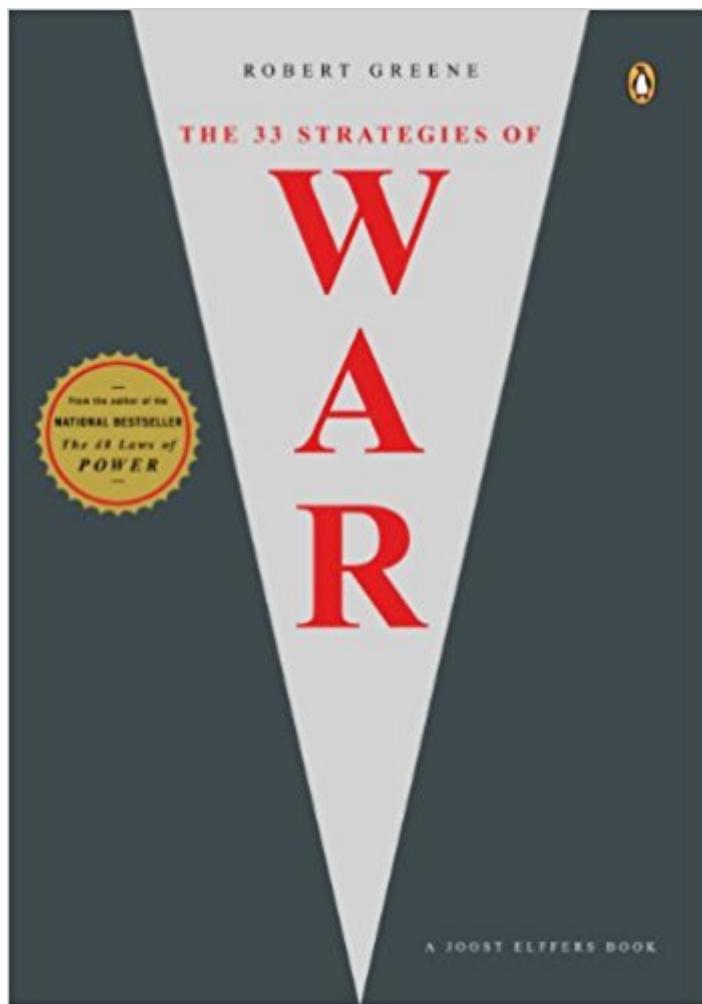


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The 33 Strategies Of War (Joost Elffers Books)



Synopsis

Brilliant distillations of the strategies of war— and the subtle social game of everyday life— by the bestselling author of *The 48 Laws of Power* Robert Greene’s groundbreaking guides, *The 48 Laws of Power*, *The Art of Seduction*, and *Mastery*, espouse profound, timeless lessons from the events of history to help readers vanquish an enemy, ensnare an unsuspecting victim, or become the greatest in your field. In *The 33 Strategies of War*, Greene has crafted an important addition to this ruthless and unique series. Spanning world civilizations, synthesizing dozens of political, philosophical, and religious texts and thousands of years of violent conflict, *The 33 Strategies of War* is a comprehensive guide to the subtle social game of everyday life informed by the most ingenious and effective military principles in war. Structured in Greene’s trademark style, *The 33 Strategies of War* is the I-Ching of conflict, the contemporary companion to Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*. Abundantly illustrated with examples from history, including the folly and genius of everyone from Napoleon to Margaret Thatcher, Shaka the Zulu to Lord Nelson, Hannibal to Ulysses S. Grant, as well as movie moguls, Samurai swordsmen, and diplomats, each of the thirty-three chapters outlines a strategy that will help you win life’s wars. Learn the offensive strategies that require you to maintain the initiative and negotiate from a position of strength, or the defensive strategies designed to help you respond to dangerous situations and avoid unwinnable wars. The great warriors of battlefields and drawing rooms alike demonstrate prudence, agility, balance, and calm, and a keen understanding that the rational, resourceful, and intuitive always defeat the panicked, the uncreative, and the stupid. An indispensable book, *The 33 Strategies of War* provides all the psychological ammunition you need to overcome patterns of failure and forever gain the upper hand.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As in his bestselling *The 48 Laws of Power*, Greene puts a modern spin on wisdom that has stood the test of history, only this time his role model is Sun Tzu rather than Machiavelli. The argument is fairly standard: despite our most noble intentions, "aggressive impulses that are impossible to ignore or repress" make military combat a fitting metaphor for getting ahead in life. Greene's advice covers everything from steeling one's mind for battle to specific defensive and offensive tactics—noteably, the final section on "dirty" warfare is one of the book's longest. Historical lessons are outlined and interpreted, with amplifying quotations crammed into the margins. Not all of the examples are drawn from the battlefield; in one section, Greene skips nimbly from Lyndon Johnson's tenacity to Julius Caesar's decisiveness, from Joan Crawford's refusal to compromise to Ted Williams's competitive drive. Alfred Hitchcock, he says, embodies "the detached-Buddha tactic" of appearing uninvolved while remaining in total control. The diversity of subject matter compensates for occasional lapses into stilted warriorese ("arm yourself with prudence, and never completely lay down your arms, not even for friends"). For those willing to embrace its martial conceit, Greene's compendium offers inspiration and entertainment in equal measure. (Jan. 23)

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Greene and "producer" Joost Elffers are the Machiavellians who brought us *The 48 Laws of Power* (1998) and *The Art of Seduction* (2001), and their latest book similarly purports to distill the profundities of history for personal gain. Unapologetically premised on Hobbesian "all that is social is war" bromides, this account collects parables of strategic success and error from a diverse cast of military and nonmilitary historical figures. Its lessons are presented self-help-book style in chapters titled "Maneuver Them into Weakness" and "Seem to Work for the Interests of Others While Furthering Your Own" and flanked by a withering barrage of reiterative marginalia. Most books this cynical (and this repetitive) need a sense of humor to be readable, something this book apparently lacks. Its quasi-spiritual tone, though perhaps increasing its attractiveness to the impressionable, is also trying at times. But those readers who push through to the end (or flip ahead) will find a curiously contemporary section on modern terrorism cloaking a surprisingly specific commentary on

al-Qaeda and antiterrorism strategy. Politics by other means? Brendan DriscollCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

To date I've read everything Robert Greene has in print and, much to my surprise, this turned out to be the most useful volume of all. Greene's other books were immensely helpful for clearing my head of cobwebs since, along with everyone else, I'm forced to negotiate our brave new world of cutthroat tactics and social Darwinists, while trying to keep a roof over my head. Without going into detail, let me simply say *The 33 Strategies of War* taught me exactly what I needed to know in order to adequately discourage the bullying I have had to endure at work for the past three years. Until I can find another job -- not all wars are winnable -- I can now keep this workplace vampire's demeaning behaviors in check. I recommend all of Greene's books, but this one may well be the best investment of the lot.

In 30 minutes of reading- have learned many of my weaknesses and things I was doing very, very wrong - need to erase my public persona's and start over. As good or better than Sun Tzu.

I think that you must strive to get along with everyone around you, but this is a good book for the business owners out there because if you own a business your competition wants you to go out of business that is the truth so you must be ready, but ideally DO NOT treat other businesses as your enemies!

Though I do not buy into the book's opening premise that life is essentially a zero-sum, win-lose affair that puts us into perpetual conflict with each other, there is much to be learned from this extensive work on how human conflict in general and wars in particular are fought and won. It basically lays out thirty three very concrete strategies to deploy when being in a conflict, each with a direct introduction on how what it is about, when and how to deploy it, and a historical example of it being used successfully. For me the historical examples alone are worth the price of the book, which I acquired in audio version and whose narration is sure to keep you entertained when driving, if nothing else. These elaborate examples are actually the backbone of the book, for without them the principles would have remained abstract, their applicability hard to see. The reader should be mindful though, that this is more the work of a scholar than a business writer or self-help guru, and the author is more intent on providing deep understanding on the science of war than practical

to-dos, which the reader is left to derive for him/herself based his own understanding of the principles and individual circumstances. Also, as the book's historical examples attest, the strategies of war are value neutral. There is no distinction between a just war and an unjust one, and the strategies work just as well for people I would consider heroes (i.e. Gandhi, George Marshall, FDR) as well as mass murderers and self-serving opportunists of any kind. Since this science of war is already "out there", and unscrupulous, conflictive individuals would have no qualms about using it, the strategies laid out here should help us guard against such people. For the audio version of the book, it would have helped if the sections of each chapter (Keys to Warfare, Understand, Reversal, etc.) were explained beforehand, as their intent is not clear to the listener at first, and overrepetition of some phrases and expressions such as "the height of strategic wisdom", "the biggest ... in ... history" should be avoided so as not to wear out the listener's patience, but other than that the narrator's pitch and pace were excellent and the abridgement did not seem to leave any essential elements out.

While the Art of Seduction and The 48 Laws of Power are great, The 33 Strategies of War brings you into the common sense of the realities of life. If you are to get anything out of this work, it is the fact that we are frequently facing unpleasant situations we choose to ignore and that an attitude of conflict resolution, no not necessarily pleasant or fair, is a must for survival in this world. I'd like to think we can live in peace, that we can resolve our differences in a civil way, that things and circumstances are fair and favorable most of the time, but this scenario is by far not the scenario in which most of us live our lives. This book brings one a little more awareness of what is going on in the world and why we struggle so much in the face of the only constant which is change, as we fail manyatimes to adapt clinging to a preconceived notion of reality from whatever tradition this may come from (religion, customs, culture, etc.) This and other strategies are portrayed in the book. I give it four stars, because there is no magical solution for any worldview or successful approach to a problem. Finally, this book made me reaffirm my realization that no book is the solution to any problem. As your person, your life, your circumstances will be unique and never identical, the only solution to problems is living through them by facing them using your own wits and your own experience.

This book is excellent! It was my first book written by Robert Greene. I wanted to write a book myself on the same topics. But after reading this informative and wonderfully organize piece, I asked myself 'Why?' After reading how each strategy worked for those in past battles, history plus

use, there was nothing left to say but "perfect". Each step of the way, the information not found in general history class comes alive. The information becomes useful. What is hidden from view becomes alive in the present. I keep this and this authors other books well within my reach. I realize once reading, man will always be man. What does one choose to become with what he has been given. Thank you.

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