

### Introduction

The feeling of having no power over people and events is generally unbearable to us. And when we feel helpless we feel miserable. No one wants less power. Everyone wants more!  
However, it is dangerous to seem too power hungry or to be overt with your power moves. You must seem fair and decent. So you need to be subtle --- congenial yet cunning! Democratic yet devious. The Laws have a simple premise, namely, that certain actions will almost always certainly increase your power --- the observance of the "Law," while others decrease it and even ruin us --- the transgression of the "Law." These observances and transgressions are illustrated by historical examples. The "LawS" are timeless and definitive! (p xxii)

Credits: THE FORTY-EIGHT (48) LawS OF POWER by Robert Green. Viking, A Joost Elffers Production, 1998

### LawS 1-20

- Law 1) Never outshine the master.** (p1-7)
- Law 2) Never put too much trust in friends, learn how to use enemies.** (p8-15)
- Law 3) Conceal your intentions.** (p16-30)
- Law 4) Always say less than necessary.** (p31-36)
- Law 5) So much depends on reputation --- guard it with your life!** (p37-43)
- Law 6) Court attention at all cost.** (p44-55)
- \*\*Law 7) Get others to do the work for you, but always take the credit!** (p56-61)
- Law 8) Make other people come to you --- use bait if necessary!** (p62-68)
- Law 9) Win through your actions, never through argument.** (p69-75)
- Law 10) Infection --- avoid the unhappy and unlucky.** (p76-81)
- Law 11) Learn to keep people dependent on you.** (p82-88)
- Law 12) Use selective honesty and generosity to disarm your victim.** (p89-94)
- Law 13) When asking for help, appeal to people's self-interest, never to their mercy or gratitude.** (p95-100)
- Law 14) Pose as a friend, work as a spy.** (p101-106)
- Law 15) Crush your enemy totally!** (p107-114)
- Law 16) Use absence to increase respect and honor.** (p115-122)
- Law 17) Keep others in suspended terror --- cultivate an air of unpredictability!** (p123-129)
- Law 18) Do not build fortresses to protect yourself --- isolation is dangerous!** (p130-136)
- Law 19) Know who you are dealing with --- do not offend the wrong person.** (p137-144)
- Law 20) Do not commit to anyone.** (p145-155)

### LawS 21-48 (cont)

- Law 30) Make your accomplishments seem effortless.** (p245-253)
- Law 31) Control the options --- get others to play with the cards you deal.** (p254-262)
- Law 32) Play to people's fantasies.** (p263-270)
- Law 33) Discover each employee's thumbscrew!** (p271-281)
- Law 34) Be royal in your own fashion --- act like a king or queen to be treated like one!** (p252-290)
- Law 35) Master the art of timing** (p291-299)
- Law 36) Disdain things you cannot have --- ignoring them is the best revenge!** (p300-308)
- Law 37) Create compelling spectacles.** (p309-316)
- Law 38) Think as you like but behave like others.** (p317-324)
- Law 39) Stir up waters to catch fish!** (p325-332)
- Law 40) Despise the free lunch.** (p333-346)
- Law 41) Avoid stepping into a great man's shoes.** (p347-357)
- Law 42) Strike the shephere and the sheep will scatter.** (p358-366)
- Law 43) Work on the hearts and minds of others!**(p367-375)
- Law 44) Disarm and infuriate with the "mirror effect".**(p376-391)
- Law 45) Preach the need for change, but never reform too much at once!** (p392-399)
- Law 46) Never appear too perfect! --- Only gods and the dead can seem perfect with impunity!** (p400-409)
- Law 47) Do not go past the mark you aimed for --- in victory, learn when to stop!** (p410-418)
- Law 48: Assume formlessness!** (p419-430)

By taking a shape, by having a visible plan, you open yourself to attack. Instead of taking a form for your enemy to grasp, keep yourself adaptable and on the move. Accept the fact that nothing is certain and no law is fixed! The best way to protect yourself is to be as fluid and formless as water. Never bet on stability or lasting order. Everything changes!

### Conclusion

This book can be used in several ways. By reading the book straight through you can learn about power in general. By getting such an overview of the entire subject you will best be able to evaluate your own past actions and gain a greater degree of control over your immediate affairs. It is hoped that a thorough reading of this book will inspire thinking and reevaluation long after you finish it! (p xxii-p xxiii)

### LawS 21-48

**Law 21) Play a sucker to catch a sucker --- seem dumber than your mark.** (p156-162)

**Law 22) Use the surrender tactic --- transform weakness into power!** (p163-170)

**Law 23) Concentrate your forces.** (p171-177)

**Law 24) Play the perfect courtier.** (p178-190)

**Law 25) Re-create your life!** (p191-199)

**Law 26) Keep your hands clean.** (p200-214)

**Law 27) Play on people's need to believe to create a cultlike following.** (p215-226)

**Law 28) Enter action with boldness.** (p227-235)

**Law 29) Plan all the way to the end.** (p236-244)



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Page 1 of 2.

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