

Lesson 29 – Training your rivals

Text Translation (English)

Jianwei opened a bookstore in an apartment building in the University, selling stationery, batteries, small daily necessities, etc. For more than a year, although the profit of every product is not high, but he **runs his business¹** with honesty, **small profits and quick returns²**, which made his bookstore business more and more **prosperous³**, it even became a target for media interviews. There were three other bookstores in the University. Because of the influence of Jianwei bookstore, the operation of the other three bookstores has decreased in size, and the combined sales number of the three bookstores aren't even as high as Jianwei's one store. Jianwei became the "bookstore boss" here.

At that time, many friends and relatives suggested that he simply crush the three other bookstores and monopolize the market. Jianwei **not only⁴** did not crush his opponent, but he often helped the three bookstores with marketing events. For one bookstore that was about to go bankrupt, he was eager to lend his money and tried to keep the store in business.

Someone asked him, "Why are you so stupid?" Let them be unlucky, isn't it good?!"

Jian Wei said, I am maintaining the "ecological **balance⁵**" of the book market in this area. In fact, the field of commerce is similar to the world of nature, creatures in nature appropriately have "enemies", which will make them grow better. Similarly, opponents will not hinder my development, instead, it will accelerate business and gain more benefits. One reason is that it can create a better shopping environment for the customers to compare and **choose the best from the best⁶**. By comparison, the students would notice that my bookstore has good service, excellent variety and reasonable price. If my bookstore is the only one here, the students would have no comparison, they would think that the price is too high even if I drop the prices as low as I could; in case they run to other books markets to **"compare with three stores⁷"**, then my business would be **doomed⁸**. Another important reason is to maintain the "ecology" of the bookstore saturation and avoid more and stronger competitors. If I crushed the other three, it's

¹ 经营: To run a business

² 薄利多销: 薄(thin/small) 利 (profit) 多(many) 销(to sell). Small profit but quick turnover.

³ 火: popular, booming, prosperous

⁴ 不但: Not only (...but)

⁵ 平衡: balance

⁶ 优中选优: 优 (excellent), 选 (choose). Picking the best from the best.

⁷ 货比三家: 货(good/commodity). Comparing the good with three stores.

⁸ 完了: ruined, doomed, to be done for.



not necessarily a good thing, because now there's only one bookstore in this large area, and new bookstores may appear, possibly then having a stronger rival. Therefore, in order to maintain the current "ecological balance" of this business, I must continue to cultivate my opponent.