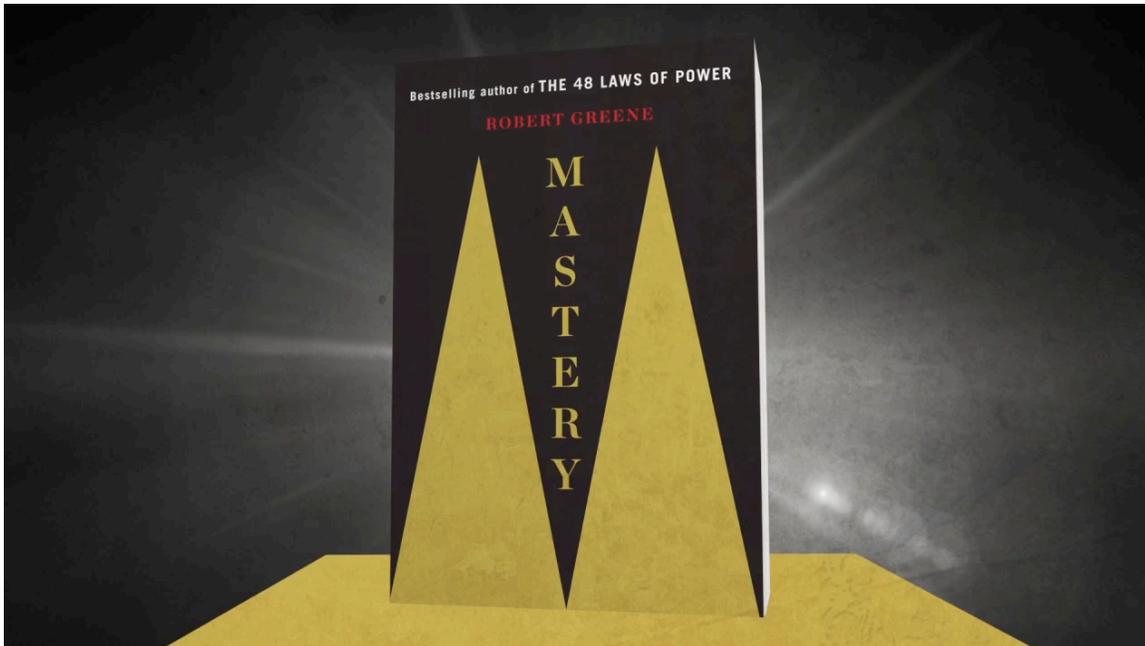


## TREW Marketing Blog | Mastery: Master Your Craft and Grow Your Business Taking Tips from Historical Masters

To truly master any subject, a person normally believes he or she should merely have to study the material over and over again to become knowledgeable on the subject matter. While this is a great way to learn about a topic, the way to become a master of any field goes further than that. As Leonardo da Vinci believed, “Learning never exhausts the mind.”

I recently read [Robert Greene's \*Mastery\*](#), a book written in 2012 that analyzes and documents traits of brilliant historical figures who were considered masters of their craft, ranging from Mozart to Henry Ford, as well as more contemporary people, such as Temple Grandin. This led Greene to recognize many similarities of the traits one must have to be a master, including many that may not be readily expected.



Before we analyze some key points in *Mastery*, it's important to discuss why being a master is important in any field – whether that is marketing, technology, sports, or entertainment. While it is widely [recognized](#) that competition is good for business, [The Guardian](#) does note, “when starting a business, there is very little in business that is truly unique. Focus on being better than the competition instead of looking for something new.”

Competition is very important when starting a business, but finding a way to be better than your competitors in whatever niche you occupy is crucial to success. How can you be better than the e-commerce firm across town? What can you learn about product manufacturing that the leader has missed? How can you get a leg up on the sales team that keeps narrowly beating your profit margin by snagging that last client for the quarter? The answer is simple – focus on being better than the competition; focus on

mastery. Let's see what wisdom Greene conveys that can help us focus on being better than the competition in *Mastery*.

**“Our natural tendency is to project onto other people our own belief and value systems, in ways in which we are not even aware.”**

This quote by Greene particularly rings true for all of us in marketing. We often feel that it is vital to make sure that the position of each of our client connects to the consumers. Although this of course is very important, the next step is what can make or break the consumer connection – [connecting the consumer](#) to the position of the client. Even if we do a perfect job detailing exactly where a client stands in their industry, if their position doesn't connect with the consumers in their niche, it's a misfire. A step back must be taken first, a step that ensures the client positioning fully aligns with what the consumer in that industry needs. These consumer needs should be the basis of the client's position – not the other way around.



**“We live in the world of a sad separation that began some five hundred years ago when art and science split apart.”**

This is one of the reasons why all of us at TREW do what we do – to combine creative reasoning with logical analytics and tactics. While analytics can really convey the science behind what is or is not working well in a [marketing plan](#) for a business, if this is not paired with a creative strategy plan. The act of taking this research one step further and implementing a marketing plan using this information is the ideal route for any situation, proving the need to combine art and science once again.

**“Everything that happens to you is a form of instruction if you pay attention.”**

This goes along the classic adage of learning from failures but takes it one step further. Don't simply learn from failures – learn from everything that happens to your business. Take something that was said in a meeting with a partner yesterday and use that as a tip for where to take your business today. Asking questions about what went well or could have ran more smoothly is crucial to achieving more success with the next attempt. Take any information that comes your way as a learning experience to grow your business.



**“Become who you are by learning who you are.”**

This quote is actually over 2,600 years old, taken from Pindar, an ancient Greek poet. Despite being a little philosophical on a surface level – something that has always been

common among every generation of poets – this adage can be applied to any company today. A company cannot simply decide to exist and then exist; there must be a [foundation there](#). A depth of not only internal values but also an external position of what space the business will occupy in the market. A business must recognize exactly what the company is meant to be before existing. The result of this mindset is an incredibly consistent brand image and culture that can exist across every platform of the business, from social media to letterheads. In this digital age, a company's foundation becomes the brand image, but that foundation must be built before the rest of the business.

All of these insights that Greene uncovers make it clear how much we can learn from the past, as well as from the present. The traits that make leaders and thinkers great can also make a business or marketing plan great. Understanding your consumer belief system, marrying art and science, using life as an instruction manual, and learning exactly what the foundation of your business is all lead down the path of becoming better than your competition.

Once you realize how to apply these insights from *Mastery* to marketing and business, you will realize how important it is to simply pay attention. Maybe a fortune cookie will influence a business idea or maybe a billboard you drive by on the way home from the office will inspire that next step in winning the client. If you are now inspired to grow your business as a master of your craft, start with our [Smart Marketing for Engineers: Build Your Foundation e-book](#).