

Go Principles and Good Leadership

The following overview presents similarities between the fundamental principles of the millennia-old strategy game Go and key elements of "good" leadership.

The five fundamental principles are based on my work from 2024 to 2026 and aim to answer the question of how the Go model of thought can be applied to modern strategy and leadership.

I consider the often-cited "10 Golden Rules" of Go to be more tactically oriented and would subordinate them to the principles described here..



<i>Go Principle</i>	<i>Importance in the business sector</i>	<i>Good Leadership</i>
Precise Positioning	We define very clearly where we want to win – markets, segments, customers – and where we don't. No "everything for everyone," but a precise selection of the playing fields. Dominance is not the goal, but a solid, profitable footprint in the most important core areas.	Portfolio sharpening, strategic focus, clear "no-gos" for resource allocation.
Leading by influence	Instead of controlling every step, we create clear structures, goals, and decision-making spaces in which teams can act independently. We lead through visions, processes, key performance indicators and culture , not through constant intervention.	Governance, operating model, leadership framework – guardrails instead of micromanagement..
Recognizing the right timing	We consciously choose when to invest, scale, or stop. Not every opportunity is seized immediately; we prioritize based on impact and capacity. "No" is a strategic response when the timing isn't right.	Capacity management, prioritization, sequencing of initiatives, and protecting the organization from chronic overload.
Winning through coexistence	We don't have to destroy every competitor. Often it's wiser to leverage ecosystems, partnerships, and alliances – especially in regulated, capital-intensive, or digital markets. We think in terms of win-win scenarios , not just zero-sum games.	Cooperations, platform strategies, joint ventures, co-opetition instead of pure annihilation.
Remain flexible	We accept that projects, products, or structures may eventually disappear. We are prepared to halt or scale back ongoing initiatives to reallocate resources to what truly delivers results. Short-term losses are accepted in favor of a stronger overall portfolio .	Dynamic resource management, proactive termination of initiatives and the courage to write off assets and change course.