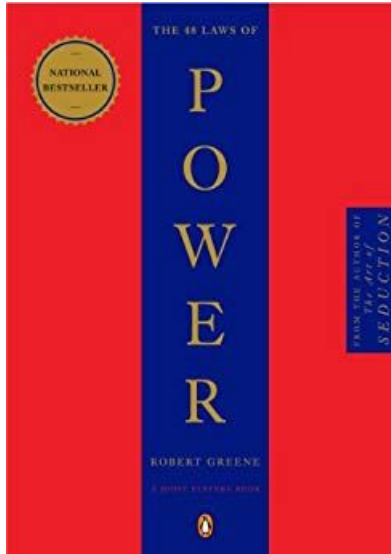


BOOK SUMMARY

The 48 Laws of Power

Robert Greene



Who Should Read This Book:

If you are a leader or if you are aspiring to get to positions of power, this book is for you. However, use it at your own risk because some of these laws can be dark and manipulative.

The following are my Top 8 favorite laws of power, the ones I feel good about.

I. Key Points

Law 1: Never Outshine the Master

This law literally changed my life.

I struggled in my high-tech career back when I was a computer engineer. I was not getting promoted even after working hard in the company. I was getting mad and frustrated, until I came across this book.

The first law totally blew my mind. I realized I was blatantly going against it all the time:

- I was constantly trying to outshine my boss.
- I would tell him when he was wrong.
- I would show him and my VP why my ideas were amazing.
- I was constantly trying to prove how amazing and how smart I was.

But as soon as I read Law 1, I started changing my ways:

- I made a decision to never try to prove how smart and how talented I was.
- I stopped trying to prove why I was right and they were wrong, even if that was the case.
- I stopped trying to impress my boss or my VP.

Within 3 months I got promoted. It was shocking.

Here's why this law works:

- The people above you want to appear smarter and more talented than you.
- When you show off how good you are, others tend to feel insecure. They start to resent and envy you.
- These people don't want you to grow and to threaten them.

Superiority of a subordinate over his superiors can be fatal for the subordinate. Keep this law in mind.

Law 10: Avoid the Unhappy and Unlucky

Jim Rohn said it best:

"You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."

Be very careful in selecting the people you spend time with in every area of your life. When it comes to power, your associations are critical.

This law works like osmosis -- you will absorb the good and the bad of all the people around you without even knowing. It's almost like an infection -- you have to quarantine yourself against the negative ones.

When I went to *Unleash the Power Within*, a live event with Tony Robbins, he taught us something really powerful. He said:

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*"If you want to truly excel in any area of life, if you want to compress decades of learning into days, this is the most potent strategy that's out there: **associate with those who are playing at a higher level than you are.** Spend time with them. Learn from them. Association with them will force you to subconsciously play at a higher level."*

Similarly, in the book **The Compound Effect**, Darren Hardy talks about the idea that the effect of your influencers will keep on compounding over time. Your influencers are critical for your long-term success or your long-term demise.

So take stock of your influencers. Be very picky in whom you spend time with. Avoid the negative people in your life.

Law 13: When Asking for Help, Appeal to People's Self-Interest and Never to Mercy or Gratitude

When you're asking for help from others, don't try to remind them of how you helped them in the past and what good deeds you did for them. Instead, find out how your request will benefit them right now. That's all you should be focusing on. Never confuse your needs with theirs.

We naively assume that people are interested in helping us selflessly, that our needs matter to them. The truth is that even the most powerful person has needs and desires. You must appeal to those or else they will think you are just wasting their time.

Appealing to Genghis Khan's self-interest

When the great Mongolian conqueror Genghis Khan was invading China, all he wanted to do was plunder and destroy the country. However, a man named Yelü Chucai appreciated the Chinese culture and wanted to keep it intact. So he managed to become a trusted adviser to Genghis Khan.

By the time Genghis Khan took the city of Kaifeng, Yelü Chucai went up to him and said that all the finest craftsmen and engineers from other parts of China had fled to Kaifeng. He convinced Genghis Khan that it would be great to put them to use, and in return he could collect taxes and get richer.

Genghis Khan, being the greedy warrior that he was, did not care for arts or sciences, but he did care for the fact that he could make money. The taxes appealed to him, so he spared the city from plunder unlike what he had done to any other city in the past.

This is the key: the ultimate lever to move people is their self-interest. Try to get them to see--

- how you can meet their needs
- how you can advance their causes
- how any of your requests will actually help them

Then you will not encounter any resistance. Constantly train yourself to be able to see inside other people's minds

Law 23: Concentrate Your Forces

Focus your energies on the strongest point that is available to you. Don't spread your effort on multiple endeavors. Focus on just the 1 thing that will make all the difference.

As the great martial artist Bruce Lee said:

"The successful warrior is the average man with laser-like focus."

Laser vs. Blowtorch

A laser and a blowtorch almost have the same amount of power. However, a laser beam can cut through 6 inches of steel while a blowtorch will just end up heating the metal to a higher temperature. This is because a laser is sharp and focused while a blowtorch spreads its energy all over.

In the book **Good Strategy, Bad Strategy**, Richard Rumelt says that the essence of strategy is focusing all our power on the point of highest leverage.

Also, the book **On War** by Carl von Clausewitz says there is no higher and simpler law of strategy than the act of keeping one's forces concentrated.

In short, the first principle means act with utmost concentration. We have to be very careful with our focus in any endeavor in life. We have to concentrate our forces on just the right things.

Law 25: Recreate Yourself

Here's the powerful truth: you can create *your own* identity -- not the identity that society is forcing on you.

Think of yourself like an artist. You are constantly molding your identity to what you want it to be. Once you start acting like that person, you will become that person.

In the book **Total Recall**, Arnold Schwarzenegger says you always have to start with your own identity. You have to first identify who you want to become in life and then figure out the actions you need to take in order to become that person.

Arnold Schwarzenegger has recreated himself again and again in his life. He went from conquering the world of bodybuilding as Mr. Universe and Mr. Olympia, to becoming the highest-paid actor in Hollywood, to becoming the governor of California, and to becoming a successful entrepreneur and real estate investor.

Law 29. Plan All the Way to the End

When you are embarking on an endeavor, you cannot just hope that you will come out victorious. You cannot just dream that things will all work out. You have to consider all the difficulties in your lane, the obstacles or challenges that you will inevitably face.

Plan all the way to the end and see all the different steps in your path. Don't let emotions dictate your decision in the heat of the battle. You have to know what you will do when certain situations arise. This is exactly what Navy SEALs are taught to do in their training

In the book **Rethinking Positive Thinking**, Dr. Gabriele Oettingen, a professor of psychology at NYU, says that we cannot just think positive and hope for the outcome we want.

Backed by solid scientific research, Dr. Oettingen came up with a 4-step process called **WOOP**. It means that when trying to accomplish any goal, we have to understand:

- our **Wish**
- the **Outcome** we desire
- the **Obstacles** that stand in our way
- our **Plan of Attack**

This law works because when we are faced with inevitable obstacles --

- we will not be perturbed
- we are guided by our plan of attack
- we know exactly what we need to do to move to the next level

Law 34: Act Like a King to be Treated Like One

The way you carry yourself will determine how you're treated, so act as if you are the person you want to become.

Act as if you are the king and you will be destined to wear the crown one day.

In life, you can set your own price. If you ask for little, you get little. If you ask for more, you get more.

The Strategy of the Crown

Robert Greene talks about this very interesting strategy, which means act as if you are wearing a crown. If you believe you are destined for greatness, it will radiate out just like the crown radiates the aura of the king. People will start to believe that you must have reasons to feel so confident.

If you wear the crown--

- you feel you own the world
- you have abundance
- you are confident
- you have no sense of limits

In the book **Steve Jobs** by Walter Isaacson, we learn that Steve Jobs used to believe that he was special, that he was someone different, that he was destined for greatness. He always held firm to that belief and would act in accordance with it time and again.

The laws of normal humanity didn't even apply to him. He would always believe that he was destined for success, and as we know, he actually ended up being one of the greatest entrepreneurs of our time.

Steve Jobs was a perfect example of how to carry that out.

Law 43: Work on the Hearts and Minds of Others

Many of us try to persuade others with logic, reasoning, argument, or even boasting. We're trying to explain our ways of thinking by showing them why we are right and why they might be wrong.

However, the other person will just ignore us. This is because when we ignore their heart and mind, they resist us.

We have to understand what makes them individual -- their psychology, their typical emotional response -- and then we have to move their emotions. That is when we can persuade them.

Assuming that whatever word on one person will work on every other person is the clumsy approach to motivating others.

The right way to find out what they need in order to be persuaded: **get them to open up and talk**. The more they talk, the more they reveal their minds and hearts, and the more you can move them.

Self-interest is the strongest motive of all. Showing them how anything will benefit them is the easiest way to get them on your side.

II. The Other Laws

Law 2: Never put too much trust in friends. Learn how to use enemies.

- The book says that your friends, even your close friends, are likely to betray you. Since they already know you in many aspects, they can harbor envy for your accomplishments and positive attributes that they don't have. Observe them well and their motives if they are authentically happy for you or not.
- Meanwhile, enemies turn out to be of more benefit to you if they return as a friend. They will be more loyal to you as they have more to prove to you. All they want is to gain back your trust so they work hard to earn that.
- Find these enemies and take advantage of them in your life.

Law 3: Conceal your intentions

- When others have no idea about what you are up to, they cannot plan or prepare properly when it's time for them to respond.
- Keep them in the dark and lead them to the wrong path. Keep your motives unclear. By the time they find out your actual intentions, it will be too late for them.

Law 4: Speak less than necessary

- The more you talk --
 - The more common you appear
 - The less in control you appear
 - The more likely you are to say something wrong/foolish
- The less you talk than necessary --
 - The more powerful you appear
 - The more profound you seem
 - You appear mysterious
 - Your silence will make others uncomfortable
 - They will fill the silence
 - They will reveal useful information

Law 5: Guard your reputation

- Protect your reputation as it is the foundation of your power. It's your only way to intimidate others and win.
- If you let your reputation slip, vulnerability will follow, easily leading to your defeat. You will be prone to attack from all sides.
- Be alert to potential attacks and prevent them the best that you can.
- *"Meanwhile, learn to destroy your enemies by opening holes in their own reputations. Then stand aside and let public opinion hang them."*

Law 6: Always court attention

- Just like your reputation, your appearance is very important. Always be mindful of it as that is how you are perceived and judged.
- When in a crowd, don't be lost in it. Stand out to get others' attention. Make yourself appear larger and more striking than the rest and you'll be easily noticed.

Law 7: Get others to do the work for you, but always take the credit

- *"Never do yourself what others can do for you."* Advance your cause using the wisdom, knowledge, and skills of others. Apart from saving you much of your precious resources -- time and energy -- doing this will make you appear fast and efficient.

- When others see you getting things done well in the least time possible, they will admire you and look up to you.
- Ultimately, despite making use of others' tools and know-how, you will be the one who will be remembered and given credit for, not your helpers.

Law 8: Make other people come to you

- The upper hand is yours when you are able to force your enemy to react and move. Keep them on the defensive. Lure them with attractive gains that they would find hard to resist. This way, they will have no choice but to abandon their original plans. Hold them in your strings.
- People have a natural tendency to react angrily when pushed and baited. Master the art of playing on their emotions.

Law 9: Win through your actions, never through argument

- "Show, don't tell" is a powerful statement that resonates well with this idea. The book is saying that it is better to demonstrate your power through actions than through words. Winning through argument is a Pyrrhic victory; its consequences will be a huge blow against you. Arguments only stir up resentment and ill will, and such emotions are too strong to wipe out.
- In the book **How to Win Friends and Influence People**, one of Dale Carnegie's most powerful teachings is that an argument is something no one ever wins, so better avoid it. It's a sure way of making enemies. Instead, respect the other person's opinions and never tell him he is wrong.

Law 11: Keep people dependent on you

- Find out what skill or talent you have that cannot be replaced. Develop it well in yourself because that's one thing that would make you valuable.
- The book says you must always be someone that people can depend on, so bring a unique value to the table. That way, people would always look for you, need you, and want you. You will have more independence when others rely on you for their happiness and growth.
- Don't share too much about what you know so that they cannot move on without you.

Law 12: Use selective honesty and generosity to disarm the victim

- To win over even the most suspicious people, give them that one sincere act that can cover all your insincere acts. It can be in the form of a gift, a favor, a (careful) admission, or an act of generosity. Let your selective honesty move them to the point that you can deceive and control them.

Law 14: Pose as a friend, work as a spy

- Every occasion and circumstance is an opportunity to learn more about your rivals. One of the ways is to indirectly force them to reveal their weaknesses and motives.
- Spying is an art -- you have to remain polite while secretly probing them for valuable information. You can hire spies to do this for you but it's best to be the spy yourself. It will save you resources and you will be a step ahead right away.

Law 15: Crush your enemy totally

- *"If one ember is left alight, no matter how dimly it smolders, a fire will eventually break out."* Make sure your enemy is left with absolutely no chance to recover; otherwise they would readily plan and seek revenge. The book says it's not enough to crush the enemy in body alone but also in spirit. Aim for total annihilation for total security.

Law 16: Use absence to increase respect and honor

- In economics, scarcity increases value. In love and relationships, absence makes the heart grow fonder. In this book, Robert Greene says "too much circulation makes the price go down." This simply means that once you have established yourself, make yourself scarce. Make your absence felt. It will make you more talked about and admired. You will seem rare, not common.
- Know when to temporarily withdraw from the group. If you leave too early, they will just forget you. It is crucial to reach a certain level of power and omnipresence first.

Law 17: Keep others in suspended terror. Cultivate an air of unpredictability.

- As creatures of habit, humans find comfort in familiarity. When they have an idea of your next moves, they feel a sense of control over you. Therefore, show yourself as someone unpredictable. Be inconsistent with your actions. This will get them off-guard. It will terrorize and wear them out trying to figure out your moves.
- Meanwhile, predictability and patterns can also be a tool for deceiving. If you can lead them to a bait using those, you win the game.

Law 18: Do not build fortresses to protect yourself. Isolation is dangerous.

- Protect yourself at all times, as all people do, but don't build a fortress around you. The world may be dangerous, but isolation will only put you at a massive disadvantage. It actually puts you in more danger because you become an obvious and easy target. Vital information won't also get to you.
- Better shield yourself with the crowd. Mingle with people and find allies. This way you will be harder to target.
- Make isolation only as a last resort when you want time to think, but do it in just short periods.

Law 19: Do not offend the wrong person

- People will always react differently to your strategies. The key is to choose your victims and opponents carefully and spare the rest from your deception or control. If you offend the wrong person, they will detest you and seek revenge for the rest of their lives.
- Avoid these 5 kinds of people:
 - The Arrogant and Proud Man
 - The Hopelessly Insecure Man
 - Mr. Suspicion
 - The Serpent with a Long Memory - the kind of person who shows no anger when hurt but will calculate and wait
 - The Plain, Unassuming, and Often Unintelligent Man - he will not take your bait because he does not recognize it; a waste of your time
- Only rely on concrete knowledge when judging someone, not on instincts alone and their appearances.

Law 20: Do not commit to anyone

- Commit to yourself and to your cause alone. Only fools rush to take sides.
- Your independence is key to becoming a master of others, and those who have no personal cause will want to be part of yours. Stay aloof if you want to keep relishing the attention you are getting from others.
- Do not be swayed into others' affairs and fights. You can show interest and support, but remain neutral through it all. This keeps you on top of the situation and you can take advantage of it. Better commit your limited time and energy to your personal affairs as that's where your power lies.

Law 21: Seem dumber than your mark

- Never make your enemies feel that you are smarter and more advanced than them. Instead, turn it the other way around. When they think they are smarter than you, they will not take time planning how to outsmart you because they do not see the need to. Now you can push with your hidden motives and attack.

Law 22: Transform weakness into power

- When you find yourself on the losing side, choose surrender over honor. Surrender is your opportunity to recharge your power, plan again, and wait for your enemy's power to wear out. Nothing is more infuriating to your enemy than you turning the other cheek.
- Use the surrender tactic as a tool in order to win. It's all about staying patient and firm inwardly but bending outwardly. Your enemy, who is expecting you to fight back, will be frustrated when you don't give them the honor and satisfaction of fighting and defeating you.

Law 24: Play the perfect courtier

- The perfect courtier is one who has mastered the ways of power and politics and can rise in the court. His skills include:
 - Flattery
 - Yielding to superiors
 - Asserting power over others in the most indirect and graceful manner
 - Nonchalance
 - Modesty

- Adapting style and language according to the person he's dealing with
- Subtlety
- Bringing only the good news and expressing only admiration for others
- Self-evaluation
- Emotional intelligence
- Being the life of the party

Law 26: Keep your hands clean

- Establish yourself as a model of civility and efficiency. There are 2 major ways to achieve a spotless reputation:
 - conceal your mistakes and nasty deeds using others as scapegoats
 - make use of the cat's paw, which means you leave the dirty tasks to those around you in order to keep your hands clean while accomplishing your goals and hiding your motives

Law 27: Play on people's need to believe to create a cult-like following

- People constantly want to know there is hope and that there is a solution to problems. Offer something for them to believe in, and be at the center of that cause.
- To keep them supporting your faith, give them thrilling promises that are not clear and specific. Make use of new words and vague concepts to give the impression that you possess specialized knowledge.
- Give emphasis to the importance of their enthusiasm over logic and reason. Create a spectacle that appeals to their senses and emotions right away.
- Successful cults mix religion with science. Study the hierarchical structures and the routines of organized religion and apply it to your group. Ask your members to sacrifice for the cause and to perform rituals as followers. In the absence of organized religion and grand causes, your belief system will shine.
- Make your followers believe they belong to an exclusive club. Then, create this vivid image of an enemy that's out to ruin you, and your followers will destroy the enemy for you.

Law 28: Enter action with boldness

- In the book **Essentialism**, author Greg McKeown says "if it's not a Hell Yes, then it's a Hell No." Similarly, in this idea, Robert Greene says it's always best to enter with

boldness; doubt, half-heartedness, and timidity can cost you your victory. Never attempt to make a move unless you are fully sure about it.

- If you commit mistakes along the way, correct them with more audacity.
- People admire and honor only the bold, not the timid. So practice getting over your fears and insecurities. Don't put so much thought on the results or on what others would think of you. Just focus on the process of facing the things at hand and eventually you will be a changed person.
- A good start to developing boldness is in negotiations. Enough of asking for too little. Make yourself feel worthy of greater things.

Law 30: Make your accomplishments seem effortless

- *Sprezzatura* is an Italian word that means the capacity to make the difficult seem easy. Consider the ducks -- they are calm on the surface but underneath they are always paddling. Yet all we see is how they seem to glide gracefully and calmly with such ease.
- No matter how difficult your task may be, keep your actions seem natural. Always execute with ease while concealing all the hard work and practice involved. Otherwise, you would be questionable as to your capabilities.
- Always keep your clever tricks under your cloak. If you teach them to others, those tricks will only be used against you. Show others that only you can efficiently do what you do.
- *"The more mystery surrounds your actions, the more awesome your power seems."* Others can only wonder how you are able to do your tasks with such ease and expertise. They'll believe you can always accomplish more with barely any effort.

Law 31: Control the options

- Make your victims feel they are in control, even though the truth is they are held by your puppet strings. Always make it appear that they have a choice, even though any option they pick actually goes to your favor. Obviously, they are only choosing between lesser evils that serve you. Always leave them in a dilemma in which they have no choice but to choose for your benefit.
- People tend to pick from available alternatives rather than freeing themselves from having to choose.
- As long as you are in control of the options, you hold them in the scope of your power and punishment. They are left to play the cards dealt by you.

Law 32: Play to people's fantasies

- When people get frustrated or distressed with truth and reality, they tend to feed their fantasies. They find comfort in made-up stories and imaginings as a way to appease themselves or to escape the harshness of what they find to be bitter reality. This is why it's better to appeal to their fantasies rather than to the truth. Because you don't pose disenchantment to them, they'll be on your side.
- When you offer fantasy, keep it far from the truth, to the point where it's unfamiliar and almost ungraspable. Maintain its allure and promise.

Law 33: Discover each man's weakness

- Everyone, no matter how strong and powerful they may seem to be, has their own set of weaknesses and limitations. Watch for the weak spots of your enemies. What are their insecurities, the emotions that overwhelm them, their needs, their unconscious mannerisms, and even their pleasures or passions?
- When you talk to them, always show interest. Listen to what they are not saying. Train your eyes to spot weak details. Once you've found these, you can launch your attack.
- Always find those who will bend under pressure for that means they will also bend under your control.
- Focus on the 2 main emotional voids: insecurity and unhappiness.

Law 35: Master the art of timing

- Being constantly in a state of hurry gives the impression of that you have a poor sense of control. It's better to seem patient because it means you know the right time to act. Show others that you are allowing things to unfold in their own pace.
- *"Become a detective of the right moment; sniff out the spirit of the times, the trends that will carry you to power."* Know when to step up and when to strike.

Law 36: Disdain things you cannot have: ignoring them is the best revenge

- *"The less interest you reveal, the more superior you seem."* The more you fuss over a problem, a temptation, or an enemy, the more you are acknowledging their presence in your life.

- Waste no time trying to fix a petty mistake. Spending too much of your energy and time on it will only magnify and worsen it. Sometimes it's best to let things take course. Focus only on what is worth your while.
- Treat unnecessary things -- including your own mistakes -- lightly. When attacked, immediately divert your attention and show your attackers that you are not bothered at all.
- Keep your cool publicly, but assess concerns privately.

Law 37: Create compelling spectacles

- Where words fail, grand displays of imagery, symbols, and gestures will strike those around you. Therefore, work on associating yourself with these visuals of power in order to gain it.
- If you manage to fuse together never-before-seen images and symbols that demonstrate your views and belief, people will be drawn to you.

Law 38: Think as you like but behave like others

- When you keep showing yourself off as someone different, whose views and ideas are out of the ordinary, others would think you are only seeking attention. Some others would think you are looking down upon them for being just like the rest. Refrain from displaying this kind of superiority, or else they will punish you for making them feel small.
- *"It is far safer to blend in and nurture the common touch."* Unless you're with your "tolerant" friends, don't share too much of your originality. Only your friends can know where your unique ideas are coming from and can appreciate you for how unconventional you may be.
- Stand out only when you already stand out. Then you can flaunt your difference from others. Others will have no more reason to doubt you.

Law 39: Stir up waters to catch fish

- Causing a stir from a calm disposition puts you at a sure advantage over your enemies. This striking combination of "trouble" and "calm" is an art worth practicing.
- Keep your cool and logic no matter the circumstances. Anger will only lead you to your defeat. Don't follow the path of rulers who fight believing that their outburst would bring them victory -- unless your display of anger is under your control or is a trap to trick others into thinking that you are weak.
- Calmly and strategically put your enemies off-guard. When you play this way, you can go as far as finding loopholes in them through which you can easily manipulate them all the way to their defeat.

- Still waters allow your enemies to plan, initiate, and take control. So stir the waters to force the fish to the surface and to expose their plot. Then take over. Play on their uncontrollable emotions.
- In the game of power, remember that nothing is personal. Keep your emotions in check.
- Nothing is more infuriating to your enemies than seeing you keeping your cool while they are losing theirs.
- Be careful, however, of provoking those who are too powerful.

Law 40: Despise the free lunch

- Be wary when you are offered something for free. Take it as a warning against either a trick or a hidden obligation.
- *"What has worth is worth paying for."* Paying your own leaves no room for guilt and trickery. Even better, paying in full guarantees you excellence.
- Keep your money flowing. Your generosity is a useful strategy to draw others to your power.
- As for those who are unskilled with money, either avoid them or use them to your advantage.

Law 41: Avoid stepping into a great man's shoes

- It doesn't matter if you have inherited your parents' wealth and reputation, or if you've become the successor of a powerful person, or if you are mentored by a great teacher. If you don't bring to the table anything new that's uniquely you, you will just be these great people's shadow.
- Create your own starting point. Blaze a trail being who you are and doing what you do best. You will have to let go of your background and of whoever came before you. Focus on achieving more and on outshining them. Take this as an opportunity to be someone who will leave even bigger shoes to fill.
- To build a name, change your course. Don't recreate past actions and success. The circumstances now are far different, and will continue to change. Adapt to all the changes and from there build your own legacies.

Law 42: Strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter

- In every group, it is common for power to be centralized in one or two people. To win over the group, do everything you can to isolate the source of power. This will stop such influence from spreading.

- There's no use negotiating with this source of power. Don't wait for them to cause troubles. Disconnect them right away from their power base. It will be the sheep that will scatter, not your lead opponents' power.

Law 44: Disarm and infuriate with the mirror effect

- The mirror has two faces: reality and deception.
- The Mirror Effect: Mirror what your enemies do as a way to mock and manipulate them. It will make them overreact, without being able to figure out what you're actually planning to do.
- Constantly applying the Mirror Effect will give off the illusion that you and your enemy have common values, when it's not really the case. It's a powerful trap.

Law 45: Preach the need for change, but never reform too much at once

- As people are creatures of habit, they don't always like changes. They are averse to anything that appears to disrupt routines and threaten comfort zones. However, as a leader and as an innovator, you are in a position to initiate reforms. The book says the key is to show respect to the old ways of doing things. Too much of a change can lead to mass revolt. So make the changes you want appear to be somewhat familiar, packaged as a "gentle improvement of the past."
- When you keep new things positively linked to the past, people won't resist your leadership.

Law 46: Never appear too perfect

- It's best to appear human to your enemies rather than making it seem you have no defects, weaknesses, or vices. Too much perfection can cost you your success because it creates enemies who envy you. On the other hand, when you come across as a "normal" human being, you become approachable and you'll get to know more about other people and their motives. People will open up to you more because they think you relate with each other well.
- Keep an eye out for those who envy you because they are the ones who are likely to work against you.

Law 47: Do not go past the mark you aimed for; in victory, learn when to stop

- Your victory is not where it all ends, in fact the book says it is usually the point of “greatest peril.” At the peak of this brief moment, stay rational. Overconfidence can push you way too far from what you were originally reaching for. Your arrogance can also bring you more enemies.
- Simply put, don’t let your success go to your head.
- Strategy and careful planning is everything. Reach the goal and that’s it.

Law 48: Assume formlessness

- Maintain a formless shape and keep your plan hidden in order for you to be unassailable. Keep moving and adapting to what’s new. Your formlessness will increase your power and advantage.
- Be so vague to your enemies that they will never have any accurate ideas on your moves.
- Come to terms with the fact that nothing is permanent. Even laws change. To rely on lasting stability means lack of flexibility on your part and more opportunity for attack from your enemies.

Related Readings:

- [Essentialism](#) by Greg McKeown
- **Good Strategy, Bad Strategy** by Richard Rumelt
- [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#) by Dale Carnegie
- **On War** by Carl von Clausewitz
- **Rethinking Positive Thinking** by Gabriele Oettingen
- **Steve Jobs** by Walter Isaacson
- **The Compound Effect** by Darren Hardy
- **Total Recall** by Arnold Schwarzenegger