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## Introduction

Managing people is one of the toughest jobs in business. With the right managers there is no limit to how large a business can grow. With the wrong managers a business can, and probably will, fail.

Every company, from the largest Fortune 500 companies to the sole proprietor, has managers. The Fortune 500 company has multiply layers of managers. Even the CEO has to answer to a manager: the Board of Directors. The sole proprietor has managers too. He has to answer to his banker, his customers, and if he is smart, his advisory board.

The statistics are chilling. The Small Business Administration and other researchers agree that more than 75% of all businesses fail within the first five years. Even large companies fail because of mismanagement. Enron and WorldCom are two of the latest examples of managers who have caused companies to die. The businesses that survive and thrive have good, even great, managers.

We've all experienced great managers who got the best out of us. We aspire to "be like that manager." We enjoyed our jobs, were very productive, and grew personally and professionally. Because of our good results, the company also grew.

Many of us have also experienced the worst managers. We hated working for that person. We swore that if we ever became a manager we "wouldn't be like him". We hated coming to work. We spent as much time focused on finding a way to be promoted, transferred, or finding another job as we did working for that bad boss. Usually, the company suffered too. Many times sales and profits weren't growing and customers weren't happy.

What are characteristics of a good manager? Earns respect. Creativity. Motivates. Fairness. Sense of purpose. Deals with the tough performance issues well. Tackles problems head on rather than hoping they will go away. You'll find many, many other qualities in the stories shared in this book. Good managers create an environment where an employee can do his job productively and positively contribute to the bottom line of the company.

All managers make mistakes. The smart ones learn from their mistakes. The smartest, most experienced learn from the mistakes of others before they make the same mistake. ***The Ugly Truth about Managing Well*** reveals the realities and horror stories of management. By using the good techniques and avoiding the bad situations you'll be a better manager and create a better working environment for the people that work with you.

Managing well takes trial and error. In Part One you'll read the stories of managers sharing the good, the bad, and the ugly truth of their situations. The

bottom line is that good managers and good management teams take care of customers well whether they are internal or external to the company thus enhancing the possibilities that the company will survive.

You'll find stories of how managers have coped with one of the best management traits: allowing mistakes – either theirs or those of the people on their management team. Good managers recognize that we're all human and make mistakes. You will read the story of Nancy Slater whose boss expects her to make mistakes. However, if she hid them, she knew she would be fired.

The most difficult and challenging situations can be turned around. You'll read the story of Ellen Frederick who hires disadvantaged youths and teaches them to become managers. Joanie Winberg took a teenager without customer service skills and taught him how to communicate with customers. Ellen and Joanie teach skills for life. George Wells and Joe Humphries had nonproductive employees. Each used a different way to get the employees to understand productivity and as a result, increased the profitability of their companies.

Your management team and you need to have fun. You're going to be spending a large number of your waking hours commuting to and on the job. Those hours should be pleasurable most of the time. Kathryn Whitecotton shares how she hires blue collar labor, ensures that the new hires fit into the corporate culture, and helps keep the company's reputation intact. Joe Schneider talks about how building relationships will help alleviate crisis situations.

Finally, you'll read about things that can cause problems. You'll find out why you should have the words, "Maybe fireable offenses" rather than "Are fireable offenses" in your employee policy manual. You'll learn about the need for sexual harassment policies and non-nepotism policies at your company.

In Part Two, How to Handle Difficult Situations, critical management survival strategies give you methods to approach and resolve challenging management situations. Grooming employees and your next manager is a six step process to success. Avoiding the Seven Myths of Management helps you succeed in your management career. Finally, some words of wisdom from those who are or have been managers.

***The Ugly Truth about Managing Well*** gives you real management situations and how to handle them.

I spoke to many more people than the stories of those that you will read. Many declined to share experiences because of legal or corporate policy ramifications. Those who are sharing are doing so with the hope that you use what they did well and don't make the mistakes they made. All want you to be a better manager and avoid some of the stressful situations they experienced.

Many of the names, and sometimes the industries have been changed. The companies that these managers work for are large and small. Some of the stories are employees who had, in their opinion, rotten bosses and what you can learn from them. Some are responsible for teams of managers; others are the only manager. Some are managing the company while others are managing sales, finance, or operations departments. Still others manage family businesses. By reading the stories in this book you will become a better manager, generate more profits for your company, and not let the people you manage cause the company to be one of the failure statistics: eliminating your job and the jobs of others.