

# *The War Manual of Dolf Zinidean*

Fighting to win: a guide to group combat.

## Fundamental truths and axioms:

(these following points may seem to be vague philosophies, or fluff to fill a page, but I assure you they are not, they are most basic truths behind success in pvp)

- Psychology is very important to pvp. (If you think you can win you will find a way to make it happen. If you think you will lose it becomes a self fulfilling prophecy). This is part of what keeps good teams winning, they expect to win and have no excuse to fail.
  - There is no such thing as a small advantage. (Every advantage in combat matters, the margins between victory and loss are razor thin).
- Be aggressive, but not foolish. (It's a tightrope walk, you must do both. Timid behavior does not win combat, reckless behavior is certain to result in loss)
- A chain is only as strong as its weakest link (This is no exaggeration, it only takes one person in a group doing the wrong things to get the entire group wiped out)
- The best players are not those that never lose, they are the ones that learn from their losses, get back into the fray and try again!
- Clear communication is the backbone of combat.
- Maintain a 'sense of urgency', nothing is done lazily in combat, everything you do is important.
- Fear is failure:
  1. Don't be afraid to lose your ship. When you enter combat; Ship loss should not be on your mind. The success of the group is all that matters, the loss of your personal ship is totally unimportant. Don't bring a ship to combat that you are afraid to lose; when you do, you become a liability.
  2. Don't be 'gun-shy': If you shy away from the enemy when you should be in a position to block for the guy in front of you and bring guns to bare, you have failed the group.
- The battle does not begin with the opening shot; it begins before you ever leave port (more on this later).
- You are not an individual in combat; you are part of a team and can not play as a rogue element. Unless ordered to separate and pursue, your duty is always to the group first.
- Capitalize on your strengths, compensate for your weaknesses.
- An enemy's weakness is more important than his strengths. Find that weakness, and exploit the hell out of it.

- Be realistic about the opponents you choose to face. While nobody is undefeatable, you don't want to pick a fight you are not ready for.
- Don't try to follow a script or formula, pvp is dynamic and fluid, you must be as well, adapting, improvising, and thinking every moment.

## *Terminology and Jargon:*

This guide uses certain terms that you should be familiar with.

- Kiter- is someone that uses guerrilla tactics against you in combat (Stun and run). They try to wear you down and leverage you into an untenable position usually using speed, maneuverability and range as well as stun attacks).
- PUG -Pick up Group: a random group of guys that have formed a full group of 6 for pvp.
- Stick- A group of 6 in a port battle
- 180- A maneuver that results in the line facing the opposite direction
- cartwheel – To perform a line 180
- shoulder A maneuver in which the members of the group run downwind side by side then turn reforming a line instantaneously
- Hat- The slang for the use of the naval skill guardian
- Spike- An attack designed to reduce an opponent to zero through sheer immediate damage, rather than a focus over time that tries to use dps.
- Crossing the T- A historic technique of bringing guns to bear by moving across the front of a line of ships with another line.
- Rear Bomb- a strategy historically preferred by the pirates that attempts to attack the line from the back where it is weakest.
- Primary- The Target that is the subject of the spike attack
- Chipped tooth formation- The misalignment of ships in a line due to poor line discipline.

## *Some random but useful observations:*

- When in a 6v6 the first side that successfully spikes out someone on the other side will be victorious nine times out of ten. It's not always true but it is true often enough. You need to be the side that takes down one of the enemies first. This is part of the reason why NOs are better for 6v6 than FT, they have far better spike attacks, ergo the side with more NOs is more likely to win a linefight.
- Group composition matters. You need to have a certain number of NOs and a certain number of Privs. There are skills unique to each class than need to be incorporated to the right degree in each group. What is the perfect blend? That depends on which way the devs swung the Nerf bat on the last patch. Currently FT are worthless in 6v6, a blend of 3 NO and 3 Privs seems ideal to me.
- Having someone in the front of the line that is competent with regard to how to approach the enemy line is important. Don't put a noob in the line lead.
- The speed at which your group forms up in combat is very important. You must learn to form a line quickly and efficiently.
- A note to Naval Officers: Did you use your Focus Fire, Thundering Broadside, URR, invincible and Final D in the battle? If you answered no to any of those options, then you did it wrong. You should get everyone's skills off at least once in every battle. If you failed to do this then you may need to work on 'managing your morale' better.
- A note to Privs: Did you use Jugular, Agile Tactician, Death's Embrace, and Break Formation in the last battle? If you answered no to any of those options, then you did it wrong. You should get everyone's skills off at least once in every battle.
- A note to FTs: what the hell are you doing in a 6v6..go level up a NO! \*This may seem to be an unfair critique of the FT, I have ( 3 ) lvl 50 FTs, with current game mechanics they have no place in 6v6. I don't like it either. Go lvl a Naval Officer, you will be glad you did'.

*“The battle does not begin with the opening shot; It begins before you ever leave port”.*

***Failure to prepare is failure to succeed.*** You will not win no matter how well you fight if you don't prepare correctly. The two major elements are:

1)Your skill build:

I could try and delve deep into this subject. The problem is this: Flying labs are constantly changing the dynamic of what skills can and can't do. If I tell you that one build is the right build it will probably change before anyone has a chance to read this manual. Find the best pvpers in the nation. Ask them what skill build to use. There are many, many wrong skill builds. There are usually only one or two 'right' skill builds for any class. There is an overwhelming temptation for people not to want to change their skill build because they think what they already have is the best. This is a temptation that must be resisted, get out of your comfort zone and try the build the pros use, you can always switch back later.

2)Your outfittings.

You need to be compatible with the group. If everyone else is equipped for speed and damage, you must be as well.

Once again I must reassert the axiom: The margins between winning and losing are razor thin. "There is no such thing as a small advantage".

Ergo: You can not go into combat with anything less than the best and expect to win.

There is no substitute for the best:

I own at least one of every mod in the game. Believe me when I tell you that the difference between:

- 1 Ares cannon mod+explosive powder 2+ Aprils observing scope

compared with

- overloaded cannons + explosive powder first rate+ crows nest

compared with

- Treacherous canons 3 + Cantonese powder 3+ precision optical  
rangerfinder

is a substantial difference. The 3rd build is as far beyond the 2nd build as the 2nd is to the first. Don't cut corners the best is worth it.

***Two approaches to  
outfitting for two prominent***

## *combat ships:*

The mini mc and the cap mc are far from the only ships in the game, these ships are being cited as examples because each of them are well suited to the different combat styles listed below.

There are two major approaches to combat,

- Speed + dps approach to combat(MC Minerva) People that like speed tend to use this ship

Advantages:

- You don't have to fight every battle, you can choose not to fight unwinnable battles. -Its hard to use Jugular on a mini MC due to its size.

- Its good for groups that have less than 6 guys in it.

- close range damage is unparalleled in Nat vessels.

Disadvantages:

- You sacrifice damage for speed. Ergo: you have to pick your battles more selectively. -Almost worthless for fighting at range

- The turning is not good at low speeds

NOTE: The mini mc is especially good for a FT because when you are fighting a dps fight not a spike fight, The repairs of the FT can be brought to good use on a mini MC in broadside to broadside contest. Do not try to use the mini mc to 'spike out' an enemy, it's all about outlasting the opponent in this ship in a close range fight.

- Damage approach for combat(MC Cap)

Advantages:

- Based on your skill level and line discipline no enemy will be immune to your attacks -Some Damage at range as well as close up
- cheaper to replace.

-Disadvantages:

- you must fight every battle to the death, there is no running from the enemy with this approach. This really sucks when you come across a full 6 man of Herc MCs -This approach to combat does not work without a full group of 6 guys, If you go out with 5 guys, you will not have the spike firepower to take down your enemy. You will also be easy prey for full 6 man teams.

Recommended Damage build:

Ship=Cap MC

2 Runners rigs

2 wadding

2 double planked hulls

1 cantonesse3

1Trecherous cannon 3

1 precision Optical Range Finder  
*Recommended Speed build:*

*Ship=Mini MC*  
*2 Runners rigs*  
*2 Lightweight Guns*  
*2 double planked hulls*

*1 Cantonese 3*  
*1 Treacherous cannon 3*  
*1 Engineered Structure 5*

It is fair to say the above build is ideal for general Mods, but everyone will not have all these items. If they did, the group would be god-like. Try to obtain the best. If you can't get Cantonese then use explosive powder first rate. If you can't obtain Treacherous use overloaded cannons. For the speed build if you can't get eng struct 5 use Streamline Structure First Rate Do not use 'running speed' items use 'battle speed all' items only, but if you want to win....go get the very best.

The above table is not written in stone, as the game continues to evolve, so must the builds. Furthermore there are other ships that can be used instead of these. The reason The Mc Minerva is preferred at this time is that it is one of the few speed ships that can fight and go fast. It is also frequently underestimated giving it a psychological edge (people expect the mini mc to be failfit and run away) . I have taken down many Cursed Blades 1v1 broadside to broadside at close range in this ship. The approach though is the same no matter what your choice of ship. If you are using a fast ship go with speed and damage, if you are using a damage approach go with damage and accuracy.

The cap MC is even more impressive than the Minerva MC when evaluating ships in a purely combat scenario, it offers turning, damage, a built in reload bonus and decent armor and sails.

\*I know some people out there are going to want to say, "well, I plan to use 1 damage, 1 accuracy and 1 armor instead. Because I don't want to be the first to die". **This thinking is wrong.** Damage wins combat. Accuracy improves damage, so it is needed as well. 6 guys with the damage build on the left above will melt anything with those mods that they shoot at! The enemy will vaporize! As stated before the first one to spike out someone from the other side in a 6v6 almost always wins. You can compensate for the lack of armor mods with line discipline and blocking. Don't think that you are a special case that should have more armor. If one person cuts corners on damage mods it reduces the odds of the group spiking out an enemy greatly.

\*Why not use reload items?

Because it does not add to the spike attack, it only allows quicker

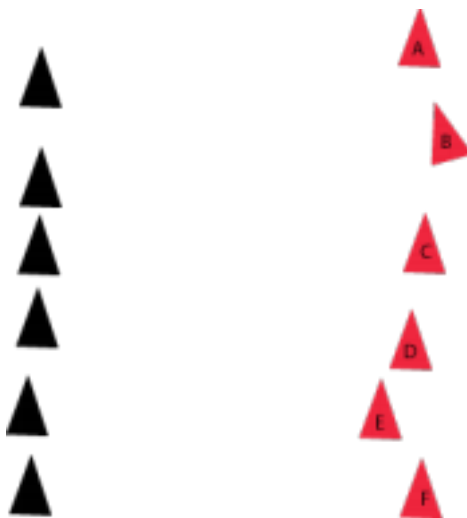
recharge. The goal is to hit someone so hard, so sudden, and so viscously they can't get a block. Reload doesn't help that. The DPS Approach to combat is more valid when operating with less than a full group or using ships like the mini mc. When you roll out a 6 man, employ a spike at tacks for the win.

## Formations and diagrams

### Line Combat:

Line combat is the typical formation that nationals employ in their fighting. It is not always the best way to fight. (for example) If there are only 2 enemies

and you are trying to sink them, often it is better to go in 'loose' to maximize speed.



To the left is an illustration of a fairly typical

line fight. Black team is demonstrating superior

line discipline. Each ship is aligned to block fairly well for the ship in front of him. Red team is demonstrating what is known as chipped tooth formation. The line needs to be like the teeth in a supermodels smile.

Perfectly aligned and beautiful. Red team looks like the smile of one of the

mountain folk from the movie 'deliverance'.

### The Shoulder Formation:

Obtaining the wind in combat is important. But not always feasible. This is a good time to employ the shoulder tactic. Suppose you are being chased down by a team of bloodthirsty pirates.



The shoulder formation is much as it appears illustrated above, running away from the enemy with the wind to your back, side by side 1 ship length in distance apart from one another. At a chosen time everyone pivots in place suddenly forming a perfect line instantaneously. The enemy that have been pursuing find themselves running full speed into a well formed line while they are spread out and discombobulated from their speed differences. 'Break formation' and they will be unable to do anything but take it on the nose.

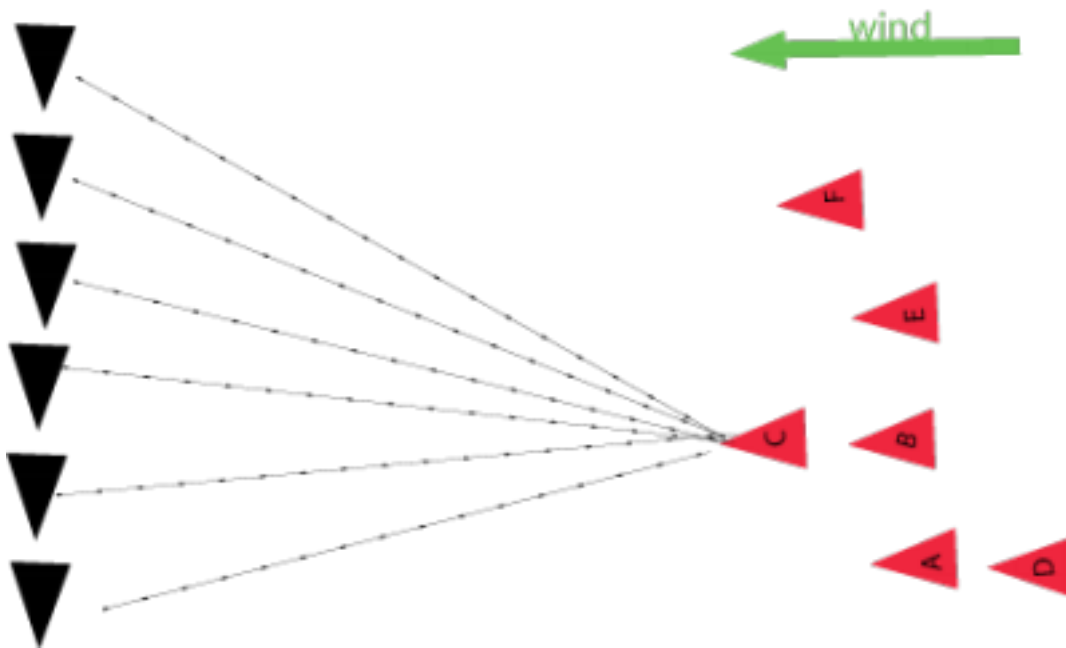


The shoulder formation cont...

The final formation should look something like this if done correctly. Pick a target

and spike him out.

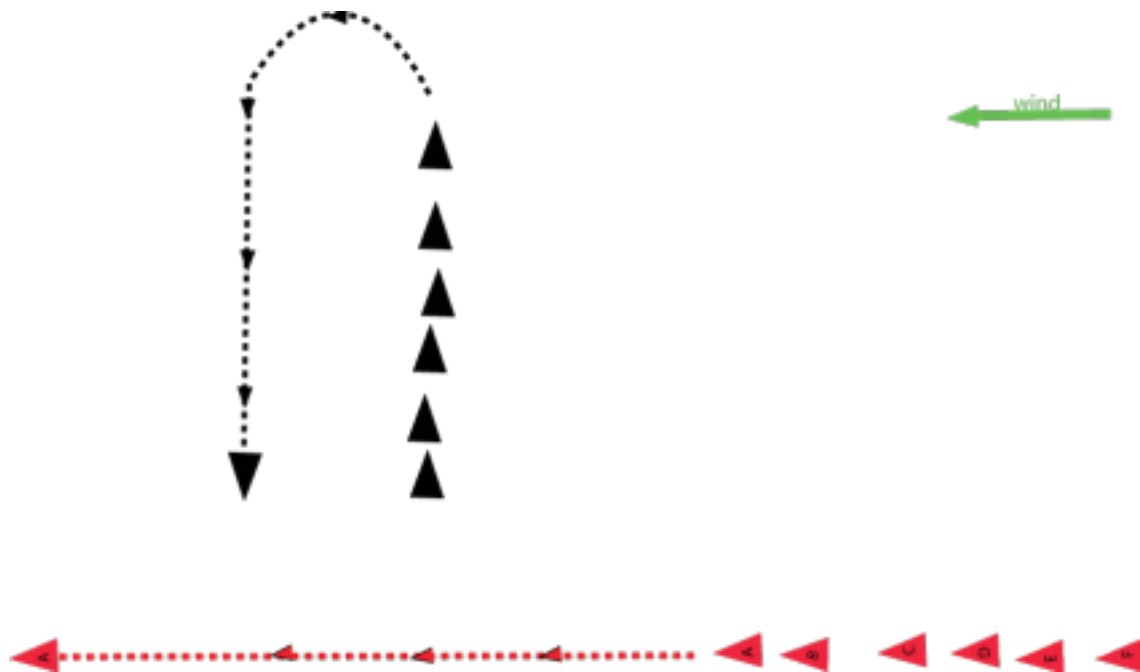




## The 180

There are 2 types of 180.

**Line 180** is presented in the diagram on the following page. As the members of the line turn they follow the guy in front of them. When done in the classical rigid line, ***you turn 'where' the person in front of you turns not 'when' they turn.*** During the turn everyone is at full speed. As you exit the turn the leader of the line must slow slightly to allow the members of the line to catch up

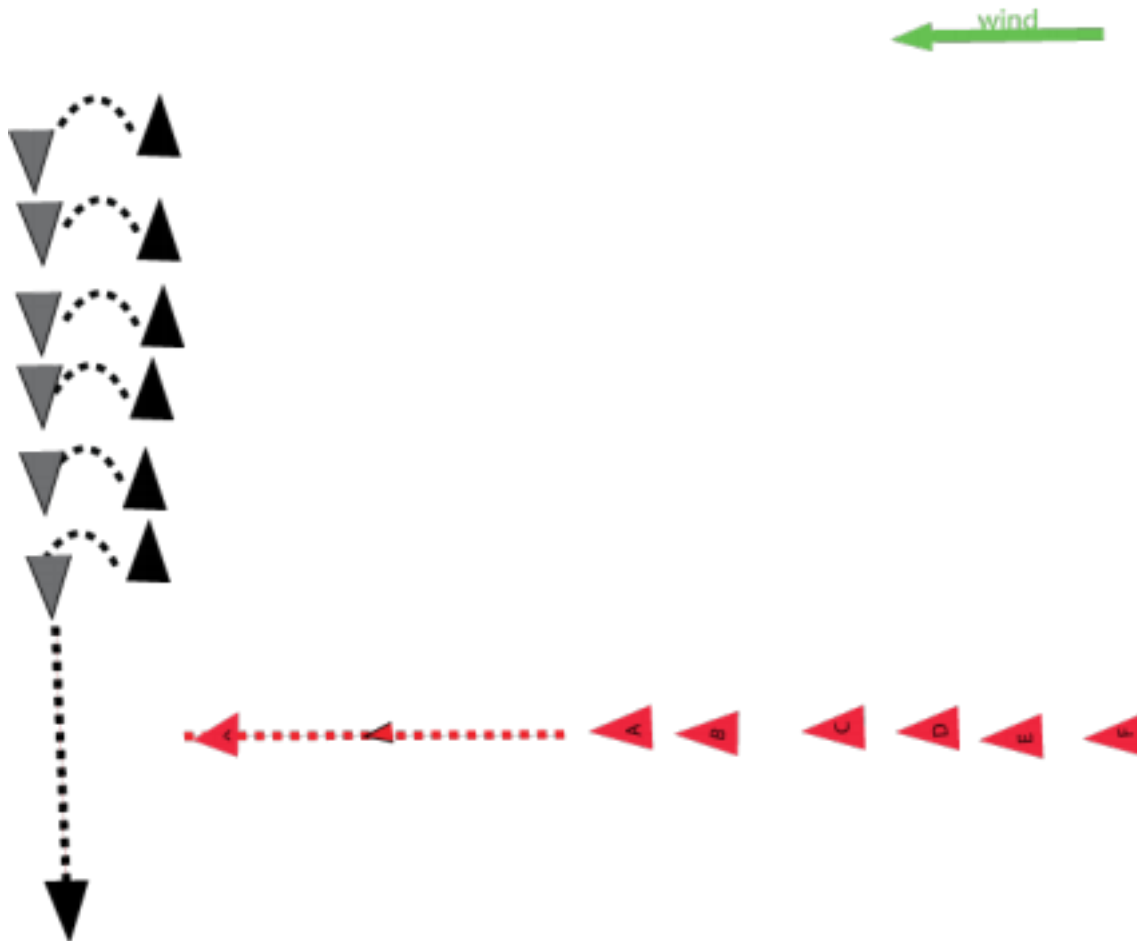


The above diagram demonstrates the (line 180) It also unfortunately for black team demonstrates the concept of 'crossing the T'. By the time black group completes its turn, the red group will have easily cut across the nose of the line. This is known as 'Crossing the T'. It turns out very poorly for black team as the red team has guns to bear on the nose of the lead black ship.

## 180(In Place)

Alternatively, there is the 180( in place) *diagram on the following page*. On the blackbeard server this was referred to by some people as an Oblique turn. Why call it an oblique turn? I have no idea, we in the coalition frequently joked that it was the 'isosceles turn'. Call it what you want, this is a deadly effective maneuver when done at the right time and right place. Consider what happened in the previous diagram, and what can occur using this method instead. This diagram that follows demonstrates the 180 in place. In this maneuver the ships do not follow the ship in front of them. Rather the ships pivot individually to form a new line facing the opposite direction. ***In this maneuver you turn 'when' the guy in front of you turns, not 'where' the guy in front of you turns.*** One advantage of this maneuver is that it is much faster than the line 180. Another advantage is if you have

taken damage heavily on one side of the ship, performing this maneuver can give you restored guns and armor facing the enemy. A side effect of this is that the person that was at the back of the line is now the front, and vice versa which sometimes can be useful.



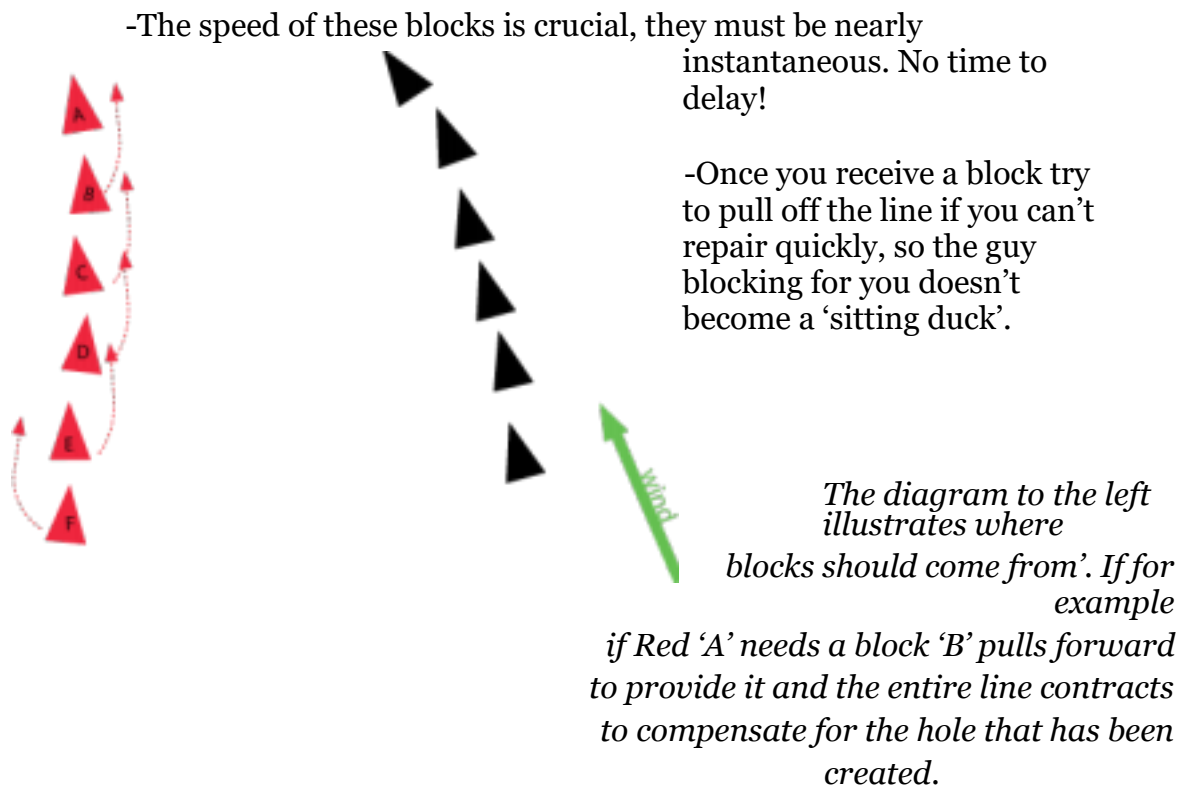
Due to the speed of the 180 (in place) black ends up crossing the T of red. Not so pretty for the red group. When the line 180 was executed in the previous diagram red 'Crossed the T', the superior turning speed of the 180 in place allows black to beat red to the punch.

## Blocking and focus fire:

-Blocking and focus fire that 'wins battles'. That is it in a nutshell. Want to win? Then you must master the skills of blocking and focus fire.

-Blocks always come from the rear unless you are in the back of the line as evidenced in the following illustration.

-If you are in the rear the entire line slows slightly and you pull behind the guy in front of you.

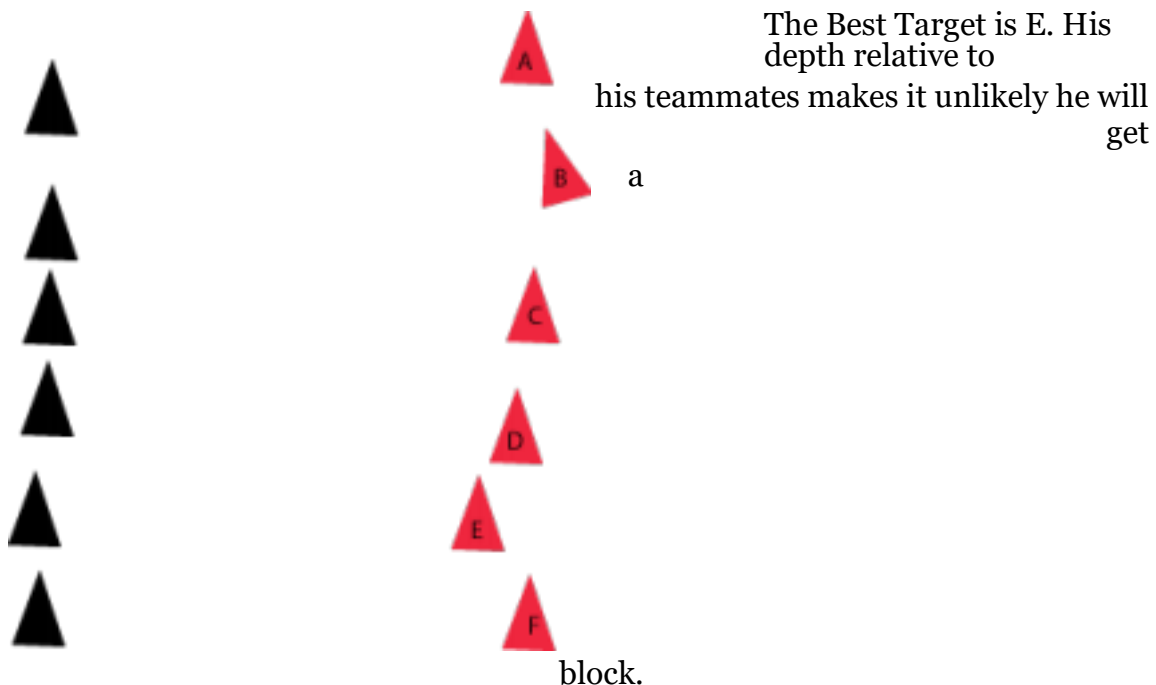


## Target Calling

Target calling is an art:(Like any art, it must be practiced to be mastered) Criteria for target calling must be prioritized in the following manner: 1 The target that is called must be a target that all of your guys can hit.

2 The target you want to call needs to be the one least likely to be able to get a block. ☐ Relative speed and direction of the target to your line is a relevant consideration. ☐ I have heard it said "always target someone to the back". This is not correct. The 'depth' Of the target is more important than their position in line.

☐ What is the best target in the following diagram? A, B, C, D, E, or F?



block.

The worst target is probably F. He is too deep in the pack to hit, and the front of your line may not be able to hit him. Also E is in a position to easily block for F. Similarly, E can block for D, D can block for C, C can block for B, and because of B's angle he can likely block for A.

*'Depth' in the sense It is used here refers to the relative proximity of any given enemy compared with his line and your*

## PUG ANXIETY!

Earlier I mentioned psychology being important to the game. There is a phenomenon I like to call 'PUG anxiety' (a PUG is a pick up Group). It is said that 'trust is earned'. This is the basis for the pug anxiety problem. When you pvp you are making a gamble. You are effectively wagering your ship and all its outittings on the skills of those you pvp with as well as your own. When in a group of 6 guys that you pvp with on a regular basis you know the degree to which you can trust them. You know if you can trust the guy behind you to provide a block for you. You also know if the leader is competent and has not ordered you to commit suicide. In a PUG these are unknown quantities. People tend to be hesitant about engaging heavily until they see that others are doing it as well. This leads to many problems.

- Chipped tooth formations. If the guy behind you does not follow in your wake because he is 'gun shy' and worried about not getting a block

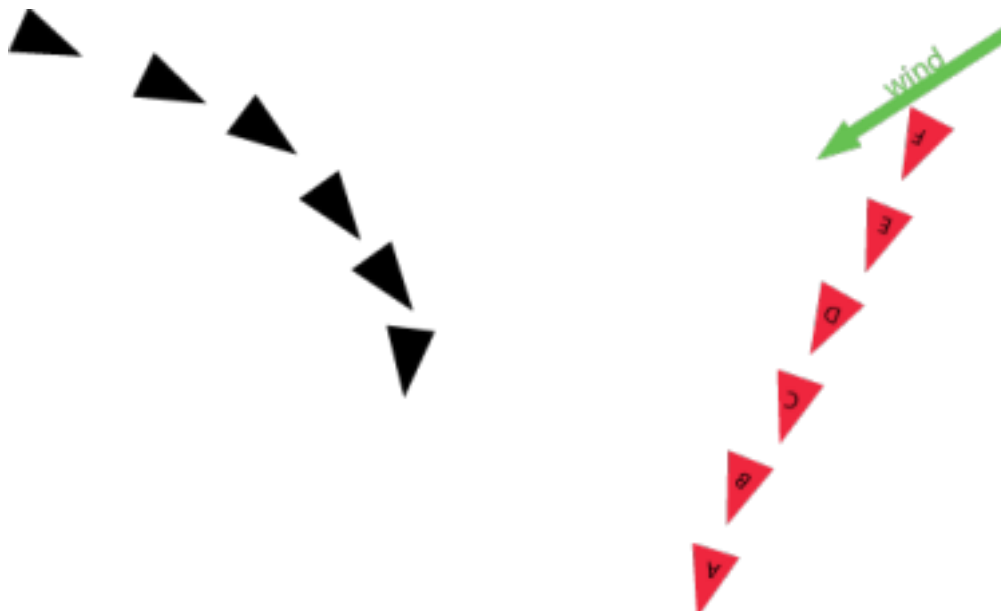
from the guy behind him, then he is not in a position to block for you. This is an extremely common occurrence in PUG groups. Do not do this!

- Hesitant engagement: Many times in a pug group the front of a line will engage heavily, while the back will hold off because they think it might go poorly. You can't afford this. When this happens you are no longer working as a team. You must bring guns to bear in a consistent uniform manner. All Members of the group commit to the attack at once.

*If you are going to be a part of a pug group, you must show some blind faith and not fall into these pitfalls. Victory lies within a group of 6 individuals playing as one. Every player's considerations must always be to the group first.*

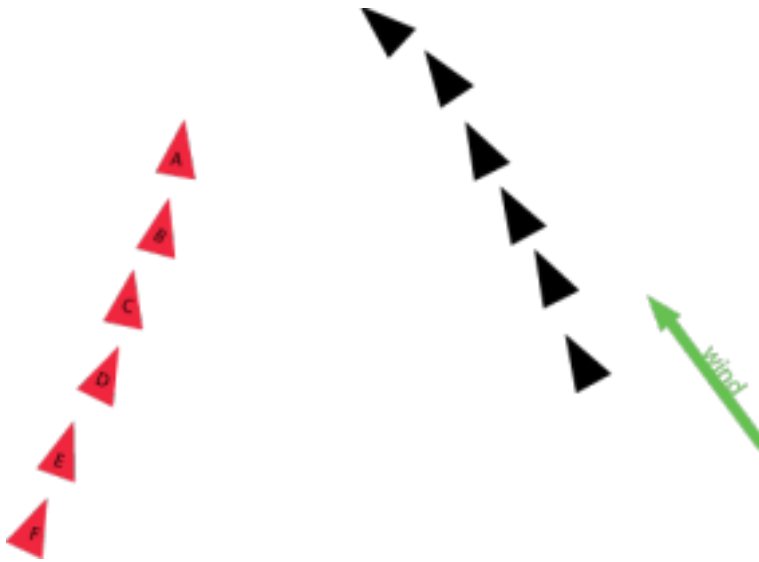
## Approaching the enemy line:

Approaching the enemy line is a very difficult skill to master. There are many considerations with regard to obtaining and maintaining wind advantage. You must have an estimate in your head of the probable speed capability of the enemy. You must estimate with the wind angle and the ships and class of the enemy how much ground they can traverse and how quickly they can do it. Don't come in too steep.



The above illustration shows an approach that is dramatically too steep for black. A situation must not be allowed to occur where the opposing team has all or even most of their guys with guns on one of your guys. There are less extreme approaches that are equally as bad. This is why it's important to have someone in the lead ship that understands this principle. Have the guy in the front pull back out of the range of the enemy, get the line straight. Bring All the players inward in a shallow approach that allows your people to bring guns to

bear in a simultaneous, uniform and consistent fashion.

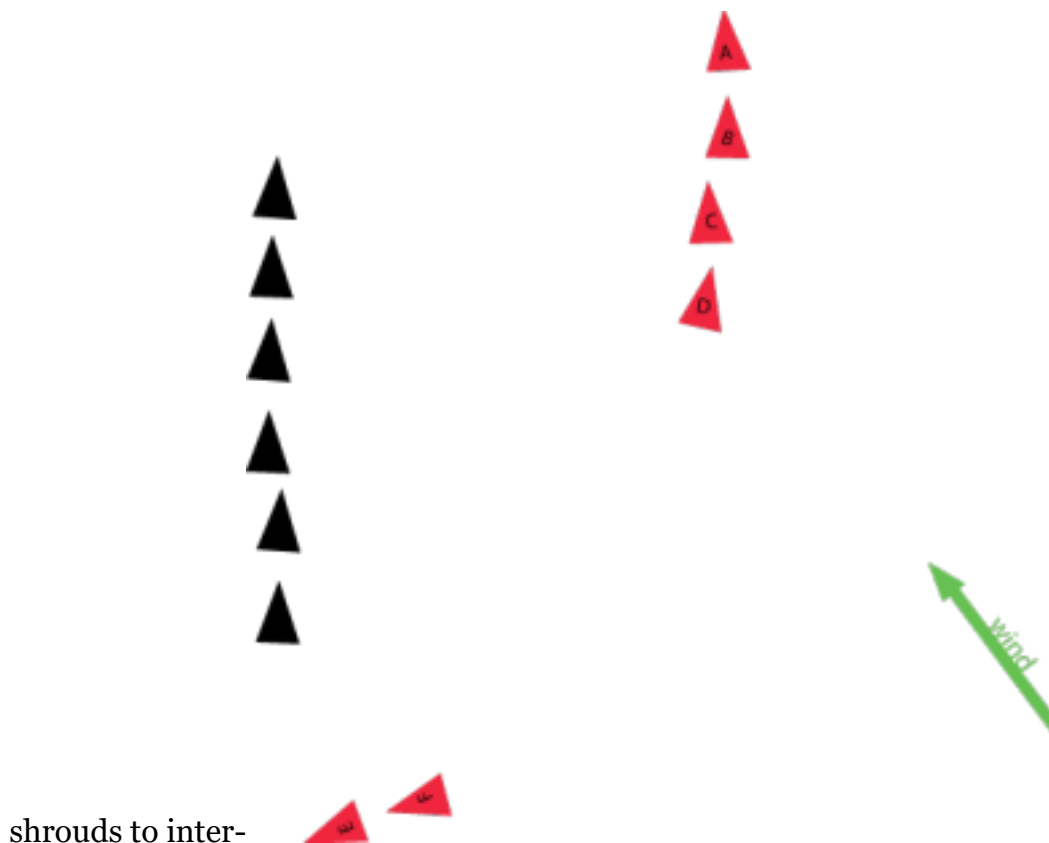


The illustration Above is a more appropriate way to approach the enemy line. This way you bring the guns to bear, and they are scrambling to get shots.

## Dealing with the Rear Bomb

The line strategy is a solid one, but it does have weaknesses. Being vulnerable at the rear is perhaps the biggest weakness. The rear bomb has been traditionally employed by pirate groups against Nat line strategy. They send 1-3 guys to hit the back of your line knowing that the guy in the rear will have difficulty fending off the attack and keeping up with the group at the same time.

1. The enemy almost certainly has someone designated to take the damage as they rear bomb, determine who they want you to target and pick someone else as primary.
2. Break morale on the enemy that you have selected as a target so he can't use 'too mean to die.'
3. Have a NO in the rear ready to absorb the damage with invinc and final D when fighting against known rear bombers.
- 4 keep your group 90 degrees to the wind so you can call for a 180 in place allowing you to quickly move in a reverse direction.
- 5 Don't adhere rigidly to line strategy against rear bombers.
- 6 You can always cripple the front of their charge with break formation and cut



## Dealing with Kitters

(A kiter is someone that uses guerrilla tactics against you in combat (Stun and run). They try to wear you down and leverage you into an untenable position usually using speed, maneuverability and range). The best way to deal with kitters is barshot.

Dealing with kitters requires unyielding discipline, patience and stamina. I have fought against groups of kitters and had the battles drag out for two full hours. It also follows to say that dealing with kitters is difficult and usually unenjoyable. These twerps are pests, you can never seem to deal that kill shot before they get out of range.

What you can do is take them down with bar shot and stun attacks.

Identify one of the enemies that is not as skilled as the rest at kiting. Or look at the enemy armor and use that as a basis to determine which of the enemy might be slower than the rest., wait till he is not expecting it and stun him, immediately have everyone in your group nail the living crap out of him with bar shot while he is stunned. Once he is immobilized I recommend not killing him outright, use him for bait to lure some of the other kitters in to rescue him, make them commit in a fashion they don't want to, all the while your focus being taking down sails, not outright sinking.

From a leadership role, dealing with kitters is extremely challenging, you must constantly bark out orders, reorienting the group so the enemy can't pick one of your guys off. That means you must keep an eye on everyone in your group and determine who the enemy is attempting to target from moment to moment



constantly ordering one person to speed up and another person to slow down so the same person is not in the back the entire time..

1. It is good practice to change directions frequently when dealing with kitters. If you continue in one direction too long they will reposition to their advantage, changing direction keeps them from doing this. Small changes in your direction requires big repositioning of your opponent.
2. Another good tactic against kitters is to wait until they are moving inward against your group, and stun them so they will continue to sail right into you, have everyone turn in place and spike them with bar.
3. Try not to do line tactics against kitters, play it loose. A line is too unwieldy to be effective against kitters.'
4. Another effective tactic against kitters is to 180 in place and charge back on them when they have a couple of guys on your stern. Kitters usually try to sail and shoot the guy in the back to slow him down. The guy in the back is usually the one having trouble keeping up anyways. By doing the 180 the faster players are now caught up with the slower and the kitters can no longer get shots on the slow ships as the fast ones are barreling down on their position.
5. Try not to run directly downwind to escape kitters, if you do and they cripple your guy in the back then you must run against the wind to return to help him.

As you are changing directions and speeds constantly, always be slowly working your group to an exit point. Once on the exit point, the kitters are rendered impotent by your ability to leave the battle at will, they must then commit to a real battle or break off.

### (The margins between victory and loss are razor thin)

There is no such thing as a 'small advantage'. Every slight increase to your capabilities is huge. There are some Must have items that will give you an extra bonus in the game.

- Lucky Albatross-restores 140 crew quickly
- Lucy the Figurehead-restores 20 morale
- Sonia's dissertation-30 sec speed boost

### **Repairs**-There are 3 categories of repair

#### 1. Skill repair:

Each class has skills that repair (ship or sail or both)

#### 2. Consumable repairs"

This is the category that includes Hull Patches, Mast Braces, guns and rum and overhauls. 3. Expert consumables (expert carpenters and sailmasters, captains and gunners if you are an FT It is crucial you have some of all of these on your ship all of the time. There is one repair that deserves special mention 'the admirals overhaul' the uninitiated and ignorant often have 'sticker shock' when they see the cost of these things. These overhauls are well worth it, I have been known to use 5 of these in one battle. PVP is not cheap, you can not cut corners. These things will bring you back from the dead and are worth every penny.

If you don't use expert carpenters you are robbing yourself of one of the

main repair abilities, especially if you are a FT. You need to have and use all repairs.

**Ammo-** There is no such thing as a ‘small advantage’.

- Explosive is an expensive MOV trade-in that only provides a marginal advantage, it is worth it. · If I can’t persuade you to pony up the marks for explosive bronze is a must at a bare minimum. · Always have bar and star shot and grape on board and in your skill bar.

- If you need to take down someone’s sails use bar at distance

switch to star up close. **Powders** There is no such thing as a ‘small advantage’.

- Always have coarse grained powder aboard you ship.

- There is a coarse grained first rate that is very expensive but worth every penny as well

**Junk that isn’t Junk at all:.**

All junk dealers have missions where you can trade in loot for items. Now pay close attention because I am about to give away the big secrets that the pros often even overlook. 1 Hoynes Hoodlum Hooch: Take 1 gold plaque, 1 silver plaque, and 1 jade plaque to rosignol. For each 1 of these ‘groups of triplets’ you bring, the Junk merchant will give you one hoodlums hooch. This drink gives a small damage boost for 60 seconds.

2 Professor Herndon’s Miracle elixir. Take 1 pearl pouch and 1 pearl pendant to Belle isle (I know it’s a long sail to get there) for each 1 of these twins the junk merchant will give you 1 miracle elixir. It makes it very difficult for others to board you in pvp.

3 Sharps Blackout Stout- A quick morale restorative that is very valuable to Naval Officers. Often a Naval Officer will have difficulty getting their morale High enough to use invinc and final D. This potion will restore 35 points in less than 10 seconds. It is well worth the trouble to have this when you need it. You can obtain this with one Gold Goblet and one Silver Goblet at les Hattes from the Junk Merchant.

## Getting your ass kicked?

Are you continuing to lose battle after battle, despite all the advice in this guide? Well of course you are! You weren’t expecting immediate gratification were you?

On every server there are ‘elite pvpers’. When you go out and fight these guys they have a massive experience advantage. There are pvp groups that have participated in literally Thousands and Thousands of fights against other players. You will almost certainly not have immediate success after reading this guide fighting players like Lewis Stokes. (I know I shouldn’t mention how good he is, the last thing he needs is an ego boost). I don’t mind giving credit where credit is due. Stokes is a

very skilled opponent

There is a learning curve involved here; That learning curve is steep. This is a reason why I am publishing this guide, to help people overcome that curve. I think it's in the best interest of the game to get the most people you can involved in competitive pvp.

You can expect to lose almost every fight when you first start. Don't despair, you must pick your fights at first. Find someone to fight that isn't bringing ships that so badly outclass you that it's not even funny. This will take time. You can afford to be picky. Don't fight the pros that do it 4 hours a day every day. They will be waiting for you at the places you think are the best to find pvp, because they are doing the same. Try going to less pvp prone areas at first. Even trying to do this You Will lose a lot at first, I guarantee it. But the more you do it the better you will get. Eventually you will 'break through' and hit your stride.

## Lemmings and Shepherds

In combat you either lead or follow. The following two sections are dedicated to the Lemmings(those that follow), And the Shepherds (those dumb enough or arrogant enough to try to lead). The suggestions for the lemming also apply to the leader.

### **Some useful tips for the lemmings:**

1) Whether heavy or light .....blocking for each other and teamwork are the keys to victory. This isn't a slogan, it's the most fundamental truth in pvp and port battles.

2) If you get hit, and need a block- call for it, but once someone is blocking for you, move away from combat(if possible), so the guy blocking for you doesn't get primaried while he is trying to protect you, If you sit there and don't move you paralyze both yourself and the player trying to block for you. It is not always possible to move off, this is a judgment call.

3) 'Focus fire' is the key to sinking ships, you must fire on the targets called if at all possible.

4) If you have an intelligent suggestion throw it out there, but don't argue, there will be time for that in the locker room after the game, Once the leader says 'no', drop it till later.

5) Communicate clearly, if you say "hit those two guys", that's not good enough; call the enemy by name, or position, or both. You should also call out your own name when asking for a 'block' or a 'hat'.

6) Use your buffs! If you don't use them then why have them at all, (I've seen

port battles, with mostly naval officers in attendance where not 1 'Hat' was used....use them or you are wasting them).

7) The battle leader is the battle leader, If you want to lead then speak up . Most groups are perfectly willing to give anyone a chance to lead a pvp. But once the battle has begun follow the commands of the battle leader even if you disagree with them.

8) Always have auto join on, so the enemy can not split you from the group.

9) keep spare armor, sails and guns aboard so you can re-outfit, and the entire group does not have to wait while you sail around trying to find outfitting if you are sunk.

10) Don't overextend, Don't put yourself 'out on an island' because you are chasing someone down. Stay with the group unless ordered otherwise.

11) Learn to recognize the 'to mean to die' , 'final defense' & 'invincible' buff icons. If the enemy is using these buffs hold your fire and call for others to do so as well. Watch the targets buff Icons, know what they are using.

12) You must bring guns to bear. If the front of the line has shots and the back does not, Those in the back must get to a position where they do have shots on the target.

13) Maintain Communications discipline. Keep communications short, concise and relevant. Nobody cares to hear that your girlfriend won't 'get freaky' for you, while we are in combat.

## **Some useful tips for the Shepherds:**

1) There is nothing more quintessential to effective leadership than communication. You must communicate clearly, specifically, and with some degree of redundancy. You can't for example call a target and expect 1 minute later for your guys to still be hitting it, unless you reinforce the notion that you want people to continue hitting that target.

(Out of all the aspects of leadership this is the one that I and most other pvp leaders struggle with the most, It is unnatural for someone to communicate beyond his normal level of conversation).

2) Before combat begins, assign a competent successor to take your place. This should be done before you enter combat. You can not afford a moment's confusion. Announce as you sink that your replacement is now in command.

3) Part of the duty of a leader is to deliver unpleasant public criticism.

-You must do this at the appropriate time.

-You need not be a Jerk while doing it, neither can you 'soft-peddle' it.

-You must tell people what you think they have done right.

-You must also tell people what you think they have done wrong.

-Keep the criticism 'positive as a whole', people respond better to a message that

is more positive than negative.

-Be willing to accept the fact that things are different from another person's point of view. -Debate but don't argue.

-Don't be unwilling to admit you are wrong.

-Correct a mistake but don't berate the offender.

*\*These people choose to follow you, you are not paying them and they don't have to do it.*

4) Part of the duty of a leader is to accept unpleasant public criticism. I can't explain the reason why, but most leaders by nature are egotistical bastards. Perhaps that's why they want to lead in the first place? Whatever the reason, you must swallow your pride and listen to what people say after the battle. The leader makes more decisions than the followers. By virtue of that fact, the leader will make more mistakes. Only about half of the criticism people throw at you will be correct. You must set your ego on a shelf, evaluate the criticism on an objective basis. The objective questions being: Is this person's criticism correct?

Is this criticism relevant to the outcome of the fight?

Can this situation be improved?

\* people will not follow a leader for long that will not listen to criticism after the battle. Nor will they want to admit they have made a mistake if the leader is incapable of admitting mistakes as well. You must always be willing to endure it. If you can't do this you have no business trying to lead.

5) Don't stop calling targets, If you can't do it for whatever reason ask someone else to take over the task. For example say: "Kev call the targets" or say it to whoever is in a position to assume the job. If you stop calling targets 'focus fire' stops, and the battle is lost at that point.

6) Guns must be brought to bear in a simultaneous, uniform and consistent fashion. As you engage the enemy line, a situation can not be allowed to occur for more than a moment where only a few people have targets. You must maneuver the line in such a fashion that everyone will have a shot at the target.

7) Anticipate

8) Try to ensure some degree of uniformity in individual capability in combat. Make sure that your guys have outfitted correctly, interrogate them if that's what it takes to be certain.

9) Use 'bookends' in combat formations. Naval Officer in Front, Naval Officer in the rear. They can cheat death for 1 minute and 10 seconds using invinc and Final D. The front and the back are the areas the enemy will likely attack. They are the weak points of a line..

10) Know your own shortcomings as a leader. I for example have a bad tendency to "snap at" people in combat. I get stressed out and that sometimes results in me biting people's heads off, Usually I apologize for this deficiency twice, once before the battle, and once after the battle.

11) After you lose a battle you need to analyze it on a strategic basis.  
first determine what your team did wrong.  
2nd ask yourself even if your team made no mistakes would your  
team have won? 3rd ask yourself why not.

12) Don't use the same strategy in every battle, mix it up with different ships  
and different strategies. If you do the same strategy every time your  
opponents will adapt and learn how to dismantle your strategy. Mixing it up  
keeps your opponent from defeating winning strategies.

13) The hallmark of being a good pvp leader is good communications and  
management skills. The hallmark of being a good strategist is independent  
original thinking.

*\* I didn't forget to add comment to number 7, that one word says it all.*