

Michele DeStefano's new book, "[New Suits: Appetite for Disruption in the Legal World](#)," with Guenther Dobrauz-Saldapenna, explores the unprecedented change in the legal industry fueled by advancing technology, new business models, and altered client expectations. DeStefano is the founder of [LawWithoutWalls](#), the multi-disciplinary, international think-tank of over 1000 lawyers, business professionals, entrepreneurs, and law and business students that collaborate to hone new skillsets and mindsets and create innovations at the intersection of law, business, and technology.

Q: What's the big takeaway?

Although the future may require lawyers to put on New Suits (learn new skills, employ new methods of service, and play new roles), it represents an enormous opportunity to reinvent ourselves for our own, our clients', and our profession's benefit.

Q: Why did you and Dr. Dobrauz set out to write this book?

The ever-changing global legal ecosystem is a little bit like a jungle: complicated to navigate yet vibrant and flourishing. We wrote this book to provide an international, multi-cultural map of the legal jungle. Legal thought leaders from around the world come together to describe the dynamic state of the current legal marketplace and to explore a viable future for the legal profession: a future in which we deliver not only more efficient but more effective and comprehensive services and solutions that help our clients and, at the same time, increase access to justice for all. This book is designed to commemorate where we have been, where we are headed, and the why and how of both. This is because the future, unlike a jungle, is not formidable. The future is filled with fascinating and unfolding opportunities for the law/legal professionals who rise as leaders to hone and own their New Suits.

Q: What will readers get out of this book?

This book is designed to provide a global perspective on the diverse legal service delivery ecosystem that will be our future. Filled with chapters written by experts in the intersection of law, innovation, and technology from all over the world, the book provides a global perspective about: 1) why lawyers need to put on New Suits (i.e., why lawyers need to change not only what services they provide but also how they provide them; 2, what New Suits lawyers will need to do given the impact, risks, and opportunities that tech advancements might have on the jobs, roles, and careers of legal professionals; and, 3) how to create and fit into the New Suits of the future (i.e., what practical and educational methods and models legal professionals might employ to not only meet but also to exceed the needs and expectations of legal marketplace stakeholders (e.g., internal colleagues and clients, external business clients, general counsels, and the public at large). I wrote two chapters in the book: "Innovation: A New Key Discipline for Lawyers and Legal Education" and "The Secret Sauce to Teaching Collaboration and Leadership to Lawyers."

Q: It begs the question, what do lawyers most need to fit into the suits of the future?

To fit into the New Suits of the future, what lawyers need most is new mindsets and new skillsets. Over the past two years, I have interviewed hundreds of in-house and law firm lawyers from around the globe to explore the changing legal marketplace, expectations of clients, and innovation in law. It is evident that in today's competitive market, lawyering skills alone are not enough, and clients want more than what might be considered traditional, high-quality legal advice and services from their lawyers. They want lawyers who bridge the gap between private practice and full-service client service. Clients are asking lawyers to innovate, cross-collaborate, and partner together to solve problems. To be adept at lawyering today, at a minimum, lawyers must be business-focused and business-minded, readily able to harness technology and social media to the employer's and clients' advantage. They must excel at project management, business planning, communicating, presenting, mentoring, and giving feedback. Clients want lawyers to approach legal services like business services. They want lawyers who communicate the way a business person communicates and they want their lawyers to be creative, collaborative problem finders and solvers who have honed the innovator's mindset. In my other book, *Legal Upheaval: A Guide to Creativity, Collaboration, and Innovation in Law*, I describe what I call, The Lawyer Skills Delta, which depicts the changing mindsets and skillsets needed by lawyers today in a visual format with innovation skills at the very tip-top of the pyramid. While it is true that not all lawyers need to be innovators to exceed client expectations, it is also true that those lawyers that hone the mindset, skillset, and behaviors of innovators will transform how they build relationships with and provide service to clients and, as a result, they will differentiate themselves.

Q: There is an interesting gathering of legal talent in the book. How did you and your co-author decide?

We aimed to have the widest, most diverse group of authors working in the legal profession all over the world who are experts in the intersection of innovation, technology, and the law. We wanted this book to give voice to all types of legal professionals including practicing and aspiring lawyers, academics, thought leaders, entrepreneurs, legal engineers, legal marketers, operating officers, legal process outsourcers, chief legal executives, law consultants, legal innovation officers, paralegals, legal technologists and more. This is because we believe the future success of the legal profession rests on intergenerational, multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural exchange. Top-down, country-specific, monolithic approaches to

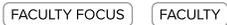
learning, training, and developing are insufficient to upskill and reskill legal professionals so that they can wear the New Suits required to create robust, fulfilling careers and make meaningful contributions to the world of law.

Q: What surprised you in the content submitted?

Given the very diverse backgrounds of the authors (arguably the most diverse group of authors to be housed under one book jacket about the law marketplace), the biggest surprise was that there was so much commonality in terms of analysis of the state of the legal marketplace, future-forward vision, and confidence that aspiring and working law/legal professionals will develop an appetite for disruption and learn to wear New Suits.



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