

Understanding that much of this book is exaggeration and/or conjecture, I have found there to be shockingly appropriate “laws” that I have immediate real-life examples to reflect upon.

Coincidentally they happen to also be the first two laws:

Never Outshine “The Master.”

In my younger years, I thought the ambition and passion were enough (and transparent) to warrant praise and recognition, and it was shocking to me when executives in one particular former company would deliberately muffle or silence the efforts I was taking with completely honest intentions. Looking back this makes perfect sense now as their technical and professional insecurities were on full display.

Never put too Much Trust in Friends, Learn how to use Enemies

To this day this has been the hardest lesson I have ever had to learn. I thankfully never had my heart broken, and have lived a fairy-tale life with my wife of >15 years.

However, I made the catastrophic mistake of being “the guy” for several friends who could get them jobs, train them, and drag them through a complete career rebirth because I *knew* that they would not only be grateful, but thankful. And frankly I sincerely enjoyed doing what I thought was genuine and helpful to enrich their lives.

Unfortunately this later led to the largest betrayal of my life, a cross-country move, and a years of paranoia, obsessive introspection and anxiety that I am not convinced will ever really disappear. All at the hands of the one person I would have previously trusted at the same level as my wife. A very hard lesson to learn, but learned well; and on the first try ☐

My Thoughts

This book and its author go to great lengths to explain the “laws” of power and use examples for each that range from thousands to decades of years old, offering real evidence as to how they have been applied and used over the centuries by the famous and infamous.

Many of these, applied lightly to real life would likely lead to real gains in the power in modern life, but they are riddled with contradiction and hyperbole, so I would caution anyone reading this to literally interpret them as laws to be applied without restraint.

In any event this was a wonderful read that really helped me understand some of the mistakes I've made in the past as a professional at work and as a friend and has helped glean insight into how people reacted the way they did when I was at the time completely flabbergasted.