Did you ever think there was a book in you just waiting to be coaxed out? I did for years, and when I agreed with the American Bar Association (ABA) to write this book, I felt vindicated, peer recognized, and highly enabled.

For the past six years, teaching LinkedIn on my own, in my own way, I have shared a lot of quality time with other professionals. The makeup of the audiences kept aggregating around knowledge practitioners: consultants, attorneys, certified public accountants (CPAs) and finance pros, insurance producers, and financial planners, and so as not to leave anyone out, anyone selling tangible products or intangible intellectual services to those who need them. My work centers on helping others in these fields vying with a large number of competitors but who needed to answer central, self-defining questions posed to potential clients:

- “Why choose me?”
- “What unique values and skills can I provide you?”
- “How can I demonstrate my worth to you, in considering me?”

It’s a hard decision for a consumer of professional services: how to decide whom to hire someone just like you (without a number of referrals by mutual trusted colleagues) or via a specific keyword search on Google, and/or on LinkedIn (if they even know they can do so).

Then on the short list of potential considerations, how does the consumer select you?

First they want to read about you. Before anyone will believe in you enough to place his or her future well-being in your hands and trust
your professional guidance, no matter what you do, you must know yourself first and express your value to others. Muddy self-expression, or a résumé outlining your past, does not, and will not, win the game.

Why be like the others, who tell the minimum to get by on LinkedIn, only to further complain that they get nothing back from LinkedIn? No surprise about them. They are your competitors. Leave their myopia behind in the dust as you zoom by.

The key to making an impression on LinkedIn is clarity of message—stepping out from the noisy crowd to have others take notice of something unique you say and offer. Make it catchy, but do not expect anyone to fully absorb it the first couple of times.

Having said that, I am not limiting you to just explaining what you do and who you are, but I want you to go much further, deeper. Answering what you do and who you do it for does not deliver the emotional and intellectual impact that is implicit in higher levels of self-description:

- Why do you do what you do?
- With an extra layer, how do others confirm why you do what you do?

Better than who and what is why and how. Someone grasping your why takes repeating that theme in different places and in various ways or having others do it for you by opining how you accomplish your why as reinforcement.

Why and how work interchangeably when crafted well. The hard part is expressing it.

This overall approach is broadly influenced by Simon Sinek in his valued book Start with Why and accompanying blog and website.1

For the sake of clarity of voice and brevity of concept for my book, let’s define why going forward as the acronym WYDWYD: why you do what you do.

And later in discussing endorsements and recommendations, we talk about HYDWyD (how you do what you do), as others echo your

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Introduction

WYDWYD with their viewpoint and perspective upon your why from their own lens and experience with you.

While we are speaking about others saying how, I want you to know that you have absolute control over your why and over what others say and place on your LinkedIn profile, your how. Nothing is added to your LinkedIn profile without your consent, and you always have the absolute and final say over anything that brands you on LinkedIn.

In this book I show you how to properly manage and finesse your brand on LinkedIn. This self-monitoring is essential for everyone, but with special focus on attorneys and certain financial professionals who follow the stringent ethical and compliance guidelines in their industries.

Now let’s put the focus back on you, the professional practitioner, who probably never sat through a personal marketing course in college or grad school. Marketing oneself is rarely offered in law schools today, amazingly. See the opinion blog post lamenting this situation at http://kevin.lexblog.com/2016/04/19/law-schools-slow-to-teach-social-media-and-blogging/.

If you did attend such a course, no matter how long or short a time ago, I assure you that marketing has changed a lot in the past years. And in the past year. And it’s still changing.

Further, I suspect you are personally reluctant to talk about yourself in terms of WYDWYD, worried about sounding ego-centered, or have paralyzed yourself and your brand, unnerved at expressing your central branding attributes to potential clients, after years of finger-wagging and admonishment.

When I first started coaching clients, I saw a need to perfect my special sauce, attuned to professional people I train, coach, lecture, and cajole; any of my LinkedIn concepts is designed to help them get out of their own way, past the parents and teachers who stymied them, to express to potential clients WYDWYD and get others to add HYDWYD, all told, to surpass their competition.

That’s a lot of emotional branding for a professional to adapt at once. And for most, it comes out reluctantly, slowly, and irregularly. Eventually with some discussion, it becomes more fluid, and with my editing, better refined. The “a-ha” moment occurs when the professional actually enjoys
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self-defining with words, concepts, actions, anecdotes, and graphics—an editable mélange of experience painted in a self-actuating way.

Over time I kept meeting professional practitioners who held more than one terminal degree or multiple professional certificate designations: attorneys with Certified Financial Planner (CFP) certification, CPAs who were trained in the law, financiers with either, or both a CPA and law degree.

And I encountered others operating more than one business at a time, as I do myself, so I attracted other owners of multiple businesses in diverse industries, needing to mentally and emotionally tie the business interests together for others to understand them as the de facto head of the firms. Their/my quandary: how can you show others the why behind the diversity of professional interests just as clearly as the owner personally sees his or her combined missions?

I sat through dozens of seminars, read the books, scanned the e-zine articles, and met personally with coaches, trainers, speakers, and authors. I knew that other how-to books, cheat sheets, and quick seminars on “four major social media platforms and how to use them for marketing, taught in an hour” were dated, or cursory, and certainly too generalized to a low common denominator of understanding. You have seen them advertised—too many social media generalizations crammed into a single session, probably best left to one social media platform per session, or better yet, a strategically designed session attuned to the needs of just one professional practice. Yet there remains the whole audience of underserved dual designation holders who need to learn personal LinkedIn marketing techniques. There is still no other place to get that.

After a discussion over breakfast in New York City in late summer 2015, the editors at the ABA were open to the concept of my book. I was pleased. I have a living laboratory of business pros in my daily work to observe and analyze the best ways to help them. This book serves to solve the issues I find in that research.

Is this the book you need?

Can you write beautiful, professional work on complex topics but when coerced to self-define your value proposition and personal brand, you hem and haw? Has your career brought together vital skills that others do not possess and that remain valued in our economy? Are
you a dual professional designation holder? Do you consider yourself a multi-preneur?

Then, you have much to gain from what I am about to write about. But you must agree, “I shall willingly talk about myself on LinkedIn.” Repeat that.

As we explore the LinkedIn marketing tips and techniques that have proven successful for my professional practitioner clients (single- and dual-designation holders alike) and have been perfected over the past six years, I encourage you to take style notes and translate these ideas through your own lens and voice, in your own writing style, to your own professional personality. Use your unique ways to answer WYDWYD with contributed examples of HYDWYD. Experiment and tweak these concepts continuously, appealing to your clientele and practitioners in ancillary areas of expertise to build more business.

I always say everyone I encounter is amazing in his or her own way, but how do you stand out? You have to look amazing-er!

That's the purpose of this book. If you ever sat through one of my classes or webinars, you know I shoot straight from the hip—honest and direct. And I try to make it fun. OK, not every joke is a rib splitter. This book is no different—me speaking to you, short chapters on digestible topics to keep you focused, and some themes repeated in different ways in different chapters.

Each chapter in this book is designed to offer you, in a very short reading duration, some practicable self-marketing techniques to consider. I want you to implement the tips in your own voice and style of communication. No two of you will be alike.

This is not a “plug-and-play-LinkedIn” book or a “how-to-do-it-in-three-minutes-a-day” type of guidebook. I try to keep the charts and “how-to-do-this” to a minimum. Besides, I wouldn't author one of those how-to-books: first, we already have too many of them, and second, with Microsoft acquiring LinkedIn, the whole book would otherwise be obsolete before printing. That would still be true even if there were no Microsoft acquisition, given the way LinkedIn routinely changes its formats, as was recently introduced in the newest user interface on desktop screens. And everything I am showing you to brand yourself in this book is available to you, without taking a subscription to LinkedIn.
Yes, I know you can figure out LinkedIn yourself (this book, by the way, is not for dummies). Mostly, if LinkedIn changes a section, the graphic look may change but the end result does not, so that’s a good thing for all of us. That means the conceptual need for that LinkedIn section remains eternal—it’s the look and feel that were polished.

Likewise, the self-branding concepts I bring you in this book are time tested and timeless. They may serve you in many other endeavors over the years and are certainly not confined to a certain version of LinkedIn, or just to LinkedIn itself. Think broadly and creatively. You know your audience.

I hope you have fun and discover new ways to express WYD WYD, and tell the professional world your values and skills. You need to.

Let’s get started.