Title:
Managing: new managers shouldn't be so hard on themselves

Word Count:
399

Summary:
Management skills are not built into our human DNA—we need to give ourselves
time to learn them.

Keywords:
managing, management skills, new managers

Article Body:
Moving from staff into management for the first time is exciting—but it can also
be scarey.

There's so much you don't know. Somehow managing looked so easy from the
outside, but now you actually have to do it, you realize it's more complicated
than you thought. Before, you had certain tasks to accomplish and you knew you
had the skills to do them. You still have responsibility for those tasks, but
now you have to see that the work is done effectively by other people. That's a
whole new task in itself, and you're not sure you're up to the job.

You also find that it's hard to concentrate on the planning that is such an
important part of managing, because emergencies large and small seem to arise
all the time and people keep running to you to resolve them. The expression
"When you're up to your neck in alligators, it's hard to remember you were
trying to drain the swamp" might have been written for new managers!

In these early days, you must learn not to be too hard on yourself. Management
skills are not built into our human DNA—we have to learn them as we go. Promise
yourself you'll learn at least one management lesson every day. Set aside a few
moments at the end of each day to think about that day's lesson and how you'll
use it to improve your management skills. Sometimes these lessons will be hard,
but each one will give you something to build on if you are willing to learn.

Each day will bring you new challenges, new experiences—and new successes. It's
easy to forget the successes and focus on all the things that didn't go so well,
so I recommend you keep a diary of all your new experiences. Then, on those days
when you think becoming a manager was all a horrible mistake, you can read over

your diary and remind yourself just how far you've come.

Becoming a manager is a journey. Like any journey, it offers both good and bad experiences, enjoyable and not-so-enjoyable aspects, positive and negative events. Just take it one stage at a time, learn from each experience—good or bad—and you'll gradually find yourself becoming more and more comfortable in your management role.