

## Does an Engineer Requires an Art of War?

Editor-in-chief: [khairilanwar@miros.gov.my](mailto:khairilanwar@miros.gov.my)

### EDITORIAL

Copyright © 2017 Society of Automotive Engineers Malaysia - All rights reserved.

Journal homepage: [www.journal.saemalaysia.org.my](http://www.journal.saemalaysia.org.my)

Does an engineer requires an Art of War?

There is no mechanical answer to the question, however the answer very much depends on how people view the 'Art of War'; none of the ancient Chinese tales has captured more beautifully than the essence of Sun Tzu's The Art of War (Dimovski et al., 2012; Emerson & Peter, 1994). It has been a premier classic of strategists. Who doesn't remember its famous quotes "to overcome others' armies without fighting is the best skills"? It is not what engineers look for, the best solution at the most efficient cost?

About five years ago, a group of determined engineers who believed in the power of dreams started their cause to build the first crash laboratory in the region (Abu Kassim & Mohd Jawi, 2014). This controversial step which not only attracted investors and friends, but became an object of ridicule for those who doubt and unconvinced. Nobody believes that it could be done, only those team who worked hard day and night believe that it will happen. It truly did when on 24th May 2012, the MIROS PC3 was officially launched and became the first crash laboratory in the region and thus "has overcome others' armies without fighting". Unlike other interested organizations who seek government support by investing a huge sum of money to build a crash laboratory, they were able to do it with 1/10 of the requested amount. They hold dear to the principle "Plan for what is difficult while it is easy, do what is great while it is small".

Nevertheless, building a crash laboratory was not the primary goal. "In battle confrontation is done directly, victory is gained by surprise". The actual targets is to improve the level of vehicle safety especially the crashworthiness. Within 5 years of its program, ASEAN NCAP has gained respect which ultimately improved the vehicle safety scenario in the region (Mohd Jawi et al., 2016). And how does this happen, history repeated itself. When Sun Tzu was tested to drill troops of 180 ladies by Prince He Lu, it did not progress well until Sun Tzu beheaded both the prince's concubines who tasked to lead the team but failed. Subsequently, the drill proceeded smoothly without uttering any dissent.

To explain the above paragraph, in ASEAN, when Malaysian Vehicle Assessment Programme (MyVAP) started, it received cloudy response (Abu Kassim et al., 2013). But when ASEAN NCAP released its results with a 1-star amongst the scorer, things immediately took a 180 degree turn. Manufacturers emphasized safety more than ever. Non-safe car is no longer an option, and making car safer is the objective.

But Safety is not the only thing ASEAN is proud of; ECO CAR project in Thailand, Low Cost Green Car (LCGC) in Indonesia and Energy Efficient Vehicle concept led by Malaysia Automotive Institute (MAI) in Malaysia. All these are essential progress of automotive engineering in the region in terms of environmental regulations.

Does it apply to the Art of War? Only they know what and what's not.

“The good commander seeks virtues and goes about disciplining himself according to the law so as to effect control over his success”. And that's what engineer needs at least – a self-discipline, an ingredient of all great success.

Does an engineer requires the Art of War, I vote for “yes”.

Khairil Anwar Abu Kassim  
*Editor-in-Chief*

## REFERENCES

- Abu Kassim, K. A., & Mohd Jawi, Z. (2014). ASEAN NCAP: Today and its future undertakings. *Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety*, 25(2).
- Abu Kassim, K. A., Mohd Jawi, Z., Md Isa, M. H., Ahmad, Y., Hamzah, A., Paiman, N. F., Ariffin, A.H., Rahman, M.K., & Solah, M. S. (2013). Scanning the achievement of MyVAP versus ASEAN NCAP and the similarity (pp. 21–24). Presented at the Southeast Asia Safer Mobility Symposium, Melaka, Malaysia: SAE Malaysia.
- Dimovski, V., Marič, M., Uhan, M., Đurica, N., & Ferjan, M. (2012). Sun Tzu's “The Art of War” and implications for leadership: Theoretical discussion. *Organizacija*, 45(4). <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10051-012-0017-1>
- Emerson, M. N., & Peter, C. O. (1994). A game-theoretic interpretation of Sun Tzu's The Art of War. *Journal of Peace Research*, 31(2), 161–174.
- Mohd Jawi, Z., Abu Kassim, K. A., Md Isa, M. H., Hamzah, A., & Ghani, Y. (2016). Towards safer cars in Malaysia. *Journal of Advanced Vehicle System*, 3(1), 1–13.