

Book review

The Passionate Professional - Creating value, success, prosperity

Kirribilli Business Network

By Linda Julian. Published by Julian Midwinter & Associates Pty Ltd, Mosman, 2007. Paperback, 252 pages. RRP \$29.50. ISBN 9780 6464 5926 4. Available online at www.julianmidwinter.com.au

Linda Julian is one of Australia's more prominent business development consultants. She periodically and freely conveys her knowledge and experience through 'eTips' – a concise email communication that encapsulates advice about various aspects of business development as applied within the professional services firm environment.

As it happens, the latest of these arrived in my inbox today, and I recommend you go to www.julianmidwinter.com.au and subscribe to this free offering if you haven't already.

The Passionate Professional is essentially a compilation of Linda's 'eTips' pieces over the years, so if you aren't yet a subscriber this is an opportunity to assemble the 'back catalogue' in hard copy – one piece to a page or so.

From the perspective of a marketing professional, there's probably nothing new in this book, and that's exactly the point. As Julian points out in the introduction, it has been noted that her advice "is all common sense". As she further observes, how often is common sense actually not that common?

Therefore, there is a degree of repetition throughout this book in terms of the content and the concepts conveyed, but this probably reflects the original source of the material and the need for the basics to be constantly reinforced.

Where *The Passionate Professional* has great application is in the ongoing business development and client relationship management education and coaching of professional services practitioners.

Marketing management professionals may be well aware of the principles, processes and nuances of positioning the firm, pursuing differentiation and identifying how to add value to clients in scientific and creative terms.

But in law firms, accountancy practices and business consultancies (among others), under the umbrella of firm-wide integrated marketing management it is ultimately up to the partners and practitioners to manage the client relationships and deliver the specialist technical service.

A paradox is that while the information and ideas contained in this book are eminently understandable by practitioners (it is totally free of marketing jargon), they almost certainly won't have the time or inclination to read it in preference to focusing on their billings, or recuperating before taking on that next big matter.

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However, as an aide-memoire for marketing managers and business developers to reinforce concepts to practitioners with the added credibility of an informed third party (show me the lawyer that doesn't value consultancy), *The Passionate Professional* represents great value. Julian suggests that her material provides ready-made content for your next retreat or as the basis for marketing discussion between practitioners and their mentor or coach, and I would suggest that is a most appropriate application.

For the professional services marketer, it is useful to be reminded that your own internal

clients – the lawyers, accountants, engineers, architects, etc. – haven't had the benefit of years of formal education studying the intricacies of marketing and subsequent experience in the application of this art and science.

Although it is back to basics, *The Passionate Professional* emphasises that many behaviours and thought patterns that are obvious and natural to marketing professionals are not necessarily apparent or habitual to the practitioner

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Book review

Linda Hazelton Legal Marketing Association Resource Committee

Linda Julian is a Sydney-based consultant to professional services firms and is often, according to her web site, introduced as "Australia's answer to David Maister." Her book is a series of short essays or advice pieces, organized by topics, and gleaned from the author's prior articles, presentations, e-tips, and columns. The book is written so that if you have only a few minutes to read and reflect, the organization of the material makes that possible. As she notes, the bite-size "chapters" are "digestible doses which can readily be applied in everyday professional life.

The design of the book is compelling and engaging, and you are drawn to pick it up for that reason alone. Although the book is directed primarily at the service provider, there are many insightful questions that marketers can use in working with attorneys. Her chapter, "Tender Debriefing," (and for those of us who are Americans, this means of course proposal or RFP debriefing rather than a gentle approach), is worth the price along. Some of the questions she suggests asking are:

- "Why did you go to tender?"
- "How do you identify which firms to invite?"
- "What were your selection criteria and how were they weighted?"
- "Did your views change during the tender process?"
- "What value adds were you offered?"

- And many more....

Some of the chapters focused exclusively on what to do, without guidance as to how to do it—but that's where seasoned in-house professionals will add value. Use Julian's book as a guideline for what to do, and then implement those suggestions. Other chapters are filled with great suggestions and wonderful questions.

Book chapters include: What Clients Want; Building Your Profile: Establishing Trust Relationships; Strategy and Planning; Growing Through Referrals and Networks; Creating New Clients; Winning Competitions: Tenders, Proposals, Bids and Pitches; Practical Business Development Tools and Collateral; Business Development Behaviours; Rewards: Pricing and Leveraging Value; Sustaining and Expanding Client Relationships; Doing Well in Difficult Times; Mobilising and Energizing Your Team; and Tracking Your Success.

For a relatively new marketer or an attorney, the book is a must have. For more senior marketers, the book provides a valuable series of reminders of what to do and brilliant questions to use in guiding attorneys.

Author: Linda Hazelton LMA Resource Committee

Published Date: 06/01/2008

Testimonials

“Highly relevant, challenging but refreshingly straightforward. Linda’s weekly stream of tips has encouraged me to run the extra mile in delivering quality service and developing closer communication with and understanding of our clients and their needs. Thank you.”

Andrew MacGeoch, Partner, Johnson Stokes & Master, Hong Kong

“Linda has the Midas touch when it comes to turning lacklustre professional practices into highly profitable money machines. With her unique combination of practical know-how and proven methods, Linda helps her clients win new business while other firms pack their tents to go home. Linda’s keen strategies – and ability to quickly identify and solve problems – has made her law marketing’s shining star. Whether you’re reading Linda’s eTips or paying a well-deserved fee, you can be sure that Linda’s skills and insights will return your investment of time, money and energy several fold.”

Trey Ryder, Lawyer Marketing Specialist, Arizona USA

“In this busy world of information overload, Linda Julian’s excellent eTips offer refreshingly short but punchy ideas for all professionals who are passionate about having an impact and making a difference.”

Simon Tupman, Author, *Why Lawyers Should Eat Bananas*

“Thoughtful, pragmatic, practical, well researched. The distillation of years of experience of a practitioner who understands what makes successful law firms tick.”

Greg Dwyer, Director – Practice Development, College of Law, NSW

“... valuable, practical guidance for any professional firm ... refreshingly clear and succinct.”

Frank Maher, LegalRisk, UK

“Linda Julian’s decades of experience and her own passion for helping lawyers create prosperous practices are obvious from the first page of this sizeable book. Her biggest achievement here is the way she presents important sales & marketing concepts to a professional audience that may be unfamiliar with them, using an accessible and readable style that respects the reader’s intellectual capability whilst also challenging them to think more laterally about the clients they serve (or would like to serve). Highly recommended for any expert professional, but particularly any lawyer, who tends to struggle with the realities of marketing and selling.”

Robyn Haydon, Principal Consultant, Winning Words and author of *The Shredder Test: the Australian guide to writing winning proposals*

“Linda Julian writes with authority about the passionate professional because she is one herself. Her suggestions are also powerfully practical. She reminds us of the simple yet critical things a lawyer must do to nourish client relationships and get rave reviews and referrals.”

Ann Lee Gibson, Ph.D., Ann Lee Gibson Consulting