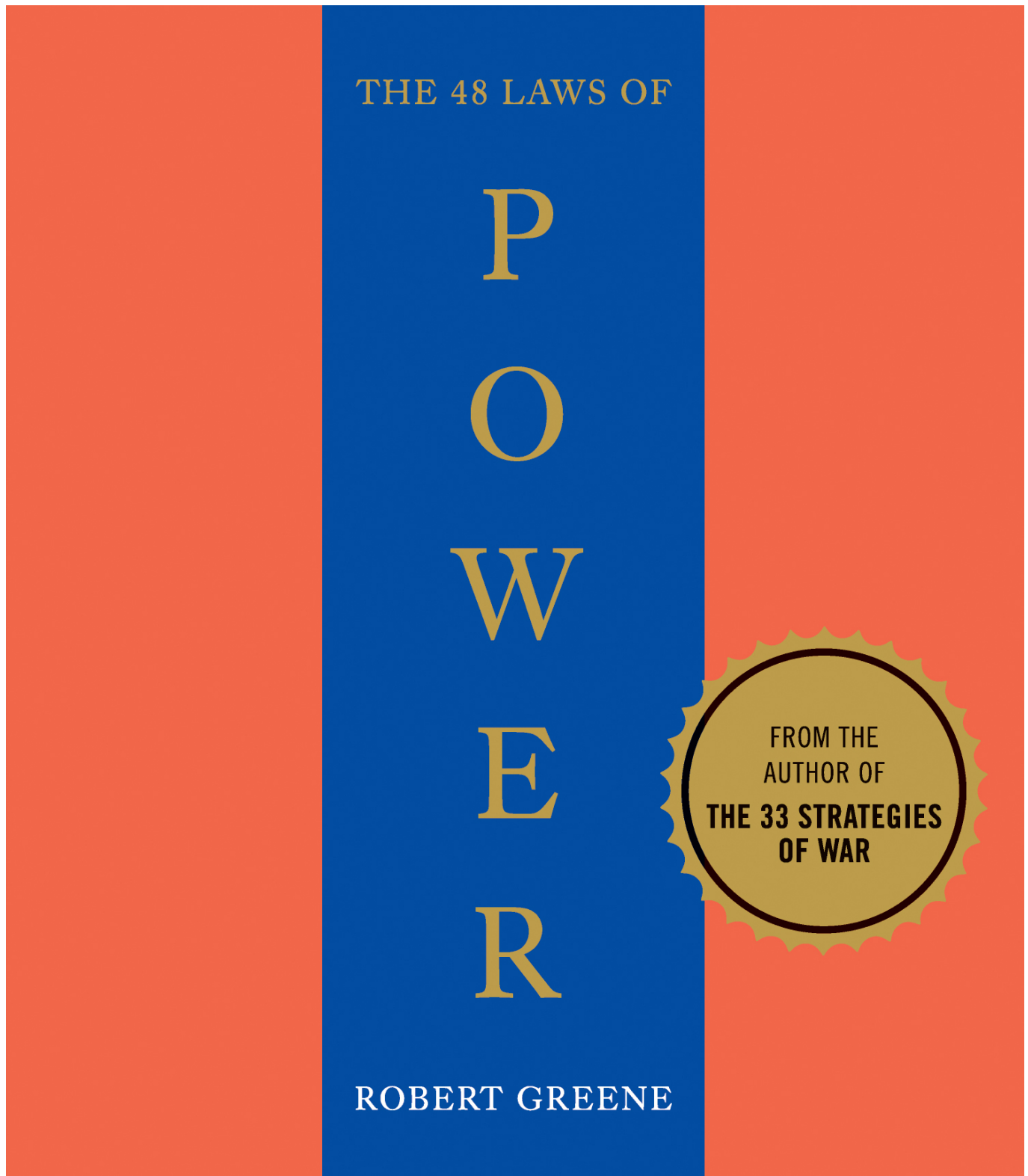


Law 01 In-Depth: “Never Outshine the Master”

Illimitable Men | 10 December, 2013 | by IM



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1.) Preamble:

A few notes before we begin: firstly, the laws of power are more akin to the ingredients of power, that is to say, they are granular elements of a grander framework, behavioural ingredients that once formed into a cohesive recipe (a grander strategy) result in power projection at the macro level. The ingredients of power project a measure of power by themselves, but they are smaller in scope than recipes of power.

Recipes focus on the future and the end-game, they form the overall arch of a long-term strategy and dictate strategic policy. You have an agenda (your reason for strategising) a recipe (your general policy or approach for enacting an agenda at the institutional or business level) and then ingredients (behaviour you utilise at the personal level to further your cause).

Like any recipe with ingredients, power is no different from food in the sense there is overlap, like cooking ingredients interact with one another to make tastier albeit more complex food, the ingredients of power interact with one another to create a stronger albeit more complex power structure.

Where the ingredients of power are micro Machiavellian manifestations, recipes are macro Machiavellian manifestations. Where the ingredients of power are but mere gambits, the recipes of power are the strategies dictating said gambits.

At the lowest levels, [power games](#) play out solely on a micro playing field, that is, people use the laws to influence one another to get respect or meet their immediate needs. At the highest levels, this remains, but there is likewise a vision or agenda driving interactions and decisions at the micro level. The simplest way of explaining the relationship between the micro and macro is that the macro is “the why” and manifests in big business and military decisions, whereas the micro is “the how” that manifests as conscious behavioural decisions.

Micro strategists are present-orientated and work from a bottom’s up approach, they are thinking of the next move, and their goals are smaller in scope and scale. Macro strategists are future-orientated and work from a top-down approach, they hold a grand vision that requires a greater timeline to actualise, and are thinking multiple moves ahead to see this vision expressed in reality.

Greene does not give recipes for power (macro strategies) in The 48 Laws of Power, only ingredients, it is in [The 33 Strategies of War](#) he approaches the macro, detailing the recipes of power. Where the 48 Laws should be your main reference for micro strategic personal interactions, The 33 Strategies should be your reference text for more macro things like economic warfare between companies.

To simplify these ideas, micro strategy is optimisation of behavioural psychology on a small scale to yield personal benefit, whilst macro strategy is the optimisation of behavioural psychology, political and economic positioning in order to yield organisational benefit.

2.) Understand Your Social Surroundings:

When you’re new to a group and your position is unestablished, you should immediately look to determine the group’s leader. If you’re a strong character, do not dominate or humiliate the leader, and

endeavour not to monopolise too much attention. If the group leader is inferior in an obvious capacity, you will have to play down or otherwise conceal your talents. Befriend the group leader, win their trust, and you'll win their approval. It is always wiser to befriend power than to challenge it, for this yields the most profit with the least energy expenditure.

When entering a new group it is vital you quickly identify and address the leader, being sure to ingratiate yourself. Doing so communicates an implied recognition of the hierarchy, and a respect for said hierarchy. Many leaders are suspicious of new people entering the group as they fear you will upset the pre-established hierarchy, by demonstrating social intelligence and showing the proper respect, you assuage this insecurity and increase your odds of success with the group.

Should the group leader feel disrespected or otherwise outdone, they will mobilise the troops and instruct them to attack, making your life significantly harder. When you are unestablished, this is a scenario you should seek to avoid at all costs as it is unlikely you can weather the storm. Inversely, should you win the leader over, you gain massive influence over a group, leapfrogging many of those in line to positions of power by having greater favour.

Leaders are the gatekeepers of their social group's trust, their words alone can heavily skew opinion in one direction; this phenomenon is as true of school cliques as it is corporations. In consideration of such influence, it becomes glaringly obvious that greater benefit is derived from the favour rather than the disdain of the powerful. The prior can carry you to heights of incredible lustre, whilst the latter may plummet you to depths of unimagined horror.

For example, whilst a celebrity endorsement may increase your sales by a factor of ten, a celebrity condemnation could likewise decrease them by such a factor. If there were a group of three attractive women, you would initiate, challenge and subsequently charm the bossiest one. By winning her, you win the group. If it were a group of frat boys, your target would be the most dominant boy. By winning him, you win the group.

If the group leader doesn't like you in spite of your sincerest efforts to win them over, abandon that group. Take the loss, move on, and seek greener pastures. Trying to become a part of groups where the leadership hates you is rarely worth the uphill struggle. It is better to thrive where you are liked, than be contemptuously tolerated where you are not.

Do not outshine people who in whatever situation, possess a stronger position than you do. A local drug dealer may be a king in one part of the city, but four streets over a rival gang may want him dead. Your ego can be your own worst enemy so do not let the ego you've built up from being successful at whatever it is you do delude you into thinking you can immediately take centre stage wherever you go. The environment you are in and what is working to directly benefit you within that environment is of incredible importance. Your environment passively implies a cap on your power. It either grants you further personal power by making things easier (home field advantage, high status jobs) or takes power away from you, forcing you to compete on less favourable terms (away turf, low status jobs etc.)

In light of this it stands to reason that one must always be aware of their terrain; be it the mud in a game of football, the cover in an online shooter or the dynamics of a social group. Fighting for dominance in a group where a leader's hegemony is already established when you are either an outsider or newcomer is not recommended, for you are at a considerable disadvantage. By demonstrating early on that you possess a desire to alter the pecking order you also inadvertently reveal your hand. Even if your demonstrations were aggressive and impressionable, unwilling to entertain your challenge and unproven, you will be rejected. Of course although almost all care for popularity, he who appears to care the least wins. This comes down to reputation, saving face. When you try to outdo a person whose reputation within the group is perceived as more prominent, admirable and credible than your own, you exude weakness.

Likewise you present yourself as an unwelcome upstart, a challenger, an enemy of the group leader and thus by extension, the group. If you are the enemy of a leader, you will naturally become the enemy of his infatuated followers. Strong, popular leaders in the primacy of their leadership therefore make poor targets for deposition. To effectively depose a leader, that leader must grow to be hated, or seen as increasingly irrelevant, out of touch. Deposition requires much planning and great patience, with both you can tip the scales of power in your favour.

2a.) The Classroom Example & Target Selection

A classic contemporary example of foolishly outshining the master is within the classroom. A teacher and a pupil have a master and apprentice relationship. It is important not to forget that despite their accolades, the teacher will have an ego. If you consistently correct the teacher or call them out on the credibility of their knowledge, you will aggravate and annoy the teacher by presenting yourself as an upstart. They will view you as a critic, a haranguer. If you dislike your teacher but other students do not share your disdain, they will equally view you with contempt and loathing. Do not outshine the master. The teacher is presumed and accepted to be the authoritative expert on the topic area in which they are paid to teach. Even if they're less knowledgeable than you are about a particular facet of something, this minor contrivance is largely irrelevant to the social dynamic. The mere perception of authority is enough to solidify their position and you would do well to acknowledge that as such.

Outside matters of social favour the teacher likewise has more capacity to legally punish you than you do them. They have the power to get rid of you, and the social influence to limit or otherwise sanction you (eg: have you attend an anger management class, see a counsellor/psychiatrist for diagnosis etc.) You on the other hand do not have the reciprocal level of power needed to affect their life in an equally discomforting manner. You cannot, within the confines of legality, match their audacity. This is why it is more favourable to win over and co-opt the teacher. Do not challenge the teacher needlessly unless the teacher is a weak target, ideally [isolated and disdained by your peers.](#)

As mentioned three paragraphs prior, knowing when a leader is a target ripe to be overthrown is crucial. An example of such a target in the context of the teacher would be where the teacher is hated by his students for demonstrating repeated incompetence. In such a scenario rather than become agitated by your haranguing finickiness, the other students will vicariously get off on your challenging of the teacher's authority. If in the collective hype a mob mentality is formed, they may even indulge in it themselves. Likewise the teacher will feel too henpecked to retort effectively, because you have the support of the majority. If they are to single you out for punishment, you can claim you were merely one of many. You can use the concealability of the crowd for defence, claiming to be a weak mind caught in the chaos instead of an architect of such anarchy. Even if they know better, plausible deniability may swing it for you.

3.) Popularity & Respect Carry More Authority Than Job Titles:

The master is not always the person in the highest hierarchical position of an organisation; the master is truly whoever holds the most sway with the crowd. It is near useless for you to be the head honcho of a workplace who can inspire neither admiration nor respect when a subordinate is capable of both. In matters of pay, you would be higher up than said subordinate, but in matters of social dynamic you would be lower on the food chain. You see in spite of your organisational position it is possible to hold less social influence. In such a scenario any attempted coup d'état by the subordinate would be largely supported by the group. They would support your deposal, rather than help you preserve your power by punishing the upstart for his insolence. In times of struggle, the preservation of your power will become contingent on your reputation, predominantly on how well you are liked, and how much you are feared. The crowd should always be your shield, acting in your interest, either out of fear or out of love. A king

without an army is all but defenceless. When the crowd is indifferent to your leadership or even worse, working against you, your downfall is a matter of “when” rather than one of “if.”

Where you are the upstart or simply second fiddle to a more dominant force, the well-liked teacher is someone you should appease. They are an individual whose favour is worth having and whose wrath is not. They should look to you favourably, give you that reference for a job, or happily commit to small favours such as signing off on your work. They should not be an impediment, a threat or a competition to your efforts; they should be a social resource, not an adversary. If they are an adversary, it is more than likely an outcome of inferior social strategy on your part.

Adversaries are typically formed via the indignation of ego, that is to say, master or not, one feels as if they did not receive the level of respect they felt entitled to. This caused a break in rapport, a conflict of some kind, and an unhealthy rivalry was born. Making those with more power than you feel adversarial towards you is a sure way to lose at the game of life as they look to crush you before you can gain any significant headway. A staunch leader knows all too well of the importance in nipping poisonous buds. Power flows in one direction, commanding in various levels of succession from the top-down. A Machiavellian does not fight against a raging upward stream, they wait for when the current is more favourable. A Machiavellian looks to influence the architect of the current with their cunning so that they may traverse the river with ease. [They utilise timing to attack with patience.](#) The Machiavellian desire is to covertly pull the master down whilst elevating themselves to replace them. Where successful this is done subtly so that the master does not become aware of or feel threatened by the correction in power differential. Such a feat can even be executed seductively, in a way that the soon-to-be replaced master finds enjoyable. The level of comfort achieved dictates exactly what you can get away with, how quickly you can act and how bold your moves are. The lower the level of comfort achieved, the quicker your scheming will be detected.

4.) Successfully Outshining Masters:

Say you’re at the gym and you’re telling people bigger than you that their form is bad. Even if it’s objectively true and you meant well, they’re bigger than you so in all likelihood they will not listen to you. In matters of physicality the power differential is visibly clear from the offshoot. You don’t have the credibility, respect or trust to issue such unsolicited advice. Challenging people with more respect, power, followers or higher status must be done tactically and specifically. The attack must hit a nerve. It should be done visibly for all to see, it should be well pointed, and it must have a measure of believable substance in order for it to gain the recognition and effect desired. The desired effect is of course an increase in power for you, the upstart. Typically to hit a nerve, the attack should be humiliating in nature, and to give it plausibility it should be based upon an already verified half-truth. That way the audience observing the spectacle can be swayed into perceiving the accused negatively.

4a.) The Michael Jackson Example:

A notorious example of this was Michael Jackson’s fun fair at Neverland Ranch. It was well-known that Michael had his own private playground, and out of sympathy (having had a hard/mentally abusive upbringing himself) he would invite sick children to enjoy themselves at his fair. It was philanthropic. Now this established truth was used as a platform to form the plausible component of a reputation destroying lie. It follows that looking to extort Michael, the accusation was made he had inappropriately touched children that had been invited to his ranch. Now whether he did or didn’t is irrelevant to the lesson at hand here. The lesson is rather simple: had it not been established that children were regularly invited to attend the Jackson estate, such an accusation would be deemed outlandish because it would be entirely implausible. However, give it a modicum of plausibility by injecting a half-truth into the equation and all of a sudden the complete product including the fabricated component of the accusation becomes

plausible. Half-truths hijack truth's plausibility to give credibility to fabrication. Such fabrications then go on to become accepted as fact by popular opinion. It is popular opinion which builds and destroys reputations, dictating the accepted reality. What the actual reality is in matters of reputation is all but irrelevant.

From the previous example many boxes for successfully outshining the master were ticked. Michael was a megastar, his accusers, nobodies. The accusation hit a nerve: Michael was known to have a mentally abusive upbringing due to how his father treated him, yet he stood accused of physically abusing children. That would have made the accusation difficult for Michael to ignore. Next, it was humiliating: he was accused of something so theatrically controversial that people would pay it attention even if Michael had managed to ignore it: pedophilia. Finally, it had plausibility borrowed from half-truth: he did invite sick children to his estate to make use of the private fun fair, just not for the reasons that his extorters stipulated. His extorters defined the narrative through spin-artistry, managing to play the victim role successfully. As such Michael Jackson lost the battle psychologically and was forced to tactically pay an out of court settlement as mere damage control in the fiasco. The out of court settlement likewise had the bonus effect of making it seem like he was admitting his guilt, reinforcing the credibility of the fabrication via his chosen response. To really nail this point home, take in just how absurd this passage taken from MTV.com sounds: *"Michael Jackson insisted Thursday that his \$25 million out-of-court settlement with the boy who first accused him of molestation was not an admission of guilt."* That's some expensive damage control.

4b.) The Ja Rule Example:

An upstart has little to lose whilst a well-established figure has much to maintain. This is why relatively obscure and unknown people have a tendency to attack well-established figures. They try to hijack the reputation of well-known figures so that they may slingshot themselves into the limelight; they are plunderers of reputation. They plunder by performing spectacles which redistribute popularity, destroying others' to build their own. Likewise, the greater the number of people exposed to a spectacle, the higher the chance the upstart will profit from their attacks. Attention is a sparse commodity, but certain key individuals (industry leaders, celebrities, and people well-known within a niche) command large amounts of attention. These are the people who are targeted by reputation plunderers. Essentially the more important you are, the more targeted your reputation will become. Stealing another man's supporters is quicker and easier than trying to gather your own, assuming one has a suitable scandal to set-up the exchange. People will line up to destroy you merely for the chance to build themselves up. Everybody loves a scandal. The controversy is magnetic, similar to the duality of yin and yang; where one man falls – another rises. Thus it follows that the more successful you become in life, the more people will target your reputation quite publicly. If you do not realise what is happening when this occurs, you can find yourself giving away much of your power.

A really good example of this can be found in Hip-Hop with Curtis Jackson's (50 Cent's) initial rise to prominence in the early noughties. When Fifty was a nobody lusting for fame and success, he started off his hip-hop career by attacking the reputation of a famous and successful artist of the time, Ja Rule. Ja Rule responded to Fifty out of ego (rather than ignoring him for what he was at the time: a nobody) and among other factors at play, Fifty rose to prominence whilst Ja Rule faded into obscurity. Fifty used Ja Rule for free publicity. As soon as Ja Rule replied by directing a diss track to Fifty, who was a fairly unknown artist at the time, Fifty had won. Fifty had gotten Ja Rule to promote him to a large group of people who otherwise would not have heard about him. That had been Fifty's intent all along. Marketing budgets are expensive, it is easier and more cost-effective just to get someone important so hot and bothered that they start blabbering on about you instead. When you are small, all publicity is good

publicity.

5.) Accidentally Outshining:

Sometimes you can outshine the master unintentionally by simply being proficient at what you do. If your baseline skill level is way above that of the average individual's then it is easy to be seen as a show-off as you thoughtlessly dazzle the crowd with your proficiency. For example, say you're a very articulate person with a big vocabulary; you will easily make those who stumble over their words with small vocabularies feel intimidated by your silver tongue. You could inadvertently outshine a socially important group leader if you were not to play down this ability (eg: speak less, pretend there's a word you don't understand etc.) You must be self-aware of your own abilities, as well as the abilities of those around you, and where your ability exceeds that of the group leader, you must downplay your own ability. Conceal it, downplay your ability by pretending to struggle, and if yet your talent is still seen in all its glory, give credit to the leader for "their support." If another's ego is complimented by your ability, they will feel invested in your prowess rather than intimidated; this is how you want the leader to feel. We do not do such things merely out of respect, or even because we like to, but we do so because we must. It is important to avoid the leader's contempt and insecurity. If the leader feels like you are more competent than they are in something which they value, their insecurity will cause them to designate you a threat. They will then use their influence to make life harder, stopping you dead in your ascent on the ladder of power.

If you're an intellectual person you will outshine the average person in general knowledge terms. When you're around social groups with low logical capacity and/or academic knowledge you will find such people are typically insecure about their lack of intelligence. As such it is quickly evident they feel threatened by indicators of intelligence, they view intelligence negatively. With such people you have to make small talk, normally making jokes or discussing simple observations that they can comprehend and relate to. If you try to teach them anything with your knowledge prior to winning their favour, they will reject you because their insecurity causes them to feel as if you are implying you are better than they are – "are you calling me stupid?!" You can't outshine the master even if the leader of a social circle is an idiot. This may seem somewhat hilarious, yet it is equally important to remember should you ever find yourself in such a group.

The Japanese have a proverb "*the nail that sticks out gets hammered down.*" This pearl of Japanese wisdom is in all likelihood a mechanism of their conformist culture more than anything but to the Machiavellian mind there's a nugget of knowledge to be derived from this saying. Not being socially accepted is a form of isolation or in this context, social ostracization. If you find yourself in an isolated position this is likely to create suspicion regardless of your hierarchical position within an institution. [Law 18 – isolation is dangerous](#) is very relevant here in explaining why isolation (sticking out negatively) is dangerous when attempting to either gain baseline social acceptance or cultivate a relationship with the master. Leaders have more leeway to isolate themselves, but they too cannot commit fully to the endeavour without arousing suspicion, distrust and eventually: contempt.

6.) Building Trust and Kinship – The Apprentice Method:

Being more competent than a master in the absence of strong rapport is one of the surest ways to isolate one's self and earn their scorn. It is in this manner the master will perceive you as a threat to be dealt with rather than an asset at their disposal. Whenever someone is more experienced than you, higher up the ladder or older etc, even if you're more competent than they, do not outshine them. Do not correct them. Being pedantic and arguing the fine points of an observation will win you no love or gratitude; in fact to the contrary that is one of the fastest ways to alienate yourself. The momentary Schadenfreude derived from correcting someone is rarely ever worth the social fallout that follows. So it follows that if you are a

pedant you must learn restraint.

A Machiavellian fosters a relationship with the master. They act a little goofy; they intentionally do things to a lower standard than the master. On occasion they may ask the master how to do something properly in order to compliment the master and simultaneously build trust. Teaching someone how to do something is a rapport and trust building exercise; however this method should not be abused. If it is, the master may find the Machiavellian to be an incapable, distracting annoyance. Used sparingly though you will achieve great results because [the master gets off on showing the student how to do things correctly](#). The student who was incapable but became capable due to the master's input elicits a sense of accomplishment within the master. Subtly, it validates the importance and prowess of the master, massaging the ego. By allowing the master to teach you something and then executing it in the way they taught, you become a part of their narcissistic supply. This is why often teachers (masters in the classrooms which they hold court) refer to the process as being "extremely rewarding." This is also one of the fundamental reasons that volunteers give away their labour for free. Volunteers value feeling important, necessary and desired so much that they are willing to exchange their most precious commodity for it: time.

An alliance must not only be fostered with the master, but it needs to be maintained once established. Disproportionate alliances where the inferior party (the student) takes more value than they provide from the superior party (the master) must be handled carefully. The power differential is so large that the master can terminate the alliance with ease, [being dependent on you for nothing](#). Therefore to maintain the alliance you must adapt to the master's needs. The master must see you as a tool to be fashioned for his own use, therefore causing him to sharpen you. Along your rise to power, you must be obedient, reflexive, and adaptive, [you should think how you like, but you must act as he desires](#). Make a friend of your master, not an enemy. As an enemy, if you are deemed a potential threat the master will learn to despise your power potential. If you present no threat, the master will simply seize investment and cut you off leaving you to fend for yourself.

The more a person invests in you, the more of themselves they pour into you. Get them to pour enough of themselves into you and you become a dominant element within their mind. Naturally this will cause them to deem you significant and you will hold influence with them. The least significant people, the one's the master has no time for, they are the ones powerless to influence the master. Their identity and actions will have almost no bearing on how the master uses their power; the master will act regardless of their wants or needs giving them no consideration. On the contrary you want to be the diametric antithesis to that.

7.) The Apprentice Method – Utilising Submission for Self-Gain:

There is a dominant and submissive dynamic to the master/student relationship. As a student you need to borrow an approach from the feminine playbook and convey a type of "curious submission" to the master. This should be perceived by the master solely as submission to effectively conceal the true depth of your ambition and its accompanying intent. The reason alluring submission is so effective at concealing your agenda is because in the egoism of dominance and control there is a sense of self-assured comfortability, self-majesty and self-importance. It is the trifecta of these egotistical elements which blinds the master to your true intent as they become consumed by the superficial, unable to pierce the veil. Your rise to prominence can be hidden in plain sight if you present yourself as the eager appeasing apprentice in need of direct guidance rather than the hyper-independent confrontational upstart.

To use a figurative metaphor, this is much like stealing food from the grocery store whilst wearing a \$1,000 suit. Security is far less likely to monitor a man in a suit due to his personal appearance, therefore should he steal his theft is likely to go completely unnoticed. The security is so assured he has no need to

steal that they believe this means he will not. This is a form of concealment (the suit hides your intentions by communicating high wealth/status,) it fosters ignorance (the security write you off as a threat) and it is based on superficial appearance (the majesty and spectacle of the suit) rather than depth (your intent and character.)

This is exactly what I refer to when I talk about “curious submission.” The curiosity is your interest, the engine for your agenda, the excuse for probing and interacting. The submission is the blanket over the Trojan horse which lulls the target into a false sense of security, encouraging them to invest in a threat under the misguided belief that the threat (or growing threat) is a malleable asset. Likewise in matters of sadism there is a kind of irresistible attraction to innocence, to imprint and inscribe upon minds which are impressionable, malleable. Those who are uneducated but likeable often elicit a desire within the strong-minded and the accomplished to take them on as a project and “educate them.” Those who are pure we often want to defile, this is the primal urge you’re tapping into here with the weaponisation of submission, a tool that has been used instinctively by women for millennia to exercise puppet like control over overtly powerful men. Naturally, women do not like to take the centre stage, puppeteering or “power by proxy” has always been their coveted method of choice (more on this later.)

This is why an illusion of innocence and yielding submission is an effective device for grabbing a master’s attention. The allure of submission is so seductive, so irresistible to a master that when tailored to their specific tastes they can do nothing but take the bait. The seduction is so distracting it takes on the mental equivalent of anaesthesia; it makes your intent invisible and the enactment of your will, insidious. The air inside the treasure chests of innocence are filled with plausible deniability, and with your ignorance seen as a virtue you are not only cherished but likewise unquestionably trusted. It is through such a device that with calculation, patience and apt timing, you may reverse the polarity of the connection with the master and influence them; succeeding them when they choose to step down, replacing them [should you opt to eradicate them.](#)

This is the exact way in which calculating women destroy great men. There is a mixture of submission and puppeteering involved, and when she tires of her toy she will abandon it or break it in half. In relationships with such women the man is “the teacher” and “the provider” because “she’s submissive” and “needs him.” She takes and continues to take from him, money, wisdom, energy, time, everything. She’s a parasite, a black hole, but she frames herself as a willing accomplice who needs investment to return dividends to an eager, naive, hopeful investor. Eventually the man in question has nothing left to give and is dried up both spiritually and financially. Now he’s been drained for his utility she becomes aware that although he elevated her self-development, she has become more valuable than him. Better yet with the taster she’s had and the strides she’s made she believes she has the opportunity to become even more. Thus rather than return investment as initially promised or implied, out of pragmatism, disrespect and insatiable hypergamy she will betray and abandon her prior mentor to repeat the process with a new one. One who she considers to be more worthy of directing her. Effectively, this means finding an even higher level man to surpass her newer, more recent elevated status.

7a.) Surmising The Apprentice Method:

When you showcase too much of your skill, you run the risk of instilling fear into the master, for they will fear their own impending obsolescence. This can be mitigated by the cultivation of substantial friendship: trust, affinity and charm. If the master likes you and is invested in you, they will be happy to see you rise, they will invest in that ideal and they will promote it. They will do that by seeing you as a narcissistic extension of themselves rather than an enemy or hungry parasite. Submission is the ultimate anaesthetic, an egotistical master can be bitten a thousand times but not feel an itch even once when captivated by superficial submission’s seductive allure. Do not outshine the master until the master is

enthralled by you. If the master is enthralled by you then when the time is right they will leave you to take over their legacy. Become an apprentice rather than an enemy and you can co-opt a power position rather than contest it. Outshine the master only when prior planning has been done and all the right mechanisms are in place. [Timing is everything.](#) With the “apprentice method,” the master approves of you eventually taking their position, or otherwise helps construct a position of autonomous power specifically for you, eg: making you director alongside them, helping you set-up your own business by providing you with clients in your niche etc.

8.) The Puppeteer Method:

Puppeteering is not solely achieved via tactical submission, but likewise it can be achieved via blackmail. [It is the necessary concealment of your intentions](#) which allows those who should not trust you to open up to you, [exposing their own weaknesses](#) which can later be used as leverage should they choose to defy you. Secrets carry great power, but the apex of a secrets power comes in holding its potential perpetuation hostage to the party who desires the nature of the secret remain concealed. If the target is willing to take the loss on the secret and calls your bluff or otherwise reveals the secret before you do, the payload a weaponised secret carries when detonated is vastly reduced. In matters of defence, masters may reveal secrets on their own terms. By anticipating a strike against their reputation they can pre-empt the attack with a half-truth which mitigates the damage done to their reputation once the attack is underway. In this way the subsequent exposure of their secret has a moot or negligible effect, essentially nullifying the attack. It may even possibly create an avenue for them to criticise you for your “excessive and slanderous criticism” in reference to your mitigated attack.

This method when used successfully allows you to puppeteer a master without actually replacing them. Having considerable influence over a master allows you to utilise their power without taking the risks that come with possessing power. Essentially via an implied threat to the master’s power one can temporarily hold their hand over the master’s hand and guide it with their will. The master can be used to commit the action desired on the puppeteer’s behalf, whilst the committed action appears superficially to be a desire of the master’s. The puppeteer is invisible, as part of the threat within the social contract usually mandates that an omission of the puppeteer’s existence is necessary. Once the master has performed the action desired or the puppeteer has otherwise temporarily tired, the hand is gently removed from atop the master’s so not to alarm the master. Cause them too much distress and they will not be utilisable for service at a later time.

Puppeteering can be thought of as a kind of “power by proxy.” The class favourite, the corporate schmoozer, the office bitch who flirts with the boss getting people she doesn’t like fired; they are all puppeteering in one way or another. Sometimes they are pulling a string or two, at other they are operating the master almost entirely.

9.) In Closing:

As mentioned prior, when manipulating a master [playing stupid is never a bad move, people do not fear the stupid.](#) In fact they trust them too much and reveal information to them they would not entrust with a mind that appears to be more intelligent, more cunning, and more self-aware. As long as you are not stupid and merely act stupid, you cannot be exploited because your stupidity by nature of its illusion is inherently a manipulative device rather than a sincere limitation. Truly intelligent people cannot become stupid; they merely feign it out of utility. Intelligence is a state that is all but inescapable, the intelligent do not ever truly become stupid. On the flip-side if you knew someone bright and they put on an appearance of stupidity, it is circumspect [they have an agenda in play to conceal](#), the ramblings of superficial stupidity but a disguise.

Generally speaking, those who seem overtly threatening are merely posturing out of defence. A skilled

and effective Machiavellian on the attack is more likely to be a friend or romantic partner than an obvious self-declared enemy. They keep you close to monitor you, use you and influence you. They want to change a part of you so that they can best make use of your abilities, favour and social position. Are you the manipulated master or the submissive student? Appearances aren't what they seem. Machiavellian submission is at the apex of cunning.

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