

Goliath's

Handbook to Threatening Behaviour

The Effects of Lowering Enemy
Morale During Conflict

by Robert Prins

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Technically speaking, Goliath was the ultimate example of threatening behaviour. He graduated top in his class, specialising in psychological warfare. His thesis had been on *The Effects of Lowering Enemy Morale During Conflict*, and due to his size, scowl, foul language and constant use of sarcasm, he had even reduced his mentors to tears.

Israel's army was hard to beat. Most wars with Israel ended in dramatic defeat despite any advantage. But in the past the Philistines had only used traditional methods: bowmen, cavalry, chariots and foot soldiers. This time they had a secret weapon: Goliath and his psychological warfare.

Every trick in his book, including his immense size, was used by Goliath in this battle with Israel. Every day he stood in front of his troops to threaten the armies of Israel. His thesis had highlighted nine aspects of threatening behaviour and Goliath used them all.

1. **Be Loud.** Goliath's shout reverberated through the valley. His voice sounded like thunder and terrified the enemy.
2. **Threaten.** Threats made sure the enemy felt vulnerable.
3. **Look Strong.** Dressed in armour to enhance his bulk and muscle, Goliath looked a lot stronger than he actually was.
4. **Boast.** Goliath bragged of his strength. The sound of his loud boasts

- added to his power. The enemy had to think he had the upper hand.
5. **Body Language.** Goliath loved this part. From full-facial expression and spear shaking, to rude hand gestures, and the no-one-can-defeat-me pose, Goliath intimidated the enemy, right down to the threatening step forward at just the right time.
 6. **Reinforcements.** Even the biggest bully needs backup. Goliath had a trail of thugs for support. Right behind him were the ranks of the Philistines, ready to fight.
 7. **Challenge.** The man who initiates the challenge always has the advantage. Goliath laid out a one-on-one dare for a to battle to the death. No one would take up that challenge!
 8. **Ridicule.** Make them look pathetic. Point out weaknesses. Show up their insecurity. Goliath's foul language and sarcasm were a winner.
 9. **Repeat.** Day after day. The more often the enemy heard his threats, the more they would believe in his strength.

The playbook was working. Goliath's strategy seemed invincible. For forty days the Israelites cowered under his threats. The Israelites retreated, while the Philistines stood their ground behind Goliath of Gath.

But there was something Goliath hadn't counted on: faith in God. One boy without weapons or armour, whose faith was bigger and stronger than the biggest Philistine bully, didn't care about intimidation. David was undaunted by Goliath's size and noisy threats. Goliath went all out, shouted insults, moved forward, drew his weapons, flexed his muscles. The boy had no fear, just a confident trust in God. And then suddenly a stone sunk into Goliath's forehead and he dropped to the ground.

Goliath and his psychological warfare failed. The Philistines were terrified. The faith of one boy destroyed the morale of the Philistines in seconds, and they fled in fear.

Threats are useless against a strong faith in God.

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*The playbook was written by the Philistine Hero, Goliath. But when the Philistines camped against the armies of Israel, would the **Handbook to Threatening Behaviour** be able to see them through and win the war? Or was there something Goliath hadn't counted on?*

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