

The 48 Laws Of Power Summary

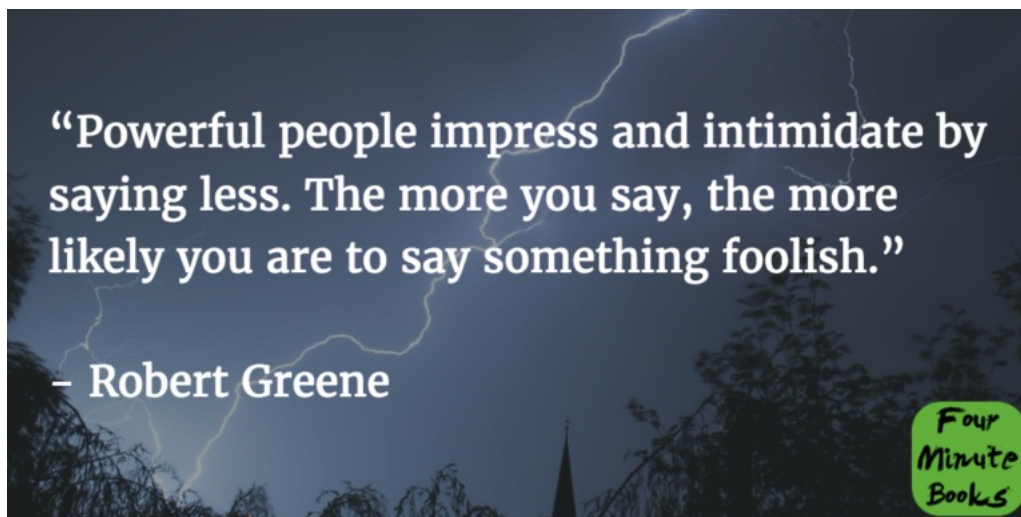


fourminutebooks.com/the-48-laws-of-power-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *The 48 Laws Of Power* draws on many of history's most famous power quarrels to show you what power looks like, how you can get it, what to do to defend yourself against the power of others and, most importantly, how to use it well and keep it.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Even though *Mastery* is a great book, it's not the one that put Robert Greene on the map. *The 48 Laws Of Power* was. Published in 1998 after taking a big risk, due to quitting his former job, which he hated, the book became a bestseller and has now sold over a million copies.

It's especially popular with rappers and hip-hop artists, but many celebrities quote from the book and mention the laws' influence on their life. 50 Cent is just one of them, with whom Greene ended up collaborating on another book. Most of the 48 laws draw on a specific situation from history, and even though some of them seem to contradict one another, there's a precious lesson to be learned from every single one.

Here are 3 lessons about power to help you understand it better:

1. Always make superiors look smarter than you.
2. Confuse competitors by acting unpredictably.
3. Don't force others to do what you want, seduce them instead.

Want to discover where Kanye gets his power? Let's study the actual laws of the world!

Lesson 1: Always make superiors look smarter than you.

Here's one surefire way how to *not* get promoted: When your boss comes across a problem she can't solve on her computer, go to her, and, as you fix it, say: "Sooooo? *That's* how you do it. No problem, I'm happy to help!"

The one thing people in a position of power don't want is to look powerless. But when you flaunt your skills right in front of them, that's exactly what happens. The French minister of finance under King Louis XIV, Nicolas Fouquet, paid for that lesson with a life in prison. When he threw an excessive party at his chateau in favor of the king, the king accused him of stealing, for no one man could legally be that wealthy, and threw him into prison.

So instead of showing off how good *you* are, make your boss look like *she's* the smartest person in the room, even if you know she isn't. **Give away credit and you'll be given responsibility in return.**

For example, when Galileo Galilei discovered the four moons of Jupiter, he could've taken all that credit. Instead, he named them after the Grand Duke, Cosimo II de' Medici, and his brothers. As a result Cosimo appointed him as his official philosopher and mathematician, securing Galileo's funding for his research for years to come.

Lesson 2: Make errors on purpose to confuse your competition.

Sometimes the competition seems to always be one step ahead of you. That's likely because they've invested time and energy into researching you and finding out your behavior patterns. When that happens, your best move is to act unpredictably. Do the opposite of what you think people expect, make a mistake on purpose, or just disappear for a while.

Erroneous behavior throws people off their analysis game, and while they're busy trying to figure out your new pattern and explaining your behavior, you have the chance to strike back.

This is one of the first lessons good poker players learn. If you only play hands when you've hit at least a pair or above, the other players will quickly be on to you and fold every time you bet. But throw in a bluff or two, which you commit to and ride out, even if you end up losing those hands, and your opponents can't be so sure anymore.

Bobby Fischer used this exact strategy to confuse Boris Spassky in their match for the 1972 world championship title in chess. He made a beginner's mistake in their first game, didn't even show up for the second one (and lose by forfeit, and returned only minutes before the third game started. Then he started making crazy demands, like moving cameras, switching rooms and exchanging chairs. Finally, he played openings completely atypical to his usual chess style, and eventually beat Spassky to become world champion.

Note: I recently watched [Pawn Sacrifice](#), a great movie about Bobby Fischer and this incident. Highly recommended.

Lesson 3: Seduce others into voluntarily doing what you want them to, instead of forcing them.

Even when you're in a position of power already, people won't always do what you want them to. When that's the case, you should **never resort to trying to force people to obey**. Instead, make it impossible for them *not* to do what you'd like them to by **seducing them**.

Chuko Liang, head military strategist of ancient China used this to break his enemy, King Menghuo. Rather than destroying their entire army, when they attacked China, he captured them all, and then...

...served King Menghuo great wine and food. His soldiers saw this generosity, and after Liang was sure he had baffled them, he released them but kept King Menghuo hostage. Only after threatening that he'd have to bow to the Chinese king if he was captured again, did he release the enemy. Over the years, Liang *did* capture Menghuo time and time again, each time making the same threat, yet always releasing his prisoner. After the seventh time, Menghuo surrendered, bowed to the king and gave up on his own accord.

Raw force only breeds resentment, so use seduction instead.

The 48 Laws Of Power Review

If you're a "Mr. Nice Guy" like me, *The 48 Laws Of Power* won't tell you what you want to hear. However, it might be what you *need* to hear, at least in some cases. I don't agree with all the laws, but there's a solid reason behind each of them. All in all a great read with lots to learn! Check out *The Laws of Human Nature* after that.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- Why you must take credit for other people's work
- A cheaper way to spy on competitors than hiring actual spies
- How Bertolt Brecht won against the US government by simply giving up
- Why it's best to act superior, especially if you *are* superior

Who would I recommend The 48 Laws of Power summary to?

The 19 year old, who gets bullied in college for being a nerd, the 31 year old "overnight" celebrity, who struggles with dealing with the sudden fame and attention, and anyone who wants to learn more practical lessons from history than the ones taught in school.

