**Polish Your Digital Presence for the Hybrid Work Environment**

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The new year is an opportune time to review your digital presence. Consider that your clients, contacts and referral sources, who were primarily working from remote locations, may now be returning to their respective offices and attending in-person events. Having met you or re-connected with you, they will look for you online.

Take the time to look over and polish your digital assets, so that they continue to display your skills and the focus of your practice in the best light.

As with marketing in general, highlight the benefit that you bring to the potential client with liberal use of the words YOU and YOUR. Make it clear that the reader and their problems are your primary concern.

Start with your LinkedIn profile and your headline. The sole purpose of your headline is to ensure that you are found by someone searching for an attorney who does X.

By default, LinkedIn uses the title of your current position in the headline slot. If you are an Attorney, Partner or Founder at your firm, that is not particularly helpful for someone conducting a search.

Take, for example, Wyoming, the least populous state; a search for these titles reveals the following results:

* Attorney: 1,600
* Partner: 198
* Founder: 18

In other words, it is highly unlikely that you will be found in a search for Attorney or Partner, although you may stand a chance as a Founder. However, in states with a larger population, those numbers will be significantly higher.

Instead, reframe your headline by imagining you are in a conversation with someone at a networking event. You would explain:

* What you do;
* The value you bring to the client; and
* How you might help the listener or someone in their circle.

Now, fill in these blanks regarding the problem that you solve for distinct clients:

(Type of) attorney helps (type of client) achieve (type of result) by (specific action step) to (problem that must be solved).

For example:

* Trust and Estate attorney helps young families protect their children’s future by creating wills to achieve peace of mind.
* Personal injury attorney helps people hurt in auto accidents be compensated for injuries, lost property and lost wages by holding drivers accountable.
* Intellectual property and contract attorney helps technology start-ups protect ideas by filing patents and drafting employee contracts with nondisclosure agreements.

Clearly, these headlines are more specific than Attorney and Partner. They include key words that are likely to be used in a search by potential clients who need legal advice to address a burning concern.

Note that you can accomplish this well within the 220 characters available for this field on your LinkedIn profile.

Give the rest of your profile a good once-over using the same criteria cited above regarding what you do, how you create value for the client and how you might be helpful to them or someone they know.

As the world’s largest professional database, LinkedIn is a massive networking opportunity. Review the connections you’ve gathered over the years and determine how recently you interacted with them. Do you comment on and share each other’s posts? Or are they simply a person you met at a conference a few years ago, and nothing ever came of that conversation?

Take the opportunity of wishing these folks well in the new year to reconnect and invite a catch-up conversation. Or, if you’ve moved on, you can delete them from your connections; LinkedIn will not notify them that you have dropped them.

Now, who will you *add* to your contacts? You probably have a gold mine of 5,000 people you could connect with on LinkedIn.

* Colleagues from your former firm and clerkship
* Classmates from law school
* People who served with you on a bar association committee
* People on the other side of a transaction or litigation
* People whose business cards you’ve stacked in that drawer

Find them on LinkedIn and invite them to connect with you using a personalized invitation that shows you read their profile. (Do NOT use the default request, which makes you appear to be a badge hunter amassing names.)

Once they accept the invitation, email them directly to set a time to talk by phone or video call, or get a coffee together. People are eager to see a familiar face after working in isolation for a long time.

If you don’t yet have a newsletter, start one, at least quarterly. If you DO have a newsletter, make sure ALL the issues are posted on your website.

Imagine an idea you discussed in May would be helpful to someone who just met you. They may subscribe to your newsletter now that you are on their radar, but they will not see the previous issues *unless you make all of them accessible*. Treat all your subscribers equally and do not hide prior newsletters.

Finally, create a quiz, tip sheet or list of FIVE best practices that you give away for FREE to your website’s visitors. Make sure that it is only one page and includes your name, email, phone number and website URL. You may allow visitors to download the giveaway, or you may require them to provide their email address, so that the tip sheet or quiz may be sent to them. (Check with your state bar association regarding any requirement to label the giveaway as *Attorney Advertising* and your ability to use visitors’ email addresses for a follow-up later.) This freebie may travel widely; it can be shared with a supervisor, an employee, a family member or a neighbor; your practical and thoughtful insights may motivate this secondary reader to call you.

At the start of the new year, these simple steps to polish your digital presence will set you on the path to greater visibility by making you more accessible. With your updated LinkedIn headline, people you meet in person will find you online and confirm you are the person you say you are.

Through your expanded outreach to connections, former colleagues will recall you as the person they knew before and may rekindle memories and conversations. Firm up that connection with an in-person chat, when possible.

With your free giveaway, you initiate the conversation with people who review your website, and with your newsletter, you keep it going.

All these elements of your digital presence will support your outreach at in-person and virtual events as you grow your practice in a hybrid environment.

**For more information** about improving your networking skills, register now for Janet’s upcoming PLI program, [**Effective Networking: Improve Your Success in a Hybrid World**](https://www.pli.edu/programs/Effective-Networking--Improve-Your-Success-in-a-Hybrid-World?t=live&p=342927), scheduled for January 28, 2022.

**Janet Falk** is the head of [**Falk Communications and Research**](http://www.janetlfalk.com/) in New York City. She provides media relations and marketing communications services to law firms and consultants. Janet will speak on [**Effective Networking: Improve Your Success in a Hybrid World**](https://www.pli.edu/programs/Effective-Networking--Improve-Your-Success-in-a-Hybrid-World?t=live) on January 28, 2022. She previously presented [**Tips to Improve Your Remote Networking Success**](https://www.pli.edu/programs/tips-to-improve-your-remote-networking-success?t=ondemand&p=318933) and [**How to Ethically Introduce Yourself to Reporters and Speak about Your Practice, Cases and Other Matters**](https://www.pli.edu/programs/ethically-introduce-yourself-to-reporters?t=ondemand&p=309750), available from PLI Programs On Demand.

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