

Essential Library for Life and Business

I created this map after seeing the JJ-Verse in Fast Company, showing all the connections of JJ Abrams in movies, TV, comics, etc. I was also doing sales consulting and was using most of these books and how I arranged them in Trello led me to want to graphically tie them together.

It looks a bit like the Twister mat. When I feel my capabilities are lacking, or I'm struggling in certain areas, I pick one and reread or re-listen.

I do read a ton, but these books are at the core - and I'd rather attempt to master a few - go narrow and deep.

Here's the key:

- Audiobooks are marked with a star
- Print books are marked with a diamond
- Red = Essential
- Orange = Sales and Marketing
- Purple = Business
- Silver = Resilience
- Blue = Mindset
- Teal = Daily Readings / Writings
- Larger circles indicate the more impactful books, to me. YMMV.
- The connections are how I see them. There are obviously more.

1. Essentials.

- a. *Learned Optimism: Martin Seligman.*
 - i. This book, without a doubt, saved my life 10+ years ago. I have given it as gifts probably 20 times. I was drawn to the homework in the chapters, and worked it diligently from 9pm to midnight during this dark period. I taught me how to handle adversity with actual skills and not affirmations.
- b. *The Art Of Exceptional Living, Jim Rohn, Unabridged Audio*
 - i. I learned that I didn't learn everything in college. And that vacuum of knowledge I was missing was vast. "Work harder on yourself, than your job", is my favorite quote. I recommend the unabridged audio because he covers goal setting in Chapter 10.
- c. *DISC Assessment*
 - i. I used to teach this course in a previous job. Myers-Briggs is more well known, and may be more accurate, but DISC is all about behaviors, and those are things we can see. Tony Robbins has a free one on his website. This taught me how to adapt my communication style to others. I'm an I/D if you're playing along at home.

2. Sales and Marketing

- a. *Let's Get Real or Let's Not Play, Khalsa and Illig*
 - i. My first introduction to relational sales, continually trying to kill a deal, and talking about price early and often. I remember being so nervous the first time I used the techniques in a sales meeting - and they worked.
- b. *Little Red Book, Gitomer*
 - i. Simple, fun, effective. Basic rules, 101 techniques for creating sales relationships.
- c. *To Sell Is Human, Dan Pink*
 - i. A history of how selling has changed, covering everything from improv to the Fuller Brush man, and how we are all in sales. One piece of my journey to improv.
- d. *Purple Cow, Seth Godin*
 - i. I read a few pages every morning to think differently when it comes to marketing. Seth puts forth some amazing concepts, and the challenge for me is to create and replicate what he is describing.
- e. *How To Win Friends and Influence People, Dale Carnegie.*
 - i. Timeless, and I can't add any new insight that hasn't already been written about this book.
- f. *22 Immutable Laws of Marketing, Ries and Trout*
 - i. My used copy is from the 1980's but the Laws they describe surrounding markets, marketing and the consumer's mindspace were fascinating.

3. Business

- a. *Influence, Science and Practice, Robert Cialdini*
 - i. I grouped this under business, instead of sales and marketing, as more of a what to watch out for in negotiations, purchases, advertising. During the listen of the audiobook, I would switch back and forth between amusement and mild anger about how we have all been influenced / manipulated.
- b. *4 Hour Workweek, Tim Ferriss*
 - i. I really took the business automation to heart, and designing myself out of the systems. The extended international travel section really opened my eyes to possibilities.
- c. *E-Myth Revisited, Michael E. Gerber*
 - i. I have to admit, I struggled with the print copy of this, and worked to make it through the audiobook, but the concepts of working on the business and not in it, were valuable.
- d. *Power Of Broke, Daymond John*
 - i. I've always looked at business in terms of how much of my product do I have to sell to pay for this expense. Daymond's book is full of examples of people starting with nothing and working, working, working - and coming close to quitting, and succeeding over time. How to do something with less - or nothing.
- e. *Extreme Ownership, Jocko Willink, Leif Babin*
 - i. I absolutely loved the themes of personal accountability and responsibility described from the perspective of the authors, Navy SEALs, with the ultimate penalty for failure on the line.
- f. *Checklist Manifesto, Atul Gawande*
 - i. A study into the mortality and morbidity rates in an ER., the author describes how a 5-7 item checklist (Do or Verify, and the distinction) can help eliminate mistakes. Has really helped my planning and crisis management.

4. **Resilience.** I started studying this concept when I was struggling. How to bend and not break in the face of adversity. How to look at things. What to do, and how to think and act.

a. *Nerve: Poise Under Pressure, Taylor Clark*

i. A study of fear, the biology of the amygdala, and how to understand and attempt to minimize fear.

b. *Deep Survival, Lawrence Gonzales*

i. Nerve led me to this title - an analysis of survival, life and death situations, and who lived, who died, and why. Be. Here. Now.

c. *Tribe, Sebastian Junger*

i. Junger talks about the human need for companionship, group dynamics and relying and trusting others.

d. *War of Art, Steven Pressfield*

i. This book opened my eyes that the creative process is a struggle - even for the most talented. I thought art, music, advertising was supposed to be easy, and showed me how to embrace the grind to get something creative done.

5. Mindset

a. *Ego is the Enemy, Ryan Holiday*

i. A Tim Ferriss podcast on Stoicism led me to Ryan's books. This was first, and the explanation of being humble - but not a pushover - further helped my sales career, and personal and professional relationships.

b. *UnF*** Yourself, Gary John Bishop*

i. I would call this a tough love book, and 2 years ago had to stop listening to it - because I wasn't strong enough in the moment to face the climb. I love his Scottish no-bullshit approach.

c. *The Subtle Art of Not Giving A F***, Mark Manson*

i. Not what the title suggests - not caring about nothing - but saving your cares and worries for what really matters in this life.

d. *Obstacle Is The Way, Ryan Holiday*

i. This title helped me frame challenges as opportunities for growth and learning. Another perspective shaping book.

6. Daily Activities

a. *The Daily Stoic, Ryan Holiday*

i. A single page each day with a lesson from Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus and others. Simple, gentle, reminders.

b. *Gratitude Journal*

i. The method I originally heard about was to write 3 things I'm grateful for in the morning, and 3 amazing things that happened during the day in the evening. My current practice is a combination of the two in the morning.