

Leadership Up The Ladder: The construction of leadership styles in the hospitality industry

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores and quantifies the differences in the perceptions of leadership styles suitable for various outcomes across three levels of management in the Melbourne hospitality industry. Using a well established self-administered instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) v5, the researcher used a 'snow balling' technique to recruit a self-selected sample of 282 residents of Melbourne, Australia who work in large, international standard hotels and major catering companies with more than 100 staff. The respondents were classified as working at one of three managerial levels; senior manager, middle manager, or front line manager wherein each level encountered different challenges in the nature of their work and thus required different approaches to leadership.

The data indicated that there are several differences within and across the three managerial levels in their leadership styles depending upon the goal at hand. These differences include the specific types of leadership style adopted, and the number of styles adopted, both within and across the task at hand.

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Introduction

This study explores and quantifies the differences in rank based perceptions of leadership styles suitable for various performance outcomes in the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry is the focus of this research because there is a body of evidence suggesting that it has a number of idiosyncratic characteristics which place particular demands on the manager at different levels in the organization (Susskind et al., 2000).

Like many industrial settings, there are clear differences between front line operations and senior management. This is particularly so in a craft based, service oriented industry such as hospitality. Whilst senior hospitality managers confront the typical strategic and resource oriented

challenges that are the hallmark of senior management, front line managers confront a raft of more immediate challenges which in turn has implications for the development of their skills and knowledge, especially as it relates to their approach to leadership style. This research explores how the different levels employ different leadership styles and in turn poses questions as to how the industry helps individuals develop appropriate leadership styles as they rise up the organisational ladder. The MLQ v 5, which operationalises the Bass and Avolio model of Transformational and Transactional Leadership was used as the data instrument in this research. The Transformational and Transactional Leadership model will be discussed first.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership

Extending on the work of Burns (1978) who was one of the first theorists to distinguish between transactional and transformational leadership, Bass and his colleagues (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Bass, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1990) have developed a comprehensive model of these two forms of leadership. In its present form, the model consists of three transactional leadership dimensions and five transformational leadership dimensions (Antonakis et al., 2003). Transactional leaders are said to focus on the present rather than the future and use organisational rewards and punishment to influence subordinates. The three transactional leadership factors specifically delineated in Bass' model are contingent reward leadership, management by exception (active) and management by exception (passive). Contingent reward leadership refers to leaders clarifying role and task expectations and rewarding subordinates for compliance or achievement of set tasks. The management by exception factor refers to leader behaviours with regard to monitoring subordinates' performance. Leaders may take an active role in 'trouble shooting' and taking corrective action when performance standards are not being met or they can respond more passively and wait until errors occur and then take action (Abraham et al., 2000).

In contrast to transactional leaders, transformational leaders are said to focus on the future and inspire followers to sacrifice self interest for the achievement of organisational goals. Bass describes five transformational leadership dimensions; idealised influence (attributed), idealised influence (behaviour), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. The idealised influence construct refers to leaders being perceived as trustworthy, charismatic and visionary (attributes) and also engaging in actions consistent with these attributes (behaviours). Therefore, leaders are perceived as behaving in an ethical manner in the pursuit of their vision. The dimension of inspirational motivation is evident when leaders inspire followers to perform beyond normal expectations. This motivation stems from the leader's ability to communicate a vision to followers and imbue them with the confidence to pursue this vision. The intellectual stimulation dimension refers to the leader's ability to challenge subordinates and encourage them to think more creatively. The final transformational leadership dimension, individualised consideration, is evident when subordinates feel that their leaders are conscious of and respond to their individual needs (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008).

The MLQ seeks to assess leadership impact in three areas; effectiveness, typically conceptualised as 'meeting targets', satisfaction (enhancing staff satisfaction) and extra effort (securing staff commitment). The implication is that effective leadership produces a rich suite of outcomes that embrace both short and medium term outcomes.

The Transformational and Transactional Model has not been without its controversies. Initially the model assumed that transformational leadership was overlaid on transactional leadership. However, recent iterations of the model acknowledge that there are two separate approaches that can be employed independently. There has also been some debate as to the validity of the conceptualisation of transformational leadership, with some authors correlating it with; charisma (Rowold & Heinitz, 2007), emotional intelligence (Lam & O'Higgins, 2012), personality (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2012), or a combination of all of these (Palmer et al., 2003). In particular, Van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) expressed considerable reservations about the construct. None the less, the model has been found to help explain several organisational outcomes (Rowold & Heinitz, 2007).

Ultimately, transactional leadership appears to have evolved as a form of management better suited to stable, process driven environments with well established and accepted goals, whereas transformational leadership appears better suited to dynamic and uncertain environments with a stronger focus on employee outcomes (Farahani et al., 2011; Lam & O'Higgins, 2012; Weinberger, 2010).

The Hospitality Industry

The Hospitality industry is a craft based, service industry that has a raft of characteristics. Whilst none of these characteristics are unique in their own right, the combination of them gives rise to an environment that may well be deemed both unique and challenging.

Within hospitality, production and delivery typically take place in the same location and timeframe. This creates periods of intense pressure on staff and management (Susskind et al., 2000). At the same time, it is one of the few industries that describes its customers as 'guests', thus adding an unusual dimension to the customer-service provider relationship (Susskind et al., 2000). Furthermore, it is a 24 hour a day, seven day a week business, which can place considerable strain on the physical and emotional well being of employees (Ying-Wen, 2012). In addition, it is an international industry wherein ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of both staff and guests is commonplace thus placing demands on the interpersonal and communication skills of staff and management (Hearns et al., 2007). Hospitality is also replete with occupational and public health and safety issues that require high levels of competence in certain skills, particularly those relating to the safe handling of food and beverages (Tranter, 2002). The industry works with highly perishable and fluid assets including; labour, food, beverages and cash. As such, front line managers need to be focused and disciplined in their use of resources (Testa & Sipe, 2012). It is also an industry that is driven largely by discretionary expenditure and is therefore subject to considerable fluctuations in demand (Hwang & Wilkins, 2002). Successfully dealing with this volatility requires high levels of strategic planning, yet tactical flexibility on the part of managers and staff.

Hospitality is also an industry with an almost intractable intellectual conflict (Lashley, 1999, 2000, 2002; Lashley & McGoldrick, 1994). On the one hand it strives for consistency of service and product, which can be readily achieved with discipline and strict adherence to systems; the 'sameness' of many international hospitality businesses is testament to this. Yet on the other hand,

the industry seeks to provide a form of differentiated, personalised service that requires a relatively high level of discretion on the part of the service provider in responding to a guest's requests; as witnessed by the vast majority of promotional literature produced by the industry.

As noted, the demand for hospitality services is volatile. However, in contrast, the core, underlying function of hospitality operations has remained largely unchanged for centuries and is thus fundamentally stable. Nonetheless, whilst many of these physical work processes and systems remain constant, digital and information based technologies have the potential to radically change the way the industry is organised and engages with its guests (Whitelaw, 2008). In particular, these changes in technology can be harnessed to improve the efficiency of existing practices as well as transform the way hospitality guests engage with the staff and vice versa. As a consequence, the successful hospitality manager has to confront and reconcile two significant, contradictory positions.

On the one hand, the industry appears to be traditional, rigid and bureaucratic. The fundamental nature of the industry remains relatively unchanged despite the advent of operational and information technologies. Many of the tasks are relatively low level and repetitive. Furthermore, the industry prospers on a mantra of consistency of service, which can give rise to rigidity in the way things are done. Therefore, hospitality managers must be focused on applying highly stable, traditional work processes. This suggests a strongly transactional leadership orientation and that the successful pursuit of operational goals, especially the meeting of budgets, will be achieved by the setting of standards and the strict adherence to these standards.

However, the industry also operates in a highly competitive environment wherein meeting guests' individual needs are deemed a hallmark achievement. At the same time the manager has to adopt new techniques to cope with 'game changing' advances in technology as well as significant market volatility. This suggests a highly dynamic environment and that the successful prosecution of competitive advantage, especially in the adoption of new technologies and meeting guests' needs, will be achieved by leading staff to embrace these new approaches, namely a highly transformational leadership style.

The ability to balance these competing demands and use the right leadership style is thus likely to be critical. How the hospitality industry has pursued this in the past is worth considering.

Leadership in The Hospitality Industry

Umbreit (1992) argued that in order to provide high quality service and maintain a competitive advantage, the hospitality industry needed to place a greater emphasis on the understanding and development of leadership. Subsequently, the discourse since the 1990s has focused on attempting to relate the aforementioned attributes of the hospitality manager to issues of leadership (Ladkin & Laws, 2000) and the likely performance and success of emerging managers and leaders (Suh et al., 2012; Testa & Sipe, 2012; Uen et al., 2012).

Leadership studies in the hospitality industry have tended to focus on identifying the personality traits of effective leaders (Berger et al., 1989; Chung-Herrera et al., 2003; Whitelaw & Morda, 2004; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2012). Bond (1998) examined the style of leadership shown and valued in

the hospitality industry. She argued that there were two types of leaders in the hotel industry: "those in the hotel business and those in the business of hotels" (Bond, 1998, p. 1104). Leaders in the hotel business focus on the needs of employees and the provision of a high quality service to guests. These leaders are also described as charismatic. In comparison, leaders in the business of hotels were found to possess exceptional financial skills. To succeed in the hospitality industry, Bond contended that leaders needed to combine strong interpersonal skills with sound business knowledge and hotel operational skills. In effect, Bond was arguing that a mix of transactional and transformational leadership skills are needed to succeed in the hospitality field.

However, whilst not rejecting the underlying thesis of this previous research, Pittaway, Carmouche and Chell (1998) undertook an extensive critique of leadership research in the hospitality industry and found much of it poorly conceptualised and operationalised and subsequently argued for a more structured and disciplined approach in the conduct of leadership research. Subsequent research has placed greater emphasis on established, yet current, theoretical models such as the Full Factor Leadership Model using the MLQ (Anastasio & Panayiotis, 2010; Talbo, 2002; Whitelaw & Morda, 2005; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2012). However, there is still an extensive body of leadership research in hospitality that is less structured and less grounded in well established theory (Johanson et al., 2011; Kalargyrou et al., 2012; Suh et al., 2012).

Transactional and Transformational Leadership within the Hospitality Industry

In contrast to Bond's research that indicated that both transactional and transformational leadership was needed for success in the hospitality field, a review of leadership research in the hospitality sector indicates that traits consistent with transformational leadership appear to be more highly valued (Cichy et al., 1992; Cichy & Schmidgall, 1996; Greger & Peterson, 2000, Tracey & Hinkin, 1994).

Cichy et al., (1992) surveyed 51 top food-service leaders in the United States. The aim of their study was to investigate respondents' perceptions of the traits associated with effective leadership. The qualities that the respondents' thought to be important for leaders included: vision, a strong personal value or belief system, flexibility, an ability to make desired outcomes tangible, encouragement of risk taking and listening skills. The foundations of leadership were summarised as consisting of trust in subordinates, an ability to provide an inspiring vision, communication and perseverance.

In a later study, Cichy and Schmidgall (Cichy & Schmidgall, 1996, 1997) surveyed financial executives in the hotel industry and found similar results to that of Cichy et al.'s earlier work. The researchers surveyed 181 financial executives in leadership positions. The qualities that the respondents associated with effective leadership in the hospitality industry are consistent with transformational leadership dimensions and included: flexibility, vision, a strong personal value or belief system, an ability to make desired outcomes tangible and to listen to and empower employees. These identified qualities were quite similar to those identified by food-service leaders (Cichy et al., 1992). Therefore, there is some consistency in how effective leadership is perceived by different occupational sectors within the hospitality industry.

Greger and Peterson (2000) interviewed six top lodging operators as to their views on leadership for the new millennium. That study's results were quite similar to those found by Cichy and fellow researchers (Cichy et al., 2007; Cichy & Schmidgall, 1996, 1997; Cichy et al., 1992). A key leadership component was vision. These Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) perceived effective leaders as being future oriented, innovative, visionary and, most importantly, they were able to communicate their vision to employees. In addition, they maintained a positive organisational culture, which emphasised the empowerment of employees. These traits are consistent with the idealised influence, inspirational motivation, and individualised consideration transformational leadership dimensions outlined by Bass. The CEOs interviewed by Greger and Peterson (2000) were also concerned with the satisfaction of guests, and investors' needs, as well as employee needs. In satisfying the needs of these different parties, the leaders identified the importance of continuing to be innovative, to assess their own performance and the need to use technology to improve the quality of service in their hotels.

It is apparent from a review of leadership research undertaken in the hospitality industry that there is a demand for leaders demonstrating transformational leadership skills (Antonakis, 2000; Brownell, 2010; Clark et al., 2008; Erkutlu, 2008; Gillet & Morda, 2000). However, the nature of hospitality work itself may indeed suit a more transactional form of leadership.

According to Stacey (1993), stable industries are likely to produce managers who have risen through the ranks whilst dynamic industries are likely to more rapidly promote their managers. As a consequence of the hospitality industry's strong focus on developing craft competency as a foundation for career development (Harper et al., 2005), it typically takes between 10 and 12 years on average for an entry level employee to climb to the most senior position in hospitality operations, the hotel general manager (Ladkin & Weber, 2006). This would suggest that the industry's stability and adherence to tradition may well play a key role in shaping a preference for transactional leadership, especially in front line, craft driven operations.

As previously discussed, the hospitality industry places considerable emphasis on the consistent provision of high quality services – a proposition based upon the need for high levels of compliance with operational standards. In effect, the pursuit of effectiveness within the MLQ framework. However, the industry as noted, has a number of challenges, many of which impact on staff retention including stress and burn out (Davidson & Wang, 2011; Gill et al., 2011; Kim & Brymer, 2011; Xander et al., 2012). As such, transformational leaders may be highly valued because of their strong focus on their staff. Therefore, there is an interesting dilemma facing the hospitality industry in that transactional leadership skills are needed to maintain standards whilst transformational leadership is needed to retain staff. A contention supported by Bond's (1998) research that indicated that leaders need both strong interpersonal skills and sound hotel operational skills. The current study sought to further clarify hospitality industry employees' disposition to employ different dimensions of transactional and transformational leadership and investigated whether there is recognition for the need for both transactional and transformational leadership at differing managerial ranks and for the pursuit of different goals.

Method

Participants were recruited using a 'snow balling' technique (Minichiello et al., 1995). In this sense the 'snow balling' technique involved forwarding an invitation to key industry employees and managers to complete the survey and, in turn, to encourage their colleagues, work associates and friends who also work in the hospitality industry to complete the survey. In effect, the response rate grew much as a snow ball gains momentum and size. Participants had to work in an organisation with more than 100 staff, have at least five years industry experience and two years employment with their current organisation and be aged between 35 and 44 years of age. These criteria were imposed to ensure that mitigating variables such as the external environment, industry, organisation size and structure, experience and age were mediated out of the analysis.

Data were gathered by way of a self-administered instrument. The MLQ (Leader Form 5x-Short) is a 45 item, self assessment instrument which assesses an individual's leadership style in terms of the three transactional and five transformational leadership styles, and leadership performance in terms of three dimensions; employee satisfaction, group effectiveness and group extra effort. The instrument has been validated in a number of extensive, large scale studies in many industrial, cultural and national settings (Antonakis et al., 2003; Carless, 1998; Muenjohn & Armstrong, 2008; Tepper & Percy, 1994).

This study sought to identify how managers at different ranks constructed their perception of leadership depending on the outcome to be achieved. In this case there are three ranks (senior manager, middle manager and line manager) and there are three outcomes (effectiveness in meeting targets, achieving staff satisfaction and obtaining extra effort from staff). By regressing their self-assessed behaviour in terms of the various transactional and transformational leadership styles against the three different measures of leadership outcomes, a model of how the three different manager groups construct leadership emerges. That is, rather than simply look at self-reported preferred leadership style or outcome achieved, this approach sought to investigate how the three different ranks of leaders construct their understanding of what styles achieve which particular outcome. Therefore, using three separate stepwise regression analyses with the nine leadership behaviours as the independent variables, and each of the three outcomes as the dependent variables, the resultant regression models give an insight into how three manager groups see the relationship between leadership behavior and leadership outcome.

Participants

The sample consisted of 282 self selected participants of whom 105 were senior managers, 135 were middle managers and 42 were front line managers. All were aged 35 – 44 years, the prime age for entering into leadership positions. Males (57%) outnumbered females, but there were no significant differences in the gender distribution across the three ranks ($X^2=1.235$, $df=2$, $sig=0.539$). Not surprisingly, in terms of education, there were significant differences ($X^2=12.195$, $df=4$, $sig=0.016$), largely driven by the over representation of degree qualified senior managers (Adj. Res.=3.0) and the relatively high incidence of a high school education amongst front line managers (Adj. Res.=2.4).

Results

The mean scores for the laissez-faire, three transactional styles, five transformational styles and three outcomes are presented in Table 1 below. The scores range from 0 – 4 wherein 0 is no utilisation of the leadership style or no outcome achieved and four is extensive use of the leadership style and significant achievement of the outcome.

Table 1: MLQ Score by Management Rank

MLQ Score by Employment Rank	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Line Manager
n	105	135	42
Laissez-Faire Leadership	0.65	0.68	0.60
Contingent Reward	3.32	3.00	2.79
Management By Exception – Passive	1.13	1.18	1.21
Management By Exception – Active	1.92	1.93	1.98
Idealised Influence – Behaviour	3.16	2.92	2.84
Idealised Influence – Attributed	3.11	2.90	2.82
Inspirational Motivation	3.33	3.04	3.00
Intellectual Stimulation	3.13	2.95	2.77
Individual Consideration	3.33	3.08	3.13
Effectiveness	3.31	3.20	3.18
Satisfaction	3.23	3.11	3.04
Extra Effort	3.06	2.70	2.60

Whilst there may be some value in comparing these raw results across the three managerial levels, the prime focus of this work was to investigate how each of the three managerial levels construct their leadership in the pursuit of the three outcomes. To that end, for each of the three ranks, the nine leadership styles were regressed against each of the three outcomes using stepwise regression.

The key statistics, including Adjusted R², F value and significance are presented in table 2 on the next page. The significance values indicate that all regressions are significant. Furthermore, the Adjusted R² are particularly high, with the front line managers' approach to achieving effectiveness the strongest at 0.867 and the middle level managers approach to achieving satisfaction the weakest at 0.352. This indicates that the three manager ranks have clearly different notions of which leadership behavior achieves each of the three outcomes.

Table 2: MLQ Key Regression Statistics by Management Rank

	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Line Manager
n	105	135	42
Effectiveness			
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.459	0.588	0.867
Sum of Squares	8.253	13.232	7.006
df	4	3	7
Mean Square	2.063	4.411	1.001
F	21.177	62.267	31.609
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
Satisfaction			
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.622	0.352	0.403
Sum of Squares	11.274	13.606	5.113
df	4	2	2
Mean Square	2.819	6.803	2.556
F	41.075	35.803	13.145
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
Extra Effort			
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.711	0.589	0.745
Sum of Squares	20.444	29.463	22.363
df	4	3	3
Mean Square	5.111	9.821	7.454
F	61.617	62.695	37.076
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000

Having established the strength and legitimacy of the stepwise regressions, the detailed beta weight of the remaining variables for each regression, along with the R² are presented in Table 3 on the next page.

The beta weights provide two key pieces of information; the size of the weight gives a measure of the relative strength and contribution of a particular leadership style compared to the other items in that regression whilst the sign indicates whether the leadership style contributes to or detracts from the achievement of the outcome.

Table 3: MLQ Beta Weights and Adjusted R2 by Management Rank

Effectiveness – Beta	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Line Supervisor
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.459	0.588	0.867
Laissez-Faire Leadership			-0.571
Contingent Reward	0.332	0.159	-0.365
Management By Exception – Passive			-0.212
Management By Exception – Active	-0.226		0.400
Idealised Influence – Behaviour			
Idealised Influence – Attributed	0.233	0.433	
Inspirational Motivation			0.713
Intellectual Stimulation		0.334	-0.206
Individual Consideration	0.188		

Satisfaction – Beta	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Line Supervisor
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.622	0.352	0.403
Laissez-Faire Leadership	0.236		
Contingent Reward			
Management By Exception – Passive			
Management By Exception – Active			
Idealised Influence – Behaviour			
Idealised Influence – Attributed	0.281	0.632	0.587
Inspirational Motivation	0.294		
Intellectual Stimulation			-0.351
Individual Consideration	0.298	-0.158	

Extra Effort – Beta	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Line Supervisor
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.711	0.589	0.745
Laissez-Faire Leadership			0.317
Contingent Reward		0.285	0.521
Management By Exception – Passive	-0.157		
Management By Exception – Active	0.130		
Idealised Influence – Behaviour			
Idealised Influence – Attributed		0.419	0.609
Inspirational Motivation	0.439	0.185	
Intellectual Stimulation			
Individual Consideration	0.521		

The most notable aspects of these results include the relative parsimony of the leadership styles with typically only three or four of the nine styles seen to be making a significant contribution to the various outcomes.

Senior Managers consistently see value in four leadership styles whereas middle managers identify two and three, whilst the line managers typically prefer two, but identify six as contributing to achieve effectiveness. However, in many instances, these contributions are in the negative, that is, using less of this style is seen as contributing to the particular outcome. This is most notable with pursuing effectiveness by the line managers.

According to the results, the line managers see management by exception active and inspirational motivation as positively contributing to effectiveness whilst laissez-faire, contingent reward, management by exception passive and intellectual stimulation as retarding the pursuit of effectiveness. The inclusion of laissez-faire leadership and possibly intellectual stimulation are somewhat consistent with the full factor theory. Laissez-faire is seen as not helping in most settings and it could be argued that in a front line service setting where achieving effectiveness is clearly specified and compliance driven, encouraging intellectual stimulation could be seen as a distraction. None the less, the results for contingent reward and management by exception passive are somewhat confounding. The other confounding result is the -0.158 for middle managers using individual consideration to achieve employee satisfaction.

Discussion

Overall, in most instances the results support the general principles of the full factor Leadership Model. Importantly, the results indicate that in different settings (front line management through to senior management) and for different goals (achieving effectiveness, or satisfaction, or extra effort) the different groups recognise the need to use different combinations of leadership styles. This is consistent with Fiedler's (1967) original conception of situational leadership and subsequently Bass and Avolio's (1991) full factor leadership theory.

In the first instance, the senior managers are behaving in a manner consistent with the theory. They use a range of transactional and transformational leadership styles in the pursuit of the various outcomes. Further, given the strategic nature of their role, and the small management team with which they work (notionally comprised of highly skilled and highly motivated individuals), the strong focus on individual consideration and inspirational motivation paints a picture of an actively engaged, slightly charismatic leader. The negative indicator for both management by exception active (for effectiveness) and management by exception passive (for extra effort) is consistent with a view of letting the highly skilled and motivated management team get on with the job. It could be argued that the score for laissez-faire in satisfaction (0.236) is also consistent with letting the management team run their own race whilst the score for management by exception – active in extra effort (0.130) suggests that when extra effort is needed, some closer supervision is required.

The middle manager places a consistent and relatively high level of emphasis on idealised influence – attributed to achieve results in each of the three outcomes. Contingent reward is also used in the two settings where operating results are needed. Again, contingent reward plays a key role in achieving outputs because of its strong focus on role clarity, an issue of significant importance in any service setting, and especially one that is focused on adherence to operating systems and procedures in order to ensure consistency of product, service and in turn, customer satisfaction.

The line managers, given their front line status in a hospitality setting of strict compliance to operating processes and standards, places much less emphasis on transformational leadership styles. The line manager seems to focus on a form of leading from the front (inspirational motivation) and close positive supervision (management by exception active and laissez faire in the negative) to drive effectiveness whilst other approaches such as contingent reward, management by exception passive and intellectual stimulation in the negative. This suggests that the line manager has a leadership world view that effectiveness is achieved by a task focused, disciplined 'lead from the front' view that 'gets on with the job' rather than debates and discusses the merits of the task at hand. Given the circumstances confronting the front line leader, this is perfectly consistent.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

The results suggest that for the most part, the practices of hospitality managers are consistent with various leadership theories, especially those of Fiedler (Fiedler, 1967) and Bass and Avolio (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In particular, those front line managers with clearly defined tasks and less skilled colleagues tend to rely more on transactional leadership styles. In contrast, those with a more strategic role who lead teams of highly motivated and skilled colleagues, tend to focus on the transformational leadership styles combined with a relaxed view of the transactional leadership styles.

This work is somewhat idiosyncratic. It investigates the different approaches to leadership by three tiers of management in a tightly focused industry sector in a large Australian city. However, it is argued that this homogenisation of the sample means that the research can explicitly focus on the key question at hand without the disturbance of external and extraneous factors. To that end, the work has achieved its goal of highlighting how different tiers of management when confronted with the achievement of different outcomes resort to using various skills and approaches from a wide repertoire of leadership skills. Obviously, this line of enquiry can be developed by further research in the same industry in other population settings as well as in other industry sectors in large urban settings.

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