Foreword

Professor Marx has written a superb little book. It is a thoughtful guide to sophisticated techniques for making your sentences work better. In fact, it might have been subtitled “Advanced Sentence-Writing for Lawyers.”

Do we—the lawyers—really need help in writing sentences? Yes, we do, because so much depends on our sentences: money, rights, property, and more. And so many people scrutinize our sentences: opposing counsel, clients, judges, and our bosses. With so much on the line and with so many audiences, we need to write better sentences than lawyers historically have. We need more training and more tools. This book will help.

But even though I can rightly describe the book as sophisticated and advanced, it is straightforward, too. The guidance Professor Marx gives is written in the kinds of sentences he advocates: planned and polished yet crisp and direct. He follows his own advice about parallelism, modifiers, and noun clauses. He recommends and then uses the colon, the semicolon, and the dash, and he uses them well. You can, too, because you will learn a great deal from the
many examples. But you can and should imitate Professor Marx’s writing style, too. All of us should.

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