

What makes a great leader in the Hospitality Industry: the role of gender

This thesis is focused on understanding what makes a successful leader in the hospitality industry and moreover how does the gender influence the success of the leader. The hospitality industry is one of the sectors where female managers are the most represented. Even though, the chances for a female to become a general manager or a CEO are 10 times lower than the odds for a man (Castell Project, 2017). The stereotypical description of a strong and dominant leader is no longer relevant, and the leadership style is adapting to the changing environment. To answer the research question, primary data was collected through interviews with ten professionals from the hospitality industry. The analysis of the primary data showed the shift in the characteristics of a successful leader into people-centered, which is strongly associated with the transformational leadership style females surpass male leaders. The results suggest that open communication and people-centered leadership style is the most efficient for the hospitality industry. The positive outcome of the interviews is the fact that the gender gap is slowly vanishing and the hospitality industry is promoting gender equality by motivating and supporting female leaders.