



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.





CONTENTS

PROLOGUE Z/YEN THINGS YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT BUSINESS	11
CHAPTER ONE: CENTRALISATION/DECENTRALISATION CONFEDERAL UNITY	19
CHAPTER TWO: TECHNOLOGY GIZMO'S BIG ADVENTURE	27
CHAPTER THREE: HUMAN RESOURCES PEOPLE ARE FOR TURNING	39
CHAPTER FOUR: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT QUALITY IS FREE	51
CHAPTER FIVE: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION THE QUESTION OF HU	63
CHAPTER SIX: LEVERAGED GROWTH BROTHERS IN ALMS	79
CHAPTER SEVEN: STRATEGY GREEKS HAVE A GENERAL WORD FOR IT	91
CHAPTER EIGHT: COMMERCIAL ETHICS KLI NING'S PRINCIPLE PROBLEM	105
CHAPTER NINE: SALES AND MARKETING SAVING FAITH	119
CHAPTER TEN: RISK/REWARD FAT CHANCE'S RISKY BUSINESS	133
EPILOGUE SEE YOU, Z/YEN	149



WHITE SOCKS AND RED SOCKS
AND PINK SOCKS BETWEEN

LAUNDRY INSPECTOR'S STANDARD BOOK OF NURSERY RHYMES

IS IT BETTER TO TRAVEL
THAN TO ARRIVE?

THE ART OF WASH



CHAPTER FOUR: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

QUALITY IS FREE

Whereby quality standards struggle to meet customers' innermost desires while removing foul smells.

ONE FINE DAY TAI TSO NOTICED a difference at Chao Kli Ning's laundry. That morning, as usual, he was the first villager to leave his washing. Tai Tso liked to get to work a little before everyone else. He worked at the village noodle factory, as the principal noodle inspector. His main concern was ensuring that noodles were cut to the right length. He appreciated the early mornings to himself, a small cup of tea, a chance to ponder on life's mysteries, some time to read the news. What was different about the laundry? It wasn't the stench in the air. The stench was always there.

Perhaps it was nothing special, but the laundry staff seemed more ardent. The counter woman nearly tore his laundry bundle from him in her enthusiasm to wash it. On his way home, Tai Tso took the time to quiz Lo Fan, the laundry manager. Lo Fan was delighted at Tai Tso's interest and said so.

"I am delighted," said Lo Fan. "What do you think seems different?"

"I don't know, a certain something. The look in the eyes. A smell of fear.



I don't know, just different. Come on Lo Fan, is something going on?"

Lo Fan replied proudly, "I didn't expect anyone to notice so quickly, but we have found a new way. The master from the Ganges, Guru Neverminda Widequal, has led the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry away from the dualism of Confucianism and Taoism. Now we follow one pure path. The way of Ti Ku."

"What is this Ti Ku, Lo Fan? Is it one of these new ecological washing powders?"

"Certainly not," said Lo Fan, "it goes much deeper than that. Guru Neverminda is a very wise man. A very, very wise man. He is so wise, Kli Ning doesn't understand half the things Guru Neverminda says. But Kli Ning tells us that we should get a detailed grip on the big picture. For instance, Guru Neverminda explained that we should spend much money on printing our customer charter and corporate mission statement. Kli Ning likes the idea of publicising our new way, but just doesn't like having to pay monastery taxes on idea dissemination."

Tai Tso was puzzled. "What is this customer charter of which you speak?"

Lo Fan grew even more excited and pressed a small, rumpled rice paper scroll into Tai Tso's hand. Tai Tso read aloud, "Her long, sensuous legs, wrapped around his massive..."

"...no, not that side. I am sorry, Kli Ning insisted that we use recycled paper from the monastery."

Tai Tso turned the scroll and again began to read:

We, the dedicated laundry employees of the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry, servants of the illustrious Chao Kli Ning, a wise and benevolent businessman with an uncanny knack for spotting an opportunity to make a quick buck, do hereby solemnly pledge to boldly strive at all times, and to the utmost of our ability to:

- Every day, in every way, constantly contemplate our customers' requirements and seek our customers' guidance on innovative, entrepreneurial and totally satisfying ways to meet their needs
- Endeavour to infinitely improve ourselves and honour our ancestors and thus, in so doing, produce the ultimate service for our community and in our small, modest way make the world in which we live a perfect place for not just ourselves or our immediate descendants but for infinite generations yet unborn
- Give good laundry in an utterly excellent manner.

Tai Tso reflected for a few moments and then said, “This is truly an impressive customer charter. Why is this necessary?”

“Between you and me, Tai Tso, Guru Neverminda noticed that we have a few quality problems. Have you ever noticed an unpleasant smell?”

“Oh, hardly at all,” said Tai Tso.

“Of course, we have a massive laundry here, employing more than forty staff. There are bound to be a few small quality problems – a slight odour, the occasional tear, a few minor mix-ups...”

“...like the day the whole village turned out in pink shirts?”

“Oh, that was a minor problem with our bleach. Anyway, I’m talking about more substantial matters. Guru Neverminda says that quality from Ti Ku should be free. By investing more time in avoiding problems, he says, we’ll spend much less time correcting errors and losing customers,” said Lo Fan.

“If I were upset with you, I would just ask my wife to do the laundry,” said Tai Tso.

“That’s precisely the point Guru Neverminda made. We must prevent quality failure by having a quality control process with inspection, standards and external review. For a modest fee, Guru Neverminda was prepared to lend us one of his Ti Ku disciples, Aiso. Aiso is busy hiring people for his quality inspectorate, producing procedures manuals, establishing performance standards, formulating quality measures and devising quality checklists. With Aiso’s help, we expect to be able to break down and understand the individual components of quality in our laundry.”

“None of this sounds free to me,” said Tai Tso. “I couldn’t see this Ti Ku stuff working at the noodle factory. People love our noodles without a quality control process. Anyway, can I have my laundry. I really need to get home.”

When he got home, Tai Tso sorted his clean laundry and as usual found one or two of those irritating brown stains that were Kli Ning’s trademark. Now that he knew that Lo Fan really cared, he felt it was his duty as a loyal customer to raise the matter with Lo Fan. On the morrow, the counter woman glumly handed Tai Tso a customer complaint form. He wanted to complete the form there and then, but was stymied on the first question: “Batch and

reference number?” He took the form to the office and rummaged in the wastebasket for his old receipt. Lo Fan wasn’t there when Tai Tso dropped off the form on his way home. The counter woman glumly accepted it and annoyingly said, “May the Ti Ku be with you.”

Tai Tso met a cheery Lo Fan the next morning. Lo Fan thanked him profusely for taking the time to submit a properly completed complaint form, although Lo Fan indicated a few non-conformities where Tai Tso had failed to use the correct date format. Tai Tso bridled at Lo Fan’s suggestion that he consider a refresher course on his handwriting.

“Lo Fan, this complaint is not about my handwriting,” said Tai Tso. “What are you going to do about my laundry?”

“We’re not sure that we have a problem yet, but let me tell you where we are in our investigation. Aiso was delighted that we now have an opportunity to deal with a real quality issue. Guru Neverminda says that receiving a customer complaint is half way to achieving the quality improvement of Ti Ku. Without complaints you cannot measure your progress. We’re feeling better already.”

“Yes, but what about the brown stains?”

“Ah, those,” said Lo Fan, “so far, Aiso feels that we have followed our existing procedures perfectly. Most importantly, the stains were duly noted on the packing checklist. Nevertheless, Aiso believes that maybe our ironing checklist could go a bit further. There isn’t a stain tick-box for ironing and Aiso blames himself totally for this unforgivable oversight. Guru Neverminda has even

suggested that we consider including our quality checklist in your laundry bundles to demonstrate our commitment to quality. Once these minor improvements are made, Guru Neverminda assures us that we are close to knowing the components of quality.”

“Lo Fan, I’m pleased that things are working so well for you, but what about the brown stains?”

“Oh, don’t worry, now that we nearly have the process right, Guru Neverminda tells us that the content is sure to follow. Further, Aiso has suggested that we send a letter promptly to all complainants. You should receive yours within a week or so. Have a Ti Ku day.”

Three weeks later, a disgruntled Tai Tso opened a letter from Kli Ning’s laundry. “Thank you for your enquiry about the problems you may or may not be having with our laundry services. We are looking into this matter and will be in touch with you again as soon as possible. In the meantime, should you wish to contact us, be sure to quote your reference number above.” The now even more disgruntled Tai Tso, having noted the prompt response, personal tone, individual attention to his problem and missing reference number, decided to have a little moan to Lo Fan.

“Lo Fan, your charter said that you would give good laundry in an utterly excellent manner. Three weeks have passed and now, if anything, the stains are getting worse. Certainly not better. In fact, you bring the stains to my attention each time Aiso includes a quality control checklist in my bundle.”

“Oh, you are so wise to grasp the paradox between process and content.

I now understand why your noodle products are so well loved. Your noodles are consistent in length. We need to ensure that we give every customer a consistent laundry service. I can assure you that your laundry has gone through the same process as every other villager's. Guru Neverminda says that our enlightenment along the path of Ti Ku will go through many levels. At this level, we are putting the customer first. We need to understand what you really want."

"I want stain-free laundry," muttered Tai Tso.

"Of course you do. But you want far more besides – prompt and friendly service, value for money, professionalism and a hygienically conscious environment. We want this, because we know that many of our potential customers still prefer their wives to do the laundry, despite all of our expenditure on quality. For this reason, Guru Neverminda is leading us this very afternoon in a quality ring meditation on continuous improvement. We hope to understand better how our service can be tailored to our customers' needs, while still meeting our specifications. In fact, I meant to tell you that your laundry won't be ready until tomorrow because of the quality ring."

"What do you do in a quality ring? Is it like my wife's silk-spinning circle?" quipped an increasingly sceptical Tai Tso.

"Very similar," said Lo Fan, "you truly have an insight into these matters. The noodle factory must be very close to Ti Ku enlightenment. In our quality ring this afternoon, we hope to look beyond satisfying our service specifications and look forward to fulfilling our customers' innermost desires."

“How do customers get to attend one of your quality rings?”

“Guru Neverminda says that only by looking deep into ourselves can we truly understand our customers. It is important that we have prime time to meditate on our own. We are like believers who follow the form of their religion without understanding the way. We observe the fasts, the days of rest, the sexual strictures and some of the more enigmatic, traditional practices. We have a quality process, but are yet to achieve the enlightenment of Ti Ku.”

“Why don’t you just give the customers what they want? We give good noodles; why don’t you simply give good laundry?” asked Tai Tso.

“How will we know when our laundry is high quality?”

Drawing from an exam question for his noodle inspector’s certificate, Tai Tso asked, “Of all the grains of sand on the beach, which is the highest quality?”

Lo Fan was speechless, deep in thought. Tai Tso fidgeted nervously. He was fast losing patience with Lo Fan’s evangelism and was seriously considering the advantages of getting his wife to do the laundry tomorrow. Suddenly Lo Fan burst forth. “You are truly a master of quality. Consistency isn’t everything. I can see that the noodle factory must have long ago achieved Ti Ku. You never told me that you have been working with Guru Neverminda all these years.”

“We have not worked with your Guru. Or any other Guru. We know what we’re doing. We make good noodles. People want to buy them.”

“Oh such wisdom, to measure quality through success. I now understand the true Way. Inspections, checklists and procedures can be obstacles to quality unless they are means to Z/Yen enlightenment. We need to do – what we do – well.”

“Yes, but what about the brown stains?” concluded Tai Tso.

Two months later Tai Tso wanted to talk to Lo Fan about a small tear in one of his shirts. Tai Tso had heard about Guru Neverminda’s hasty return to his secluded monastery in a not quite clean robe. There were murmurings in the village that Kli Ning’s expected donation to the Guru’s monastery had not been forthcoming. Further, Kli Ning had been heard to say to the abbot, “We need to get a big picture grip on the details” – a sure sign of his displeasure. Tai Tso had also heard of the paperwork minimisation procedures instituted by Aiso after his former master’s departure. Tai Tso had to admit that some changes had been made. He appreciated not receiving those irritating checklists. Some days, he found fewer brown stains than usual. The stench remained unchanged. Lo Fan greeted Tai Tso warmly.

“Things are better, aren’t they? Just say it Tai Tso,” said Lo.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Write an appropriate customer charter for the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry’s restaurant staff.
- Design a laboratory test for Tai Tso’s noodles which accurately measures their pre- and post-boiling elasticity. Use exact approximations where necessary.

Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen the humorous risk/reward management novel

The Sunday Times Book of the Week

“highly entertaining . . . wonderfully daft . . . hilariously sophisticated stuff” - DJ Taylor, “Zen and the Ancient Art of Making Yen”



OVERVIEW How to manage organisations, motivate people and make a quick buck: the eternal Z/Yen questions. As with many ancient questions, the answers have been locked away in obscure Eastern texts that have only recently re-emerged. At last, these excerpts from The Z/Yen Papers, modernised and re-published as *Clean Business Cuisine*, reveal to our age the one true path(s) to enlightenment. Today, with the benefit of these teachings, businesses everywhere will thrive and the course of history will be irrevocably improved.

DESCRIPTION *Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen* is a novel modelled as a rediscovered ancient business text. It comprises a series of stories (or case studies) set around the workings of an ancient laundry and restaurant and its legendary proprietor, Chao Kli Ning. Each story is based on a simple duality, centralisation versus decentralisation, managing people or managing results, technology is wonderful or technology is useless. *Clean Business Cuisine* is firmly grounded in management theory and practice, served up in a wry, lighthearted manner for the general reader to enjoy.

Clean Business Cuisine is a uniquely enjoyable yet informative read, perfect for managers, students and anyone interested in enlightenment. The design of this book is stunning – a great gift.

DETAILS

ISBN: 1 84059 227 3
Format: Firm-cover paperback with illustrations
Size: 198 x 210 mm, 160 pages
Publication: 1 July 2000
UK Price: £14.99
4 to 24 copies £9.50 each
25 to 100 copies £7.50 each
over 100 copies negotiable
Subjects: Management / Fiction
Ordering: faxback (over)
e-mail: helen_griffiths@zyen.com
tel: +44 (0) 20 7562-9562
www.amazon.co.uk

Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen the humorous risk/reward management novel

SOME OF OVER 50 RAVE REVIEWS

- ◆ **“entertaining and excellent spoof...worth buying as a present for a colleague or customer”** – Graham Hutton, “Book Reviews”, Long Range Planning, Vol 34, Issue 2, pages 268-269 (April 2001).
- ◆ **“shows how business acumen can be successfully combined with humour, fun and a distinct lack of regard for convention . . . very sharp and even witty”** - Ruth Sachs, “Kli Ning Up and Dum Ing Don”, Strategy, page 21 (September 2000).
- ◆ **“Cleverly constructed and amusingly related, this will appeal across the board.”** - Ingrid Fisher, “Best of the Rest”, Venture, page 202 (September 2000).
- ◆ **“it’s a must for any management student . . . it really does make management studies fun while simultaneously covering all the main topics”** - Lucy Cole, “Dealing with Dirty Laundry”, Kaleidoscope, page 26 (Autumn 2000).
- ◆ **“firmly grounded in management theory and practice . . . design is stunning”** - James Bayliss, “Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen”, Business World, page 18 (August 2000).
- ◆ **“Clean Business Cuisine is the 1066 and All That of management.”** - Francis Beckett, “No More Chinese Laundry Blues”, Ambassador, page 32 (September 2000).
- ◆ **“very tongue in cheek and very funny but also strangely enlightening”** - Alex Smith, “Clean Business Cuisine”, Business Age, page 126 (September 2000).
- ◆ **“light style and unforced humour”** - David Shirreff, “Fishy path to enlightenment”, Euromoney, page 6, (August 2000).

Quick and Convenient Faxback to +44 (0) 20 7628-5751

Your Details

Name: _____

Position: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Post/Zip Code: _____

Country: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Your Order

Please send me _____ copies of:

Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen

at a price of:

4 to 24 copies (£9.50 per copy)

25 to 100 copies (£7.50 per copy)

over 100 copies (_____ per copy, as agreed)

If ordering 1 to 3 copies (£14.99 per copy), please add £3.00 for UK postage and packing or £6.00 for overseas postage and packing per order.

Once invoiced, I will send a cheque for £ _____ made payable to Central Books Limited.

Signed: _____

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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 contribution to numerous business publications (see also www.zyen.com).

Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen the humorous risk/reward management novel

CONTENTS

Prologue – Z/Yen Things You Always Wanted to Know About Business; Chapter One: Centralisation/Decentralisation – Confederal Unity; Chapter Two: Technology – Gizmo’s Big Adventure; Chapter Three: Human Resources – People Are for Turning; Chapter Four: Continuous Improvement – Quality is Free; Chapter Five: Management Information – The Question of Hu; Chapter Six: Leveraged Growth – Brothers in Arms; Chapter Seven: Strategy – The Greeks Have a General Word for It; Chapter Eight: Commercial Ethics – Kli Ning’s Principle Problem; Chapter Nine: Sales and Marketing – Saving Faith; Chapter Ten: Risk/Reward – Fat Chance’s Risky Business; Epilogue – See You, Z/Yen.

TELEVISION

“a fascinating book with fascinating accolades” - Becky Anderson, CNN World Business This Morning (7 August 2000).

“a recipe for success” - Heather Scott, Sky News, (1 September 2000).

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

“Clean Business Cuisine offers advice on business principles and practices in a highly imaginative and entertaining way. It will amuse and fascinate business managers, students of management and anyone interested in life.” - The Baroness Dunn of Hong Kong and Knightsbridge (July 2000).

“A very lighthearted, entertaining read that would make an ideal gift.” - The Rt Hon John Gummer MP (September 2000).