

## Cultivating Management Skills

BY TRACI RAY



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**T**HE DEFINITION OF MANAGEMENT is “the process of dealing with or controlling things or people.” Sounds incredibly vast and lots of fun, right? Well, management can be narrowed, and it can actually be quite rewarding, but there are many pieces of the puzzle that need to fall into place for such an outcome. Both personally and professionally, we have countless management responsibilities and techniques weaving through our lives. And let’s be honest, learning to manage starts early. From watching our 4-year-old daughter host a formal tea party with her stuffies (cool new term for stuffed animals), to our 7-year-old son coaching his friends to victory on their multiplayer Switch games, to our 9-year-old daughter leading her gymnastics team through intricate moves via Zoom, I see firsthand how early

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we take on management roles. If we develop confidence, skills and the tools necessary to manage well, then later, as we take on more life responsibilities, the complicated side of management can be fun. But what are those skills and tools? Well, in relation to law practice, the authors in this issue will outline some very helpful tips. In relation to life, let’s ask those kids I just mentioned.



Sloan (4): “The best management skill is for others to listen to me.”

I can see where Sloan is coming from here. Of course, her captive stuffy audience does just this. She talks, they listen. At a very basic level, she’s right. But if we kick it up a notch, what does this really mean? Good management has a team of people who trust each other, respect each other and truly listen to one another. A solid leader develops a team that listens, is encouraged to share and that learns not just from one person, but from everyone.

Rock (7): “The best management skill is to have a plan (of attack).”

Totally. Video games do have some real-world translation, in this instance anyhow. Management does require a plan, with goals and strategies to reach those overarching achievements. Even more, great plans have buy-in from motivated players, checkpoints along the way to measure success and leadership from management that supports the end goal.

Ensley (9): “The best management skill is to stay focused and calm, even when it’s really hard.”

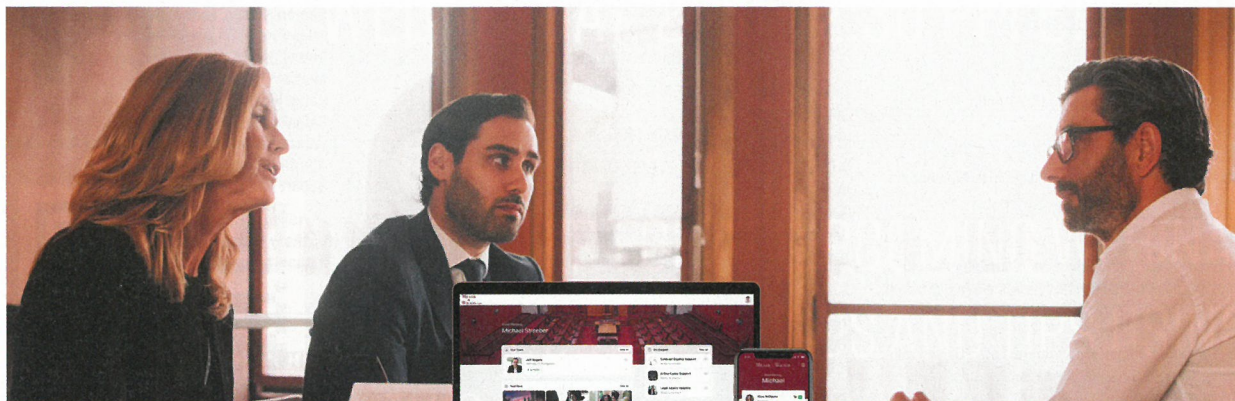
Spoken like a true competitive athlete. Yes, it’s so much easier to manage through the good ol’ easy times. But what about

when the tides change, the waters get rough, and everyone wants to quit? Exceptional management requires a level of dedication and loyalty—to the team and to the goal. Top it off with a positive attitude, and you have yourself some real management success. Learning how to not lose your cool during a perceived crisis can make a world of difference, not only for you but for those who are relying on you. Your team, at home and at the office, is always watching and listening. The most stressful of times, when reliable management is needed most, is the real time to shine.

Enjoy this issue and try to challenge yourself to take away three new ideas or tools to help you and your business manage just a little bit better. Take it from the kids: The best management skills are those that we learn young, improve upon along the way and implement carefully throughout our lives. **LP**



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