towards the proper course of action. He resolved to follow the ancient Way of the Stick with gusto.

Lo Fan followed family tradition and installed himself as kitchen tyrant. The staff had never had it so bad. They could not stand the heat, so they got out of the kitchen. The staff fell over themselves in their desire to get out and serve the customers. Lo Fan was gaining a discerning clientele who appreciated good service and were rather impervious to bewildering fashion statements. Unfortunately, the head chef had enough of Lo Fan's authoritarianism and decided to get out of the kitchen permanently. No one gave

Kli Ning's restaurant good reviews any more. The restaurant then lost the discriminating clientele who recognise good food when they read about it. He also lost the few who recognise good food when they taste it. Lo Fan saw that things were going nowhere; Kli Ning despaired of ever again owning an impressive house. Chung noticed little except that some of his clandestine mistresses were now regularly seen wearing his staff sombreros around the village.

Kli Ning was not in a good mood. His wife, Cha, had spent a tidy sum on an absurd over-sized hat called a sombrero, while telling him that his restaurant seemed "so down market." Kli Ning demanded change from Lo Fan. The staff did not speak eloquently like Chung's staff. The costumes worn by Kli Ning's staff were uncoordinated and unacceptable. Lo Fan gathered quotes for elocution lessons and uniforms. Kli Ning demurred. He said, "Get a detailed grip on the big picture, Lo Fan. If you can't change the people, change the people," and went home. Lo Fan understood his master's proclamation, at once dismissed all the staff and advertised all positions through the village grapevine: "Staff wanted at Chao Kli Ning's. Long hours. Hard work. Adequate pay. No uniform."

As dusk fell, Lo Fan settled back in a chair in the quiet restaurant, with the satisfaction of a day's work well done. Kli Ning returned to a restaurant devoid of diners, and staff. He was outraged. Not only had Kli Ning spent most of the day widening his bedroom doorway to accommodate Cha's absurd sombreros, but then his restaurant manager had taken Kli Ning's suggestion

to change the staff literally, when all that Kli Ning wanted was an inexpensive change management programme.

Doubting Lo Fan's ability to comprehend even the simplest Z/Yen proclamation, Kli Ning implored Lo Fan to seek the best counsel he could find. Lo Fan agreed. His mother had got him into this mess; she could get him out. Further, Lo Tzu was intractable these days. A trip to see his mother might remedy the situation. He would take Lo Tzu with him for a short sharp shock of maternal wisdom. The sombrero would stay at home.

Lo Fan's mother listened carefully to his latest woes. She reprimanded Lo Tzu for climbing the mountain without so much as a hat to protect her head from the sun. Turning to her son's need for counsel, she then, in the succinct way of the old, whose antiquity makes them sensitive to the value of time, laconically replied, "Son, get a big picture grip on the details. Do not fight with another's bow and arrow, do not discuss another's faults, do not interfere with another's work, do not beat another's bullock. And remember, you can achieve more with a trout than a stick."

As Lo Fan walked down the mountain he thought long and hard on his mother's suggestion. Surely she wasn't suggesting that he beat Lo Tzu with a trout? Suddenly he recalled the ancient Way of the Carrot at which his mother was not so adept (because she had a strange tendency to confuse vegetables with fish). His adolescent experiences flooded back in an overwhelming rush, in particular the manoeuvres he had learned to dodge low-flying halibut. He also remembered the arts which he had developed – leadership, self-

improvement, building consensus, consultation and selflessness. Lo Fan resolved to follow the ancient Way of the Carrot with gusto. His resolve would be like a slap in the face with a wet fish to Lo Tzu.

Lo Fan re-advertised all staff positions through the village grapevine: “Staff wanted at Chao Kli Ning’s. Reasonable hours. Moderate work. Good pay. Nice uniforms. Free elocution lessons.” Lo Fan wisely visited the former head chef to plead personally for his return. Once he had been promised a special uniform the head chef returned. He was delighted with his ten-gallon wig. The rest of the staff soon followed. They were all delighted with their six-gallon wigs. They were pleased with their composite-sole shoes. Some found the all-cotton shirts hard to iron. Lo Tzu made a personal innovative fashion statement: an eight-gallon wig over a sombrero.

Some things were looking up. The staff were happier under the Way of the Carrot than they had been under the Way of the Stick. The good restaurant reviews returned. Income was rising. Some things were looking down. The composite soles on the staff’s shoes started to come apart alarmingly quickly. Lo Fan was spending more money on uniforms than he thought possible. Customers observed that staff spent so much time preening themselves in front of the mirror that it was difficult to place an order. Other customers complained of wig hairs in their soup. In short, after all these changes, Kli Ning’s restaurant was still nowhere near as profitable as Chung’s. Chung noticed little, except that his clandestine mistresses were now regularly seen wearing wigs over his staff sombreros.

Kli Ning had had enough. He imparted some wisdom to Lo Fan. This wisdom had been handed down from generation to generation in Kli Ning's family. "Get a big picture grip on the details, Lo Fan. Generate some real profit in the next three days and you will be amply rewarded. Fail to do so and you will be fired. Thus do I meld the Way of the Carrot with the Way of the Stick. This is the Way of the Sticky Carrot." Lo Fan was astonished that Kli Ning had such insight into the ways of the retirement mountains, although Lo Fan recalled that this particular way was really named the Sticky Trout. Nevertheless they were both enlightened and knew how to proceed.

Lo Fan was indeed amply rewarded, well within the three-day deadline. A simple notice in Chung's kitchen did the job for Lo Fan. Once Chung's staff were aware of the significance of their wives' sombrero fad, it was only going to be a matter of time before Chung's popularity subsided. It was a matter of half an hour. The speed and efficiency of Chung's fall from grace shocked even Lo Fan. By nightfall, Chung sat in the village square, covered in plum sauce and duck feathers, cursing his libido. He now had no staff, an estranged wife and a pile of discarded hats. Only Lo Tzu, always a non-conformist, persisted with wearing the outmoded sombrero. After losing so much and gaining so little, Chung thought it best to leave town with Lo Tzu and inherit another fortune elsewhere. Chung graciously handed over his restaurant to Kli Ning with barely a spit or a curse. Kli Ning was ecstatic about his new restaurant. He noticed that his wife, Cha, stopped her mysterious crying after a few weeks. Lo Fan seemed strangely unperturbed at losing his wife to Chung. Indeed, he

seemed in unusually high spirits and was often seen skipping, especially when he visited the grand house in which Chung Lin, Chung Chong Chop's estranged wife, still lived.

Having regained his monopoly of the village restaurant trade, Kli Ning prospered. He kept both restaurants largely unchanged in order to increase trade, although he insisted on composite soles for all uniforms. As an economy measure, he and Lo Fan combined the New Year celebration for the staff. Kli Ning named the celebration "Party on Chung." The staff were not happy. The staff were not sad. The staff were not mixing with each other. One side abhorred pretentious accents. The other side scoffed at cotton clothing. Kli Ning and Lo Fan schemed about the cost reductions they could achieve by putting all staff on equal and less extravagant benefit packages. Deep in his heart, Kli Ning knew that the more two sides compete with each other, the more they look like each other. He would have both groups of staff wearing the same uniforms before the end of spring. Spring came early that year.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Design a more appropriate uniform for an ancient restaurant taking due account of modern fashion, hygiene and safety regulations.
- It was something Lo Fan said that caused his wife to leave him. Discuss at home.