

Title: Academic Essay

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AI Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that on October 5, 2024, I checked my work for spelling errors using Grammarly (<https://www.grammarly.com/>). Grammarly just provided the document for spelling and grammatical checks; I didn't have to follow any instructions and could choose what I wanted to enter.amidst the problems it raised, to shift and the things I wanted to stay the same.

To be clear, neither the research nor the creation of this challenge involved the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. I certify that I haven't asserted any ownership over any content produced by AI. I certify that I have copies of the drafts, notes, and other materials I used, in case I need to provide documentation.

In the hospitality industry, where the level of the customer service excellence is the basis for business success, leadership manages the performance and morale of teams. For hoteliers and hotel related businesses, management is a task with diverse teams and dynamic environments, and leadership styles play an important role with regards to operational efficiency and employee satisfaction (Bilal et al., 2021). This essay examines the effects of different styles of leadership: transformational, transactional, servant, and situational, on team effectiveness and employee morale. An essay that analyses these styles within the framework of hotel management will point out how leadership can do well or badly in team dynamics and productivity and job satisfaction. The essay offers that leadership affects directly not only team cohesion, but even service quality and guest satisfaction in hospitality. Leadership theories offers frameworks that leaders can use to lead their team successfully. In the hospitality industry where employee engagement and customer service are always top most, understanding and applying the right leadership style matters a lot to team dynamics and performance of an organisation (Sudha et al., 2016). This essay outlines four key leadership theories that are transformational, transactional, servant, and situational leadership with a narrowed focus on characteristics, applications in hospitality, and the advantages and limitations associated with each.

A leader who inspires and motivates his or her employees to go beyond the self interest to the good of the organisation transforms the organisation into a venture (Elkhwesky et al., 2022). In hospitality, this style encouraged a culture of innovation and high morale married with service to customers (Kindarto et al., 2020). Those leaders who endorse this style will foster creativity and empower employees to take charge and provide more fulfilling guest experiences (Sandstrom, J.K. and Reynolds, 2020). The best part of transformational leadership is in empowering employees and encouraging creativity. But it takes tremendous dedication, charisma and an ability to get people revved up, which is sometimes difficult to bring out.

The Transactional leadership, on the other hand, deals with degree and limited means of structured task, rewards, and punishments to achieve compliance and performance. This style is suitable in hospitality settings that primovaise operational efficiency with front desk or housekeeping management as examples (Choi et al., 2017). Leaders who engage in transactional methods set clear expectations and give performance based feedback. The biggest benefit of this style is that it supports consistency and adhering to performance metrics (González-Torres et al., 2023). But it

limits employee development and creativity since it more emphasises stand the short-term objectives instead of personal development.

In essence, servant leadership revolves around employee's needs and enhance the growth of employee personally and professionally. This style would build a powerful team culture in the hospitality industry, rising service orientation and employees' satisfaction (Ntalakos et al., 2022a). A servant leader will create an atmosphere of trust that can set up an environment for team cohesion and retention. Pros of servant leadership includes having high employee satisfaction and loyalty which is essential in hospitality that is based on who guest (Gross, 2018). But in high-pressure situations, this approach less effective, creating a slower pace of decision making. Situational leadership is adaptive, as leaders adapt their style to match the team's needs, and the situation (Elkhwesky et al., 2022). This flexibility gives leaders in the hospitality industry the ability to adjust the approach they take to fit and maximise team performance where teams tend to be diverse and dynamic (Ntalakos et al., 2022b). The biggest benefit of situational leadership is from its flexibility and responsiveness to the situation. But it requires a thorough understanding of a team's dynamics and good judgement for misreading a situation can makes it ineffective.

Leadership styles influence the effectiveness of the teams in hospitality industry because they are live on collaboration, rapid achievement, and high service quality (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020). Research has shown that the essence of transformational leadership fosters creativity, teamwork and high performance work in teams (Mishra et al., 2019). This style is used by leaders who ensure their teams feel motivated: they set direction, foster creativity and delegate authority to working groups. For instance, the leadership style that is noticeable and familiar in the hospitality aspect especially in luxury hotels is this style. A2/OS2 Thus embracing the principles of employee empowerment leads to higher quality services perceived by customers (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2019). For instance, in a luxury hotel setting a transformational leader might prompt customer service staff at the front line to come up with novel customer services for example a customised guest experience or providing a refreshing surprise for the taste of the guest based on their preferences. This empowerment provides morale boosts and an ownership feeling for the employees which leads to a cohesiveness that results in top quality service delivery (Hoang et al., 2021). In this instance transformational leadership promotes creativity and collaboration, thus ensuring both team effectiveness and the guest experience.

Transactional leadership is task oriented, straight to the point; it's for leading teams in an environment that demands output, and getting the job done well. For instance, in budget hotels, hotel transactional leadership is needed to ensure team meeting strict performance criteria like cheque in times, housekeeping standards and client satisfaction rate (Sürücü and Sağbaş 2021). Clear structures for rewards and punishments and that employees know exactly what to expect of them is how it works (Gross, 2018). A hotel chain of budget hotels case study revealed that transactional leadership helped keep the consistent service quality level by clearly setting their respective level of expectation and held employees accountable for adherence to them (Sudha et al., 2016). But while transactional leadership helps with efficiency and consistency, it also does not foster creativity and freedom to work seamlessly, it can take a great charge on the team's morale over time (Li et al., 2024). However, it is effective in places where that kind of compliance to standards equates to the business' success (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022).

Given that servant leadership places so much emphasis on the well being of employees, because of this, it is a particularly effective means of promoting morale and team work. This style is quite adopted in the hospitality industry especially in boutique hotels because the hospitality industry is for family. In a servant leader, employees are supported and the communication is wide open (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2019). In one boutique hotel, the general manager who practiced servant leadership, made employee personal growth opportunities, training programs, and wellness initiatives (Sandstrom and Reynolds, 2020). Not only did that help the teams to feel more like a team but it increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover rates. Servant leaders are able to build strong trust and loyalty amongst their team as they prioritise employee needs first, guaranteeing better service is created for our guests (Ntalakos et al., 2023).

The variable nature of event management and conference hotel work make situational leadership so adaptive. This style is adopted by leaders who put their approach in sync with the readiness and skills levels of the team members because each individual is supported enough to work in a manner that is most effective. For instance, situation leadership in a conference hotel might include more directive leadership as you manage new employees during a busy event, then a more support role with more experienced people on day to day operations (Al Rahbi et al., 2017). Being such a flexible approach, in no time teams can adjust to new requirements and therefore the overall effectiveness is boosted. In a large conference hotel case study, we found that situational leadership

provided a way to maintain high team performance during peak events since managers easily adapted leadership to match staff capabilities and confidence levels. The positive impact of transformational leadership on employees' morale is very deep as it inspires and gets people motivated. This style is adopted by leaders who try to communicate the vision they have and inspire teams working together. Those employees who feel that they're part of a greater mission are more likely to be engaged, motivated and eager to work hard for themselves (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022).

Employee morale is impacted by transactional leadership that is based on rewards and punishments, and that offers expectations and structured performance goals. This approach guarantees consistency but in some situations it may do a disservice to deep emotional engagement or long term job satisfaction. Transactional leadership serves the hospitality industry that emphasises operation efficiency in such establishments as budget hotels where performance of standards and tasks is to be expected from employees. Although there are limitations to this style (which is a focus on short term rewards and compliance) it may not cover all the intrinsic reasons of employee. Transactional leadership can be helpful, delivering clarity and structure to some employees, particularly those who appreciate how things ought to be done, but will disengage some who desire personal development (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020). This can ultimately mean that your people become less satisfied with their jobs, after some time, if the focus on these external rewards doesn't seem to lead you down a road of more purpose or belonging with the organisation.

One of those has a very strong impact on morale because it focuses on helping your employees grow and well and increasing trust, loyalty, and a sense of belonging: Servant leadership. In a service oriented industry (such as the hospitality industry) teamwork and service is crucial and employees who feel supported by their leaders are more content to work with it (Hoang et al., 2021). For instance, a servant leadership implementation would result in a spike in employee retention rates for a mid size hotel. In the case of General Manager, it was about providing a place where employees were motivated by the idea of their needs being understood, in this means making employees feel they could rely on open lines of communication, and giving them opportunities to develop their professional skill set (Dlamini et al., 2017).

Versatile impacts of situational leadership on morale can lean on adaptability to employees need, and associated development stages. If the leader adjusts their style to the level of competency and

confidence of the employee to provide that amount of support or autonomy that is needed. Situational leadership is an approach to effective leadership in fast changing, large scale or hotel events (González-Torres et al., 2023). For example, in a large event focused hotel, managers were able to use situational leadership by varying their task supervision during furious events, giving additional direct supervision for less experienced personnel and letting more seasoned employees take the lead (Choi et al., 2017). It helped employees feel supported and valued — they felt confident and they were in a good mood. Situational leadership is flexible allowing the needs of employees to be met and hence creates a more engaged more motivated workforce.

The difference between transformational and transactional leadership is so distinct. Transformational leadership in luxury hotels is about empowering employees and encouraging innovation, attributes that are perfect for luxury hotels that emphasise creativity, and customer oriented, personalised service. On the contrary, task completion and consistency is the element that transactional leadership focuses on, and that's what's more suited to budget hotels, where efficiency matters most (Al Rahbi et al., 2017). There is also a difference in approach with servant and situational leadership. Speaking of the guest-centric completion of boutique hotel, servant leadership will meet the employees' need and build trust and loyalty, resulting in long-time job satisfactions. However, situational leadership adjusts to changing circumstances based on employee readiness and provides the right amount of support to enhance team resilience for dynamic conditions such as event or conference hotels (Sürücü and Sağbaş, 2021). However, both transformational and servant leadership aim to inspire, since transformational leaders expect innovation, while servant leaders place an emphasis on well-being and trust, and achieve this distinctively in different hospitality contexts.

In conclusion, leadership styles are proven important in defining how effective a team is as well as how the employees are feeling in a hospitality industry. Transactional leadership focuses on consistency, efficiency while, transformational leadership creates opportunities for innovation and engagement. A trust and loyal built environment under servant leadership, whereas situational leadership provides a flexibility of adapting to it team needs. Each style has its strengths and weaknesses and a leadership approach is effective in one context and not another. Learning and using these styles correctly will help hospitality managers improve employee satisfaction as well as contribute to team performance.

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