

‘Leadership is not a Privilege, Leadership is a Service’

A Critical Observation of Servant Leadership in a
Mission and Strategy Development Workshop

Master Thesis (30 ECTS)

SMMM20 Master of Science Service Management, Tourism

The Department of Service Management and Service Studies

Lund University, Sweden

Author: Max Kriefall

Tutor: Hervé Corvellec

Date: 24 May 2016



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Abstract

Title	‘Leadership is not a Privilege, Leadership is a Service’ - A Critical Observation of Servant Leadership in a Mission and Strategy Development Workshop
Seminar Date	02 June 2016
Course	SMMM20 Service Management: Master’s (Two Year) Thesis
Institution	The Department of Service Management and Service Studies Lund University, Sweden
Author	Max Kriefall
Supervisor	Hervé Corvellec
Key Words	Servant Leadership; Hospitality Industry; Human Potential; Workshop; Upstalsboom
Purpose	The purpose of this thesis is to explore and critically challenge the potential and limitations of servant leadership to solve the human-related problems in the hospitality industry.
Method	Based on the exploratory purpose of this thesis, qualitative data was obtained in a methodology informed by the strategy-as-practice perspective through observations and semi-structured interviews. Interviews and observations were conducted at a paradigmatic case company and complemented by interviews with industry experts. The qualitative data analyses followed a narrative approach.
Conclusion	Even though servant leadership seems to be an utopian paradigm, based on findings at the case company, servant leadership holds many ideas that could solve the hospitality industry’s problems on a larger scale and benefit the industry. But, a complete implementation of the theory seems to be impossible, due to its lack in empirical confirmation and idealistic nature. Furthermore, a paradox in servant leadership is existing, depicted the lack of focus on followers in literature and reality. This is in stark contrast to the content of the theory and inhibits the implementation of this promising paradigm.

Acknowledgements

The development of this thesis would not have been possible without the contribution and support of several people who were involved in the process.

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my tutor Hervé Corvellec. Without his guidance, support and constructive feedback, I would have gotten lost along the way. Thank you for all the hours and your constant encouragement!

Secondly, I want to thank Bodo Janssen for his courage (“Trau Dich!”) to invite me to participate in a workshop at Upstalsboom. I am grateful for the trust you put in me and the opportunity to observe the workshops. A big thanks goes out to Bernd Gaukler for the very interesting and critical conversations we had. Thank you for your time and openness to discuss various subjects for this thesis.

The interviews with two anonymous industry experts and Alfred Gettmann gave me great insights into the industry and their daily reality. Thank you for your time and support. The fieldwork for this thesis was partly enabled by a research scholarship from Campus Vänner, for which I am thankful.

Especially over the last weeks I enjoyed a great deal of support from close friends. I would particularly like to thank Viktor Åkesson, Fabian Krause and Moritz Eger for many fruitful discussions, proofreading of confusing paragraphs and keeping me motivated in times of struggle.

Above all, I am extremely grateful for the unconditional love of my parents Jana Kriefall & Jochen Mittag and my grandma Gertraud Kriefall. Without their faith in me and immense moral support, I would not have been able to achieve this goal in life.

Merci, vielen Dank & tack så mycket!

Max Kriefall

Helsingborg, 02 June 2016

Table of contents

List of figures	V
List of tables	V
List of abbreviations	VI
1. Introduction	1
1.1. The Human Problem of the Hospitality Industry	1
1.2. Making the Most of Humans in the Hospitality Industry	2
1.2.1. Humans as an Organisational Resource	2
1.2.2. Humans as Potential and Talents	3
1.3. Finding Solutions in Leadership	5
1.4. Aim and Research Questions	6
1.5. Upstalsboom - the Studied Company	7
1.6. The Structure of the Thesis	8
2. Theoretical Framework: Servant Leadership	10
2.1. The Roots of Servant Leadership	10
2.2. Defining Servant Leadership	12
2.3. Servant Leadership in Organisations	15
2.4. The Servant Leader	17
2.5. Effects of Servant Leadership	18
2.6. Servant vs. Transformational Leadership	19
2.7. Empowering and Developing Followers	20
2.8. Questioning Servant Leadership	22
3. Methodology	24
3.1. Approaching the Field	24
3.1.1. Personal Interest and Gaining Access	24
3.1.2. The Pre-Study on the Company	25
3.2. A Strategy-as-Practice-Focussed Qualitative Data Collection	26
3.2.1. Strategy-as-Practice in Business Workshops	26
3.2.2. Qualitative Data Collection	28
3.2.3. The Data Collection Overview	29
3.2.4. From Shadowing to Observations	31
3.2.5. Two Days of Observations at a Strategy Workshop	31
3.2.6. Collection of Complementary Information	33
3.2.6.1. Semi-structured Interviews at Upstalsboom	34
3.2.6.2. On-the-fly Interviews During the Workshop	34
3.2.6.3. Semi-structured Interviews with Industry Experts	35
3.3. A Narrative-based Qualitative Data Analysis	36
3.3.1. Discovering Narratives	36
3.3.2. The Literature Review	37

3.3.3. Qualitative Data Analysis	38
3.4. Trustworthiness, Ethical Considerations and Limitations	39
3.4.1. Trustworthiness	39
3.4.2. Ethical Considerations	40
3.4.3. Limitations	41
4. Empirical Findings and Analysis	43
4.1. Germany: Culture and Industry Problems	43
4.1.1. German National Culture and Language	43
4.1.2. Organisational Culture and Change	44
4.1.3. Problems in the German Hospitality Industry	46
4.1.4. The Roots of Problems: Leadership, Culture and Investments	47
4.2. Upstalsboom: A Company in Transition	53
4.2.1. The Status Quo: High on Profits, Low on Compassion	53
4.2.2. Challenging the Status Quo - Breaking Patterns	54
4.2.3. The Fruits of Transition	57
4.3. Observations of Servant Leadership Behaviour and Characteristics	60
4.3.1. Employees Shaping Strategy	60
4.3.2. Sketching 'Die Entwicklungswerkstatt'	61
4.3.3. Problems and Benefits of the Workshop	66
4.3.4. Interactions and Cultural Aspects	68
4.3.5. Developing People and Potential	70
4.3.6. Sharing and Creating Stories	72
4.3.7. Serving a Higher Purpose	73
4.3.8. Leaders Becoming Servants?	75
5. Potential and Limitations of Servant Leadership	77
5.1. A Focus on People, not Profit	77
5.2. Sharing Power and Developing People	78
5.3. An Atypical German Mindset	79
5.4. The Dangers of Hyperculture	80
5.5. Solving Industry Problems	80
5.6. Servant Leadership is not for Everyone	81
5.7. The Servant Leadership Paradox	81
6. Conclusions	82
6.1. Recap	82
6.2. Conclusion	82
6.3. Contributions	83
6.4. Practical Implications	84
6.5. Suggestions for Future Research	84
Appendices	86
Bibliography	93

List of figures

Figure 1: The structure of the thesis	9
Figure 2: Attributes of servant Leadership	14
Figure 3: Contrasting traditional and servant leadership	17
Figure 4: The process of the fieldwork	30
Figure 5: Measurable factors reflection the transition	58
Figure 6: Visualising the status quo before and after	59
Figure 7: Servant leadership at the case company	78

List of tables

Table 1: Servant leadership characteristics	13
Table 2: Characteristics of a servant leader	16
Table 3: Search words for the literature review	30
Table 4: Summary of the fieldwork	38
Table 5: Problems in the hospitality industry	47
Table 6: Roots of problems and promising servant leadership solutions	52

List of abbreviations

CEO	-	Chief executive officer
CSR	-	Corporate social responsibility
DEHOGA	-	German employers' association for the hospitality, restaurant and catering industry (Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband e.V.)
GLOBE	-	Global leadership and organisational behaviour effectiveness
HPM	-	Human potential management
HR	-	Human resources
HRM	-	Human resource management
ITB	-	Annual international tourism fair (Internationale Tourismus Börse)
KPI	-	Key performance indicators
NGG	-	German workers' union for the hospitality, restaurant and catering industry (Gewerkschaft Nahrung-Genuss-Gaststätten)

1. Introduction

Within this section, the frame of the in-hand thesis is set and the thesis is positioned within the field of human resources. Firstly, the human-related problems of the German hospitality industry are discussed. Thereafter, the differences between either understanding employees as organisational resources or sources of potential are presented. In the following, potential solutions in leadership research are briefly outlined, followed by the aim and research question. Then, the case company examined for the thesis is introduced and the chapter concludes with an outlook on the structure of the thesis.

1.1. The Human Problem of the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the German economy, currently employing over 1.7 million people and accounts for over 73 billion Euros net turnover annually (DEHOGA 2015). Between 2004 and 2013 the sector created more than 150.000 new jobs which equals a growth of 19.9%, compared to the overall economic growth of 9.1% over the same period, despite the economic crisis in Europe (Verlemann, Kipker et al. 2013). Even though the industry appears to enjoy an on-going growth, recruiting and retaining employees is one of the biggest challenge for the coming years (Maack, Haves et al. 2013, Verlemann, Kipker et al. 2013). The reasons for that have been found in the bad reputation of the whole sector due to low wages, long working hours, an overall high workload (Maack, Haves et al. 2013), as well as a lack of appreciation, training and career opportunities (Verlemann, Kipker et al. 2013) and way of managing people in a traditional, exploitative way (Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. 2010).

The industry is characterised by tall hierarchies, an almost Tayloristic manager-employee relationship, that is characterised by ‘command and control’. In line with this, one of the key issues was described by Ingrid Hartges, the managing director of DEHOGA as the following: ‘First and foremost, appreciation of employees, no matter if trained professional or kitchen porter, is needed¹’ (Verlemann, Kipker et al. 2013, p.5). The quote by Ingrid Hartges reflects the attitude of some managers in the industry, as well as many scholars today. However, this is in stark contrast to the understanding of employees in one of the first articles on leadership in the hospitality industry by Nebel and Kent Stearns (1977). They argued that the style of leadership has to be directing and controlling, especially in regard to younger employees and conclude: ‘No reasonable person would disagree with the statement that the leadership style most appropriate for dishwashers would probably not work for group vice presidents’ (Nebel and Stearns 1977, p. 72). This was supported by Worsfold (1989), who argued that structure and rules will enable the manager to be effective, even though they can result in high staff-turnovers. This high turnover of staff is another issue in the industry, even though some can be associated to the seasonal dependence, it is still higher than the nation’s average (Maack, Haves et al. 2013, Verlemann, Kipker et al. 2013).

The problems in the hospitality industry are well known and documented, by both practitioners and researchers. It seems clear that these have to be addressed and solved. Nevertheless, only a

¹ ‘Vor allen Dingen bedarf es der Wertschätzung der Mitarbeiter, ganz gleich ob Fachkraft oder Küchenhilfe’ (Verlemann, Kipker et al., p.5)

few companies have successfully overcome the issues, some with methods that were perceived as unorthodox. One example is the Schindlerhof in Nuremberg, whose founder Klaus Kobjoll is named a remarkable and unconventional entrepreneur for many years. He founded the Schindlerhof in 1984 and his focus on employees as first priority, combined with innovative HR has led to high profitability, very satisfied customers and several awards for the company since then (Bruhn, Brunow et al. 2002). Klaus Kobjoll's success in the hotel business relates to his good leadership that caters to his employees and serves them to fully develop their potentials in the company. On a larger scale than a single hotel, the hotel chain Upstalsboom is in transition from the typical, traditional top-down approach towards a servant leadership-inspired mindset and serves as the paradigmatic company for this thesis. A brief introduction to the company is provided in chapter 1.5.

1.2. Making the Most of Humans in the Hospitality Industry

As discussed before, the dominant problems in the hospitality industry are all closely related to the employees in the industry. The human element is without question very important in the labour-intensive hospitality industry and one of the key elements that creates competitive advantages. This goes beyond pure skills and knowledge, because in the service industry other factors such as personality, attitude and behaviours are important as well. They influence the outcome of a service that is highly dependent on the characteristics of services: intangibility, perishable, inseparability, inconsistency and involvement. (Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. 2010)

Within the research and practice of the management of the human element, two schools of thought are existing. The traditional view (HR) understands humans as a resource, whereas the comprehension of humans as sources of valuable potential (HP) emerged in the last decades (Stone and Deadrick 2015). The hospitality industry is underdeveloped and under researched in regard to HRM, even though its people are the core of the business model (Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. 2010). In order to provide a solid base to understand the problems of the German hospitality industry, the core differences between HR and HP are presented in the following.

1.2.1. Humans as an Organisational Resource

Whereas HR was in the beginning concerned to find a best way through Taylor's scientific management approach in the 20th century to increase efficiency and reduce time of production, the discipline has significantly evolved (Ulrich and Dulebohn 2015). Penrose (1959, in Boxall and Purcell 2000) differentiated between physical and human resources, where the latter includes the knowledge and experience the management team has. Since the 1980s HR is seen as a core contributor to organisational effectiveness and not as a cost factor in Taylor's sense. During his time, the use of the term HRM, understanding employees as an organisation's resource emerged. The term HR strategy implies certain HR processes that are in line with the organisation's strategy. Thereby, HR does contribute to the development of strategy and creates value, instead of focusing on administrative activities and problem solving. (Ulrich and Dulebohn 2015)

Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. (2010) showcased some HRM practices, which have been researched in the hospitality industry. They conclude that these are partly unprofessional and underdeveloped,

in comparison to other industries. In their review, they discovered no clear connection between the business strategy and HRM in the hospitality industry. They found a high level of employee turnover and stress, accompanied by a low level of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and motivation to be dominant in the industry.

The German hospitality industry is characterised by tall hierarchies and a traditional comprehension of supervisor and subordinate, sometimes almost in a military understanding of tasks as orders. The utilisation of humans as a resource can be in turn be found in the bad working conditions, reflecting an almost Tayloristic understanding of employees as part of a machine 'producing services' who follows an order as command, without questioning it.

Stone and Deadrick (2015) consider technology and talent management the biggest challenges and opportunities for HRM in the coming years. They argue that most of the HR processes were developed during the industrial area and thus are unfit for the contemporary service economy. This holds especially true for knowledge organisations, which service organisations can be classified as. They rely heavily on skills and knowledge of the employees and these skills are not substitutable. Therefore, knowledge organisations emphasis autonomy and participation, focus on training and development of employees and include them in decision-making processes. HR processes have also to deal with different expectations of skilled young workers, compared to their older counterparts and reshape their compensation systems to cater to them. These younger employees do not only demand fair pay, but also a say in the organisational development, inclusion and organisational fairness. (Stone and Deadrick 2015) A firm needs to retain and manage unique 'assets' that hold knowledge and skills to outperform competitors. The combination of skilled people with other resources needs to develop over time to create a competitive advantage. (Boxall and Purcell 2000)

This view was already evident in Kalra's (1997) writings, where he argued that a change in mindset has to occur in HRM. Highly skilled people are more and more likely to take offence, when they are considered to be a resource. Therefore, Kalra suggested using the term human potential management (HPM) instead. He also considers that a change of mind in organisations could be made by referring to employees as 'partners' instead, which would inhibit understanding humans as means to an end. In recent years, employees are more and more seen as valuable strategic and organisational assets that need investment and development, moving away from the understanding of labour as a cost factor (Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. 2010). There has been a call to relabel HR 'talent function' (Ulrich and Dulebohn 2015, p.194).

1.2.2. Humans as Potential and Talents

In contrast to the traditional understanding, Longenecker and Fink (2013) stated that the best HR leaders are maximising the potential of their human capital and are most effective in creating value. In the labour-intensive hospitality industry, the unfolding of potential and management of talents can create organisational advantages and thus create value and organisational advantages (Hughes and Rog 2008).

Longenecker and Fink (2013) named seven activities to improve HRM. The first is to understand HRM as a promotion of organisational effectiveness and its goals, opposed to an administrative

function. The second is to find the right talents for the positions in the company and place them accordingly. This is in line with the next activity, which focusses on education, training and development. Within this activity, they also mention the importance of organisational culture which helps the employees to understand the mission and their individual contribution to it. The fourth issue deals with performance management and appraisal. They argue that e.g. through coached feedback the employees will better understand their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, appraisal can foster ownership and engagement among employees. This can also be achieved by the next step, where they argue that it is vital to align the compensation and incentives in the organisation to be fully effective. Longenecker and Fink (2013) then continue that all managers have to act as HR managers in their respective field of work. This understanding can be achieved by stressing the importance of HRM throughout the hierarchy. They conclude that for any HRM to be effective, a strong and ethical culture is important that encourages people to step forward and report issues.

Ulrich and Dulebohn (2015) defined three targets or outcomes of HR: individual ability, organisational capability and leadership. On an individual level, simply put, HR needs to assign the right people with the right talents to the right job at the right time. They consider individual ability or talent to be the product of competence * commitment * contribution and the equation's result will be low or zero, depending on the inputs. Whereas competence (the abilities) can be trained to some extent and commitment (the willingness) achieved through incentives, contribution (meaning and purpose) is harder to achieve. The contribution will be achieved if the employees feel their personal needs and goals reflected in the organisation. Good leadership can assist to this dimension by giving vision and providing guidance to employees.

The behaviours of individuals have to be in line with the organisational strategy to support it and leadership has to be widespread in the organisation. Leadership in this context refers to the organisational ability to build future leaders matching their culture and brand. Good leadership brings individual abilities and organisational capacities together to solve problems. Leadership shall not be cultivated through traditional learning and development on the job, but also on life experience outside the organisation. This can include travelling, volunteer work, travelling and learning from role models, thereby future leaders will broaden their horizon and repertoire of skills. (Ulrich and Dulebohn 2015) This broadening of horizons can be implemented in CSR projects that enable employees to be part of a bigger meaning of the organisation. Other motivational factors include personal growth and development, autonomy and the wish to realise one's potential. If these demands are fulfilled, it will in turn engage employees more and give them pride and loyalty to their profession. Rather than being managed and utilised, they can manage themselves, recognise and utilise their potential and continuously grow to benefit the organisation at large. (Kalra 1997)

According to Vogt (2005), the human capabilities theory assumes that all humans share universal capabilities and life is fulfilling when these capabilities can be put to use, which he calls human flourishing. The human capabilities theory began evolving in the late 1980s and does not measure economic growth, but its importance for human development. The emphasis of the theory is on the fact that the economic growth is enhancing humans to live up to their potential and have more choices. Thereby, the growth is improving people's lives and understood as a

means to an end. Vogt argues that it should be a question of moral for a business to promote human well-being.

This is partly based on Csikszentmihalyi (in Vogt 2005) who found that people are most satisfied at work, when they reach a balance between their abilities and challenges they are put up with. Furthermore, they are satisfied when they both distinguish themselves individually and contribute to a group's goal. This state of equilibrium or 'flow' describes that human happiness that is man-made. The moment of flow is accompanied by deep focus on the task at hand and full utilisation of potential. Therefore, the goals of leaders and the organisation at large shall be to create as many moments of flow for the employees as possible. This could e.g. be achieved by promoting creativity through a playful work environment or by empowering workers to fulfil tasks and grow hereby. (Vogt 2005)

People that are matched with tasks that challenge themselves and make use of their potential are more likely to involve themselves better and become more productive (Vogt 2005). The potential in every individual remains unknown and unrealised to a large extent (Clarcken 2012). Clarcken (2012) also argues that there are three interconnected dimensions of human potential: mind (intellectual), heart (emotional) and will (moral). The mind is focused on thinking and understanding the truth, e.g. if something is authentic or not. Feelings and altruistic love are found in the dimension of heart, whereas the will acts and is influenced by justice, the good and moral. The full potential is unfolded, when these dimensions are balanced and used inter-connectedly.

The goal of a business shall not only be to produce a good or service to make profits, but to manifest a shared culture, purpose and values (Vogt 2005). A very powerful tool can be a strong vision of the company, that promotes the personal growth of workers, as well as their overall positive contribution to society. HRM that empowers people in the hospitality industry aims at engaging them emotionally, to achieve a greater involvement in the provided service (Lashley 1995).

To summarise, the comprehension of humans as sources of potential, who can contribute to the organisational success holds many promising ideas to companies to be successful in the hospitality industry. The line of thought that a company follows in their HRM practices and strategy is decided upon by the top leadership of an organisation. Therefore, it is important to take a look at the current trends in leadership research to tackle the problems of the hospitality industry.

1.3. Finding Solutions in Leadership

Lately, one can observe a trend in the hospitality journals and literature: Servant leadership and its connection to success and employees are discussed by many scholars (e.g. Liden, Wayne et al. 2013, Wu, Tse et al. 2013, Burke, Koyuncu et al. 2014, Hsiao, Lee et al. 2015, Kwak and Kim 2015, Zou, Tian et al. 2015, Ling, Lin et al. 2016). On the other hand, various scholars described the best way of leading in the hospitality industry to be transformational leadership over the past decades (e.g. Tracey and Hinkin 1994, Brownell 2010, Rothfelder, Ottenbacher et al. 2012). Transformational and servant leadership both share similar characteristics and differences are

sometimes hard to distinguish. Both leadership paradigms belong to ‘positive’ leadership theories and several scholars have tried to differentiate the concepts (Gregory Stone, Russell et al. 2004, Smith, Montagno et al. 2004, Washington, Sutton et al. 2014).

Even though the concept of servant leadership was introduced in 1976 by Robert Greenleaf, it still is mostly anecdotal, descriptive and philosophical (Berger 2014). There are various interpretations around, but all scholars agree on the core that distinguishes servant leadership from other leadership theories: the focus is not on the self-interest of a leader, the focus is to help subordinates to grow. Servant leadership focusses on the humans first, develops them and utilises their potential. (Russell and Stone 2002, Dierendonck and Patterson 2010)

For some scholars and managers, servant leadership seems to be the magical formula to improve the reputation today’s hospitality industry is associated with: an inhumane, purely profit-oriented, and exploiting machinery. Some hotel cooperations like Ritz-Carlton label themselves as an excellent example of servant leadership (Sucher and McManus 2001), even though their claim has not been independently researched yet.

To comprehend the idealising servant leadership theory that is the bedrock and theoretical framework of this thesis, it is discussed in various facets in detail, including the similarities and differences to transformational leadership in chapter 2.

1.4. Aim and Research Questions

As presented in the introduction to this thesis, the hospitality industry, Germany serving as a typical case, faces various problems with the most important and invaluable component of any service organisation: The people working in it. The underlying reason is the traditional, inhumane top-down approach to management in most of the companies that understand their employees as means to an end: To serve customers. Over the last decades, many scholars studied and argued for a paradigm change that puts the humans in the organisation first: The servant leadership theory. Servant leadership flips the paradigm by inverting the relationship between leader and subordinates. Thereby, the people in the organisation are served by an altruistic leader to make the most of their talent, to develop their potential. Servant leadership holds many promising notions to solve the problems of the hospitality industry, but is descriptive, utopian and idealistic in its nature.

Therefore, the aim of the in-hand thesis is to explore the feasible potential of servant leadership in the hospitality industry and also critically discuss its limitations. This thesis is positioned within the field of human resources studying characteristics of servant leadership a paradigmatic hotel company.

To fulfil the aim, the following research questions were developed:

RQ1: Which potential solutions and limitations does servant leadership hold for the hospitality industry?

RQ2: What insights about the potential and limitations of servant leadership in the hospitality industry can be gained from a paradigmatic servant leadership-inspired hotel chain?

In order to resolve the research questions, empirical data was retrieved through semi-structured interviews and observations of a mission and strategy development workshop. The data collection followed a methodology informed by the strategy-as-practice perspective. The collected qualitative data was analysed in a narrative-based approach and contrasted to theoretical findings to reach trustworthy conclusions.

1.5. Upstalsboom - the Studied Company

As the hospitality industry is a very diverse sector where every enterprise is rooted within an individual context, servant leadership has to be studied within one case company to draw conclusions about the potential and limitations of the theory. The case company for this thesis, Upstalsboom Hotel + Freizeit GmbH & Co. KG (further referred to as Upstalsboom) has received numerous rewards for their unconventional HRM practices and radical change of leadership (Fournier 2013). To understand the potential contribution of the company's 'magical formula' to solve the problems of the industry, several facets and conditions need to be understood within the studied phenomena.

Upstalsboom is a German hotel chain, currently operating nine hotels and more than 580 holiday rentals mainly at Germany's North Sea and Baltic Sea coast. The company opened the first hotel in 1976 on the island of Langeoog to expand the core business as a building and management contractor. Upstalsboom is a family-owned enterprise, currently led in the second Generation by Bodo Janssen.

Upstalsboom currently operates in twenty destinations, nine of which are hotels and spread out over 1.200 km coastal line. The hotel accumulated a net turnover of 42 million Euro in 2013, representing an increase of 12% compared to the previous fiscal year (Laudenbach 2014). Through more productive employees, sunk agent costs, less employee turnover and other factors, the organisation's profitability increased in the same period by 40%. Furthermore, almost all of the profit was reinvested in the hotels and holiday rentals, 20% of the profit was invested in the training and development of the employees. In 2015, Upstalsboom grossed 44.6 million Euro through over 400.000 room nights and achieved an occupancy rate of 69,1% (Hotel 2016).

Since 2010, Upstalsboom has significantly increased the revenues and profitability, but also won several awards for their HR and company strategy. Over the last six years, the corporate culture, values and overall 'way of doing things' has been changed radically. Instead of profit and the focus on KPIs, the employee are in the focus, especially their personal and professional development. The company refers to this change of mind as 'der Upstalsboom Weg'². (Gründling 2013, Kaduk, Osmetz et al. 2015, Purps-Paridigol 2015) This strong emphasis of employee development was the initial trigger to match servant leadership with Upstalsboom in this thesis.

² 'Upstalsboom's Path'

Even though Upstalsboom is not labelling itself as a ‘servant leadership company’, connections and similarities were evident at first sight. Therefore, Upstalsboom can be understood as a company that now practices certain aspects of servant leadership. The process of transition is described in chapter 4.2 to develop a background for the observations.

1.6. The Structure of the Thesis

Following this introduction, in chapter 2, servant leadership is presented in-depth and connected to the previously mentioned HRM aspects. Chapter 3 describes the methodology and going of the research in detail. The foundation of empirical fieldwork is the observation of a strategy workshop at the case company. In chapter 3.2.1., the strategy-as-practice perspective on workshops is introduced as an theoretical informed methodology for observations. After the description of other utilised data collection methods, chapter 3.3.1. then demonstrates the narrative-based approach to data analysis.

Chapter 4 is divided in three parts. The first section outlines the findings on German culture and the hotel industry in general and links the potential and limitations of servant leadership to it. In the next part, the transition of the company is described as the foundation of the observations. Thereafter, in the third part, the findings of the fieldwork regarding the case company are analysed in detail. The fifth chapter then discusses the key findings of the fourth chapter in relation to the theory.

In the last chapter, after a quick recap, the research questions are answered in the conclusions, followed by contributions. Then, practical implications and suggestions for future research are presented. The structure of this thesis and basic outline of the chapters is visualised in figure 1 below.

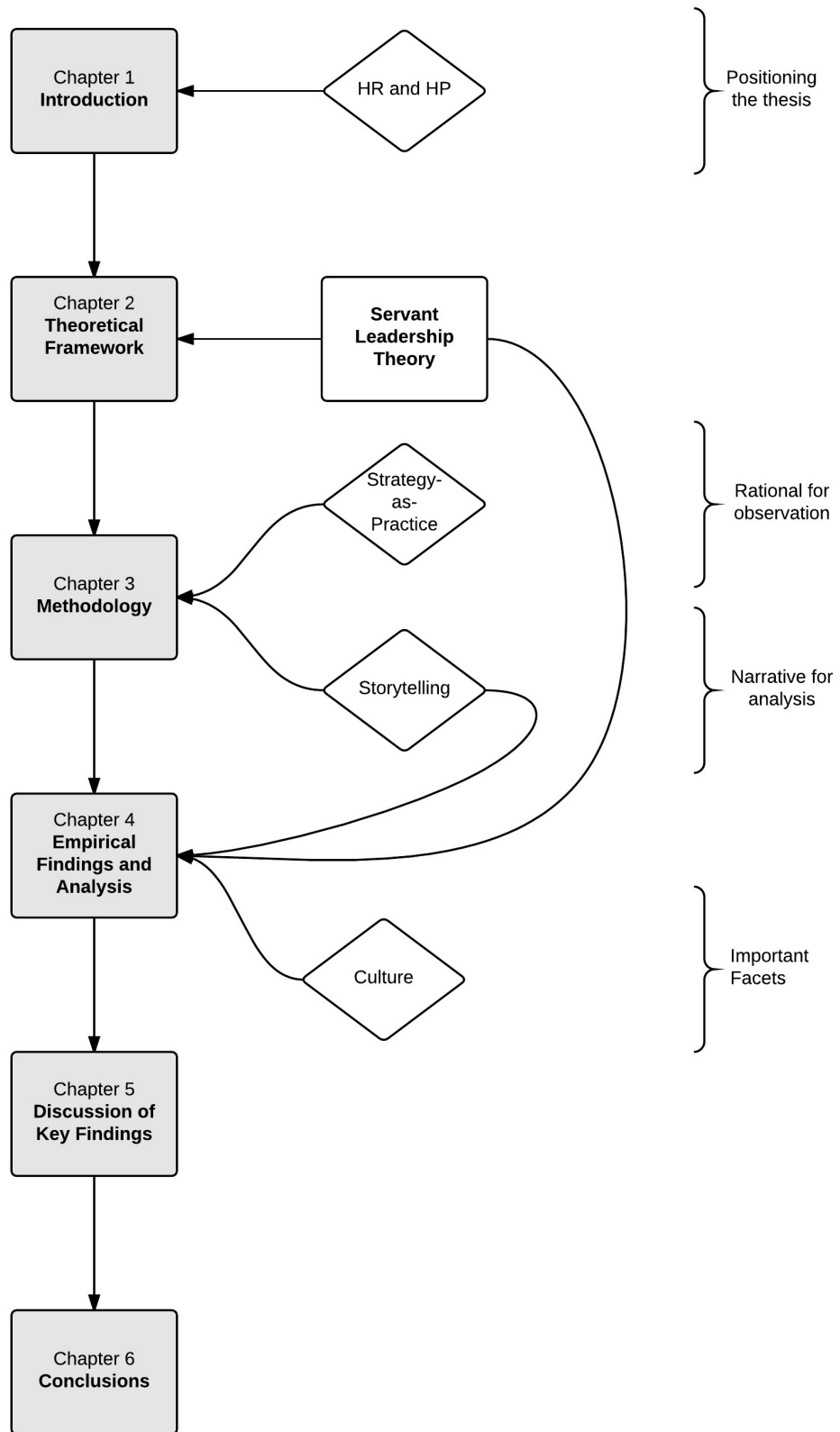


Figure 1: The structure of the thesis

2. Theoretical Framework: Servant Leadership

The next section provides the theoretical framework for the thesis. After the roots and origins of servant leadership are outlined, the struggle of scholars to define the theory is described. In the following, servant leadership in organisations is presented and a servant leader is characterised. Thereafter the effects of servant leadership and its connections to other leadership theories are established. Building on the previous parts, the notion of empowering people in servant leadership is discussed. In the last section, critique on servant leadership is presented.

2.1. The Roots of Servant Leadership

Robert Greenleaf had been working at the telecommunications company AT&T for forty years and retired as director of management research. (Dierendonck and Patterson 2010) After retirement in 1964, Greenleaf started a second twenty-five year lasting career as a consultant, further developing the concept of servant leadership (Spears 1996). The idea of the concept that a leader is a servant occurred to him while reading Herman Hesse's 'Journey to the East'. Hesse's novel describes the character of a servant called Leo, who looks after the group of travellers and guides them throughout the journey. When Leo disappears, the group falls apart and it is revealed that Leo was actually the titular head of the Order, thus being a leader disguised as a servant. (Spears 1996, Dierendonck and Patterson 2010)

The original text of Greenleaf is a rather complicated read and conceptual description of servant leadership. He understood his writing as the starting point for an ongoing dialogue that in the end will benefit all participants, intended to solve the leadership crisis in organisations (Russell and Stone 2002, Prosser 2010). Greenleaf intended to challenge readers to reflect and grow instead of delivering a how-to guide (Parris and Peachey 2013). Thus, several scholars developed various definitions and characteristics based on their own interpretation of servant leadership theory and Greenleaf's initial beliefs. Some even argue that this is the spirit of servant leadership theory, because it is vague in itself, philosophical and leaves room for interpretation. The initial writings by Greenleaf and research on the issue are mostly prescriptive, formulating an idealised leader, rather than descriptive and practical. (Russell and Stone 2002, Avolio and Gardner 2005, Van Dierendonck 2011, Hunter, Neubert et al. 2013, Washington, Sutton et al. 2014)

The striving of the servant leader to encourage followers to become servants themselves is important to Greenleaf, who calls a true servant leader 'primus inter pares'³ not abusing or using his power to force followers (Greenleaf 1977, Van Dierendonck 2011). In stark contrast to the 'homo economicus', who is individualistic, opportunistic and strives for self-actualising in the spirit of Taylor's scientific management, the servant leader falls into the category of 'homo reciprocans' being pro-organisation, other-actualising and in favour of improving their environment. (Van Dierendonck 2011)

³ latin for 'first among equals'

Bekker (2010) argued that a desire for existential meaning and sense-making is evident in today's society and not satisfied by the established spirituality. The understanding of spirituality as inner values has been described in leadership and business contexts, further emphasising the value-based leadership approaches, e.g. servant leadership. Greenleaf's vision of leaders as servants and prophets for a better common future are described as moral preaching to narrow or close the gap between commerce and community (Bekker 2010).

Traits of servant leadership are evident in all world religion, e.g. Sarayrah's (2004) description of servant leaders in early Islam and beduin culture. In every religion contrary examples of 'bad' leaders occurred and were described. Aspirations for power, fame and prestige were more important to some leaders than the moral interpretation of leadership stated in their religions believes, outlined below. In Judaism, the biblical figure of Moses is characterised by humility and as a shepherd liberating his people from slavery. In Buddhism, the concept of leadership is influenced by the notion of selflessness. Central in the teachings is the idea that the way to nirvana is was not taken by Buddha, enabling him to provide guidance to others how to reach it. This mindset is transferred to the believers who follow the teaching and help others find the way. (Bekker 2010)

Christianity is closely linked to Greenleaf's servant leadership theory, based upon his own religious believes as a quaker (Sendjaya and Sarros 2002). In the bible, Jesus' motivation is described in Matthew 20 as: 'the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Bekker 2010, p.64). Mathew 20 continues: 'whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant' (Bekker 2010, p.64), further reflecting the idea of a servant leader. Bekker continues that Jesus' self-sacrifice and his deep care for the apostles served for many Christians scholars as a starting point for their quest on good and moral leadership. (Bekker 2010)

Max Weber described three kinds of religious leaders: magicians, priests and prophets. Magicians lead through 'virtue or personal gifts made manifest in miracles' (McClymond 2001, p.622, in Bekker 2010) whereas leaders seen as priests are 'functionalities of a regularly organised and permanent enterprise concerned with influencing the gods' (Weber 1968, p.28 in Bekker 2010). Prophetic leaders are confronting the status quo based on a personal mission of call for ethical renewal (Bekker 2010). Bekker lined out that Greenleaf's concept of a servant as a prophet is in line with Weber, in both Webers sub-classifications as ethical and exemplary prophets.

Examples for historic servant leaders are plentiful and can be discovered in many cultures and contexts. A powerful example within an American context is the founding father George Washington, who returned after the war of independence back to politics. As the first elected president in 1789, he has been using his power for the good of society and refused to run for a third term to make way for new leaders. (Dierendonck and Patterson 2010)

Within an European context, one well-known leader is Frederick the Great of Prussia. Despite being a king in the very traditional 'god-given' monarchic structure, his contact with the French enlightenment philosopher Voltaire among other influences changed his self-perception. He described himself as 'the first servant of my state'⁴, reformed Prussia and perceived himself as a

⁴ 'der erste Diener meines Staates' (Birtsch, 1987)

fellow citizen serving as the head of state for other citizens. He described it as his duty to act with integrity and altruism to lead Prussia. (Birtsch 1987)

The examples of historic servant leaders do not end in a Western and Christian context. Sarayrah (2004) conducted a study about servant leaders in the Bedouin-Arab culture. He discovered in the early years of Islam that the caliphs (leaders of the tribes) were the oldest and wisest men among the group, consulting the members of shura (tribal council) to make the best decisions for the community, hereby relying on ‘the wisdom of many’.

Whereas the theory of servant leadership has just been conceptualised, researched and debated by academics over the last decades, the roots of it are significantly older. As discussed above, traits and signs of servant leadership behaviour can be found in all world religions and throughout different cultural backgrounds. Defining servant leadership as a theory is somewhat more complicated and is discussed in the following chapter.

2.2. Defining Servant Leadership

Even though Greenleaf’s writing is vague, the most common quote can be used as a definition of his understanding of servant leadership:

‘The Servant-Leader is servant-first. ... It begins with the natural feeling that ones wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. ... The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least no further be harmed?’ (Greenleaf 1977, p.7)

Prosser (2010) argued that there is a clear distinction between a person who leads first or serves first, whereas only the latter is a true servant leader who caters to follower’s highest need: being served. Even though several scholars have different interpretations about the ideal servant leader, Prosser (2010) and others agree that the notion of a leader who serves first is fundamental and non-negotiable. This focus on others first and not self-interests can be described as the defining core of servant leadership. Spears (2010) characterised servant leadership as involving others in decision-making processes, based on teamwork and community, based on an overall ethical and caring behaviour that is focussing on enhancing the personal growth of followers, while improving the quality of the institution. Furthermore, he described the beneficial effects of the organisation on society. Spears developed a set of ten characteristics in the early 1990s from all accessible writings of Greenleaf, both published and unpublished, including personal notes (Spears 2010), which are summarised in table 1 below. Even Spears himself considered the characteristics to be non-exhaustive. The characteristics were not operationalised by Spears, thus leaving a gap and making empirical research difficult. The three most common operationalisations were conducted by Laub (1999) in six clusters, Russell and Stone (2002) in nine functional and eleven additional characteristics and Patterson’s (2003) writings, where she based servant leadership on virtues. (Van Dierendonck 2011)

Table 1: Servant leadership characteristics (adapted from Spears 2010)

Listening	Listening within the context of servant leadership does not only mean to follow what others say, it includes the unspoken and identification of the general desire of people. Furthermore, it contains aspects such as understanding yourself and assists the growth of a leader through periods of reflection.
Empathy	A servant leader has to understand and emphasise with people, he accepts and recognises their individuality. A servant leader always assumes good intentions and becomes a skilled empathic listener with a wish to understand his followers.
Healing	A servant leader has the potential to heal himself and others and communicates that the search for wholeness is shared by him and the followers.
Awareness	Awareness, especially in regard to self-awareness assists the servant leader to understand the underlying ethics and values in a holistic context. This awareness can be disturbing at times, because it is unclear what will be discovered.
Persuasion	The servant leader seeks to persuade others and create consensus in decision-making instead of using his authority to force a decision upon a group.
Conceptualisation	Within planning, a servant leader shall dream beyond daily realities and provide a visionary concept for the organisation. They have to balance day-to-day routines with with a conceptual, future-oriented thinking.
Foresight	Foresight is closely related to conceptualisation, but includes to assume the future consequences based on experience from the past in combination with the existing current realities. The concept is largely unexplored in leadership and is linked to Greenleaf's notion of an intuitive mind, which cannot be learned.
Stewardship	Stewardship has been defined as holding something in trust for another, thus, in regard to servant leadership the role of the organisation is seen within the greater role in society, serving others. A strong emphasis is put on openness and persuasion instead of control.
Commitment to the growth of people	Apart from contributions as workers, servant leaders focus on the intrinsic value of every individual. Therefore, the development of the follower in regard to personal, professional and spiritual growth is a key characteristic of servant leadership.
Building community	Because the local communities have lost influence on people's life, the servant leader strives to build a sense of community at the workplace.

Russell and Stone (2002) divided the characteristics in two groups; functional attributes and accompanying attributes that have been identified in previous literature. The nine functional attributes are: vision, honesty, integrity, trust, service, modelling, pioneering, appreciation of others and empowerment. The functional attributes are all interlinked, yet distinct in themselves. According to Russel and Stone (2002), they are distinguishable and initiate the actions of a leader. The accompanying attributes are not supposed to be understood as secondary characteristics, because they can in some cases be identified as prerequisites for servant leadership behaviour and determine the overall success. The eleven accompanying attributes are: communication, credibility, competence, stewardship, visibility, influence, persuasion, listening, encouragement, teaching and delegation. To visualise Russell and Stone's (2002) model that includes a very broad description of servant leadership attributes, see figure 2 below. They also acknowledged that the theory of servant leadership is still not perfect and will change over time.

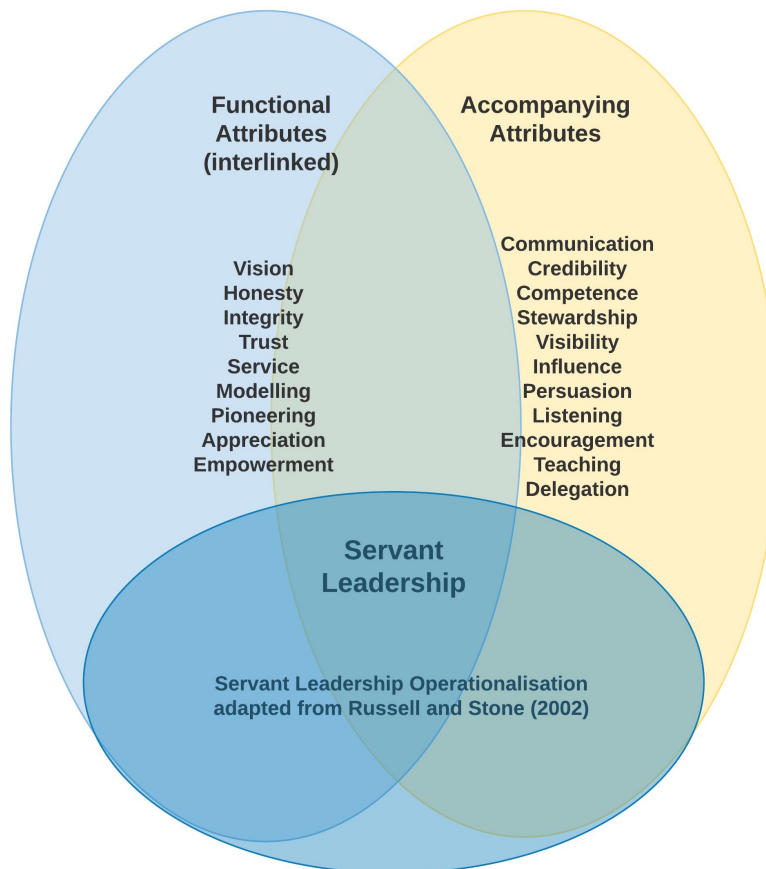


Figure 2: Attributes of servant Leadership, adapted from Russell and Stone (2002)

Some scholars like Winston (2000 in Patterson 2010) and Patterson (2003) connected the servant leadership theory with the notion of love in a moral or social sense. Patterson described the love of a servant leader as the Greek ‘agapao love’, encouraging to love, altruism and act moral at the right time based on honest reasoning (Van Dierendonck 2011). Even though this may seem abstract at first, some characteristics like empathy, heading, stewardship and development can be connected to a loving behaviour. Furthermore, love can be classified as a basic human need, since everyone wants to be cared for, accepted, appreciated and respected. A general assumption is that if you love someone, you cannot hurt the person at the same time, because you care for them deeply. A loving leader intentionally improves the health, knowledge, freedom and independence of a follower. (Patterson 2010) Patterson’s understanding of servant leadership can be connected to the idea of Sendyaja (2010), because he compared the mindset of a servant leader with parents: they also accept their children unconditionally and strive for the full development of their potential. Laub (2010) on the other hand criticised this parent-child relation as contrary to servant leadership itself.

Mayer argued in line with others that the key element of servant leadership is the ‘focus on and concern for follower needs’ (2010, p.148). Mayer bases his model of follower need satisfaction on the self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1985). They established three basic needs as essentially needed for growth, integrity and well-being, which Mayer in turn linked to servant leadership. The need for autonomy (being in control) is supported within Servant leadership

theory by the leader fostering development and providing the freedom to work independently, thus showing trust in their follower's abilities. The need for competence (feeling confident and capable at work) is evident by the follower's freedom to work without micro-managing, giving them the feeling of mastery over their work. The last need, relatedness (to feel connected), is served with the feeling that the leader builds relationships with the followers and wants to enable their development. (Mayer 2010)

One of the latest attempts to define servant leadership is from van Dierendonck (2011), who extracted six characteristics of servant leadership from the previous models of Laub, Russell and Stone and Patterson. These focus on the follower's experience and perception of the leader, grouped into: empowering and developing, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction and stewardship and are presented in the following.

Empowering and developing followers includes the enabling of people to execute personal power, acknowledges the value of individuals and encourages their development. This is in line with the idea of equality, because the sharing of information supports the intrinsic value of the followers to enable them to learn and show their true potential. The characteristic of *humility* is about the perspective on accomplishments. The servant leader is modest and does not harvest the fruit of accomplishments, but steps back. He actively asks others for their contribution, supports and enhances their performance to benefit of their expertise. When a servant leader displays *authenticity*, he is true to himself and upright. He follows a moral code and is honest, keeps promises and shows vulnerability. The individual stays in the focus and his professional role is secondary for a servant leader. The *interpersonal acceptance* of a servant leader includes their identity and the mistakes of followers are taken without punishment or resentful behaviour. The atmosphere is trustful and characterised by fairness, compassion and empathy. A servant leader provides *direction*, thus communicates the expectations and assign tasks according to the followers' abilities, holding them accountable for their actions to a reasonable degree. The direction can include new ways of problem-solving which are rooted in the values and governed by them. The characteristic of *stewardship* implies that the leader is not only caretaker, but also role model within the organisation. Stewardship in this context is related to a sense of responsibility for and loyalty to followers with an emphasis on consensus-finding teams. (Van Dierendonck 2011)

2.3. Servant Leadership in Organisations

In 1999, Laub developed the Organisational Leadership Assessment (OLA) to systematically review servant leadership and develop a more tangible concept. He defined six characteristics for a servant leader which are defined in three descriptions before assessing the organisational level. These can be found in table 2 below.

Laub's attempt to understand servant leadership is rooted in the idea that individual values form the basis for servant leadership, whereas others such as Farling (1999 in Stone, Russell et al. 2004). suggested that the values are spiritual. Russell and Stone (2002) stated that a closer look into the values of servant leaders would prove beneficial for the understanding of the theory.

Laub argues that the characteristics have to be assessed by employees within the organisation, because a servant leadership organisation spreads the leadership among them and everyone contributes (Laub 2010). Based on the concrete definitions, he shaped his definition of a servant organisation as ‘an organisation in which the characteristics of servant leadership are displayed through the organisational culture and are valued and practiced by the leadership and workforce’ (Laub 1999, p.83). Therefore, Laub’s measurement aimed to develop a two-dimensional measurement (organisation and leadership) within the six characteristics, but was inconclusive in the results and he called for future research, as his study was the first empirical servant leadership study (Van Dierendonck 2011).

Table 2: Characteristics of a servant leader developed from Laub (1999)

The servant leader characteristics	Defining the characteristics
values people	trusting and believing people serving others first receptive, non-judgemental listening
develops people	fostering learning and growth modeling behaviour encouraging and affirming others
builds community	by personal relationships by collaborative working by valuing other’s differences
displays authenticity	being open and accountable being willing to learn from others maintaining authenticity and trust
provides leadership	envisioning the future taking initiative clarifying goals
shares leadership	facilitating a shared vision sharing power and releasing control sharing of status and promoting others

The core of servant leadership in organisations, serving employees or followers, holds an interesting point of view for the service industry. The traditional hospitality management, could be visualised as a pyramid with the leader on top, the employees in the middle serving customers (down) and the leader’s organisation (up) at the same time. In the idea of servant leadership, the leaders are providing a service to the employees (are serving them), which enables them in turn to only focus on their customers and provide service to them. The roles are then reversed, employees become responsible and the leaders responsive (Blanchard 1998). This idea of a turned pyramid is visualised in figure 3 below for a better understanding. In line with Laub’s (2010) argument, I would argue that the assessment if an organisation truly executes this model has to be evaluated by the employees and not the leaders.

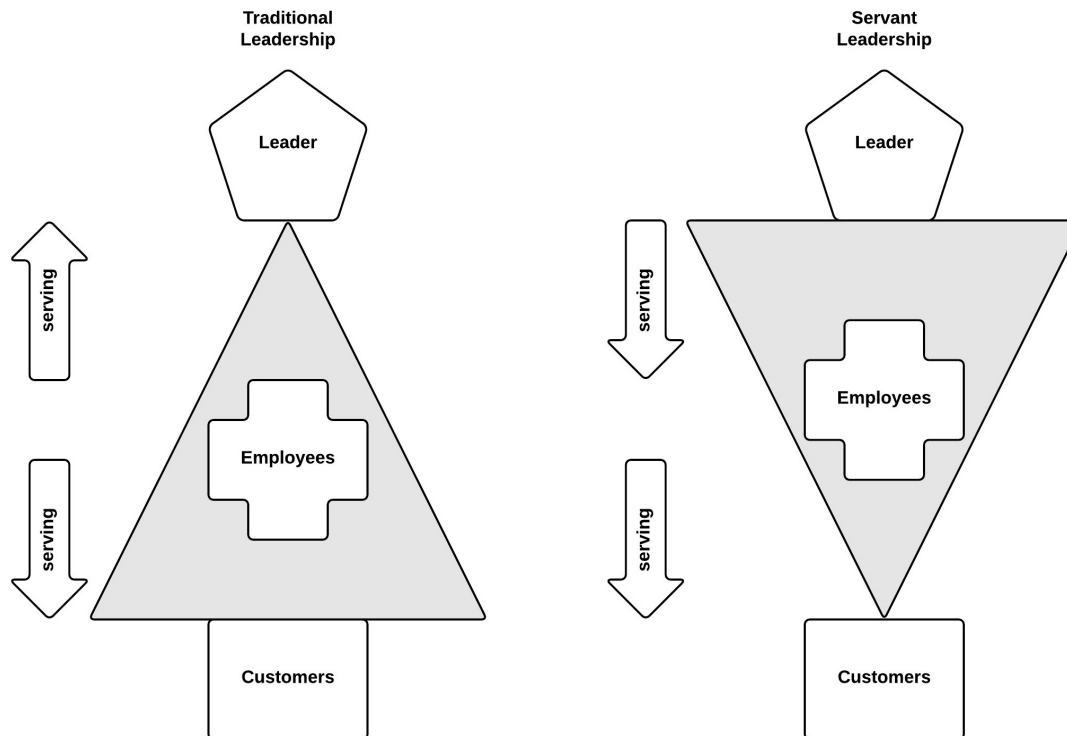


Figure 3: *Contrasting traditional and servant leadership*

Even though servant leadership seems to be practiced in organisations which is described in the media widely, it is understudied in organisational settings (Parris and Peachey 2013).

2.4. The Servant Leader

Sendjaya (2010) described behaviours of a servant leader that awake trust in the followers, which supports Spears' ten characteristics (compare table 1 in chapter 2.2.). The leader has to communicate a shared vision that can be collectively identified with, appeal to common values while setting a personal example and demonstrating them, be committed and concerned for the welfare of the followers while engaging in a moral dialogue. The training to become a servant leader is therefore less focussed on competences and concepts, but on the character development of the leader. (Sendjaya 2010)

Chan and Drasgow (2001) concluded in their research on motivations to lead that three factors generally influence the leaders initial decision to take the lead; affective liking to lead, duty to lead or calculated benefits as a result of leading. Whereas a motivation to lead focusses on the leader's vein to be in charge, the motivation to serve is defined by the emphasis of follower development. Ng and Koh (2010) discovered servant leaders' motivation is based on values of duty, responsibility and non-calculative actions, which are rooted in altruism.

Sun (2013) argued that there is a lack in research considering why a leader transforms himself into a servant leader. He concluded that this is based in their self-concept, determining

themselves to have a servant identity. The self-concept can be determined by different forms of current selfs, e.g. personal characteristics, occupational roles, roles within a family, activities or the membership in a certain group. Together they form the identity of a person and how they determine their self-concept.

The servant leader is usually also motivated by his self-determination. The concept is rooted in the psychological needs to feel competent, feel connected and feel autonomous. The satisfaction of these needs will serve as a source for self-motivation and give mental strength and health to the individual. Therefore, the servant leader gives up control to a certain degree and connects to followers to develop them and benefit from their knowledge. (Van Dierendonck 2011)

McGee-Cooper and Looper (2001) emphasised that servant leadership not only takes the organisational goals into account, but also the overall role in society, connecting it strongly with ethical behaviour. Within this notion, a strong sense of community and relationship building is key; the people bond with another in a perceived safe environment. This perception in turn increases the chance for creativity, personal development and empowered decision-making. Stone, Russell et al. (2004) defined servant leadership as a belief in the long-term goal-achievement through the growth, development and general well-being of the followers from the beginning.

Spears argued that Greenleaf believed that organisations did not encourage the natural desire of people to serve others, based on the will to help (Spears 2010). Sendjaya (2010) defined the most important difference as the paradigm change from leader-centred (sacrificing others for selfish aims) to other-oriented thinking, which in turn leads to a holistic development of leaders and followers.

Concluding, drafting a measurable description that characterises a servant leader is nearly impossible. The personal values and motivations to lead play an important role to determine the characteristics. As many scholars agree, the core characteristic is in line with the theory itself: the focus on follower development and their welfare. Servant leadership stands for an idealistic leadership theory that is nearly impossible to reach in reality.

The servant leader has to be a moral role model to look up to and embody the characteristics of servant leadership in his behaviour, he does not 'brainwash' people, but persuades and convinces. The effects of this behaviour are outlined in the following chapter.

2.5. Effects of Servant Leadership

The effects of servant leadership in an organisational context became a focus of research during the last decades. Studies indicate more satisfied and more committed employees whose overall performance is better. Furthermore, in many articles the positive impact on team performance, return on investment, organisational citizenship behaviour, creativity and innovation have been discussed (Van Dierendonck 2011, Sun 2013)

Laub (2010) evaluated over forty studies that used his 1999 organisational leadership assessment to determine the effect of a servant organisation, in regard to organisational health factors.

Eleven out of sixteen studies in regard to job satisfaction reported clear positive correlations to job satisfaction. Irving (2005 in Laub 2010) discovered a positive impact on team effectiveness in servant organisations. Within a manufacturing company, strong evidence was found by Rauch (2007 in Laub 2010) for limited employee attrition and absenteeism was decreased in the servant organisation. Mayer (2010) linked the three needs of followers to three outcomes that create a better organisation through: a positive job attitude, organisational citizen behaviour and enhanced performance.

There are recent articles published in management and leadership journals which examine the positive impact of servant leadership in the hospitality industry. Examples of servant leadership studies include achieving a competitive advantage through perceived service quality in Turkish hotels (Koyuncu, J. Burke et al. 2014), the positive impact on individual and unit performance in restaurants in the United States (Liden, Wayne et al. 2013), how servant leadership impacts the employees' own servant behaviour in Chinese hotels (Wu, Tse et al. 2013), the connection between better organisational citizenship and service quality in Korean hotels (Kwak and Kim 2015), the impact on improved employee's helping behaviour in Chinese hotels (Zou, Tian et al. 2015), the effect on customer value co-creation in Taiwanese hotels (Hsiao, Lee et al. 2015), the impact on improved service behaviours and performance in Chinese hotels (Ling, Lin et al. 2016).

To conclude, studies in the service and product sector show that servant leadership could be a proper theoretical tool to solve the problems in the hospitality industry. As mentioned before, some scholars consider transformational leadership as the ideal leadership for the hospitality industry. Because the two leadership theories are closely connected and belong to the group of current, positive leadership contracts that include ethical components, they are contrasted in the next chapter.

2.6. Servant vs. Transformational Leadership

As described by Spears (1996), in most leadership theories a change towards caring, ethical and development-focussed leadership behaviour can be identified. Spears found characteristics of servant leadership theory in other leadership theories such as transformational leadership and charismatic leadership. Avolio, Walumbwa et al. (2009) studied all 'current' leadership constructs and concluded that a trend to an 'ethical' component is evident. Some scholars even argue that servant and transformational leadership are rooted in charismatic leadership themselves (Washington, Sutton et al. 2014). Van Dierendonck (2011) describes even more overlaps in (positive) leadership theories, namely; transformational leadership, ethical leadership, Level 5 leadership, empowering leadership, authentic leadership, spiritual leadership and self-sacrifice leadership. Even the 'basic' prerequisite for servant leadership, the altruistic approach to improve other's lives by serving them is not exclusive, but can be found in spiritual leadership (Sun 2013).

For the purpose of this thesis, only transformational leadership is briefly discussed. Transformational leadership is claimed to be the most extensively researched issue in leadership theory (Washington, Sutton et al. 2014). This comparison is by no means exhaustive, but needed to ensure that the 'blurry' boundaries between the theories are clarified.

Stone, Russell et al. (2004) argue that transformational and servant leadership have relatively similar characteristics, because they are both people-oriented. Both paradigms emphasise on the importance to appreciate and value people, listening, teaching and empowering. Servant leadership is not relying on charisma as source of influence, compared to e.g. transformational or charismatic leadership. The risk of narcissistic and manipulative behaviour is limited. Nevertheless, servant leaders rely on reciprocal relationships and if their motives are in the best interest of others, the followers shall be motivated to serve others and not the leader. Self-centred leaders who disguise as servant leaders pose a threat to these relationships, thus utilising the theory to benefit themselves.

The degree of trust and freedom is higher in servant leadership, because the focus lays upon the fulfilment and development of followers. In contrast to that, transformational leaders' concern is to engage followers and accomplish the organisational goals in the first place. The development and empowerment of followers is the second concern within this paradigm, whereas servant leaders' focus on followers is unconditionally. (Stone, Russell et al. 2004) Transformational leaders develop their followers through individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation and supportive behaviour, aiming at benefitting the organisation through maximising follower's performance (Van Dierendonck 2011). Transformational leadership forms the followers values to support the vision and goals and is concerned with organisational progress and development (Bass 1985, in Stone, Russell et al. 2004). Yukl (1999) described that transformational leaders see their followers as partners. Even though recent studies found pro-social aspects in empirical transformational leadership (Grant, 2012 in Sun 2013), the foundational focus on all stakeholders in and outside the organisation is unique to servant leadership theory according to Hunter et al. (2013). Washington, Sutton et al. (2014) discovered on the contrary that the operationalisation of both theories is identical, and a transformational leader can be a servant leader at the same time, whereas the opposite did not prove to be true.

Both leadership styles can be understood as complimentary and not superior to another (Stone, Russell et al. 2004). They also posed the question if the theories are not indeed the same, but just labelled differently. This question is still not sufficiently answered and very debatable (Washington, Sutton et al. 2014).

Concluding, both transformational and servant leadership are people oriented, but transformational leadership understands people as means to an end to fulfil organisational goals. Servant leadership on the other hand puts the development and empowerment always first. Empowering followers to develop themselves is therefore the consequence of serving followers and discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

2.7. Empowering and Developing Followers

Lashley (1995) defined empowerment as a state where the employee has a certain degree of control, the freedom to exercise a certain degree of power and holds a sense of self-determination and efficacy. Sparrowe (1994) defined empowerment as managerial actions that share power with employees and encourage them to take decisions, when the focus is on managers. When the employees are in focus of empowerment, he describes it as a form of

motivation through choice, impact, meaningfulness and competence. Gill et al. (2010) also stressed the need of employees to influence and control their environment, when their researched the connection between transformational leadership and empowerment in the hospitality industry.

Servant leadership values the potential of the individuals in the organisation and aims at developing that potential. The servant leader shall provide the framework that encourages personal growth and development. This is done by empowering the employees and assisting them to grow. (Dierendonck and Patterson 2010) Van Dierendonck and Rook (2010) argue that creativity and innovation within a servant organisation are vital for the success of any business. Some studies suggest that the intrinsic motivation of employees is important in this context to manage organisational creativity. This is especially important for the creative solving process of complex problems, where extrinsically motivated employees will only show limited capacities.

Senge defined in his book 'The Fifth Discipline' the learning organisations as 'organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together' (2006, p.3). Senge defined five learning disciplines for the organisation: the four cores (shared vision, mental models, personal mastery, team learning) and systems thinking. The personal vision and values of a servant leader usually serve as their starting point for their development of a shared organisational vision (Fairholm 1997 in Dierendonck and Patterson 2010, Hunter, Neubert et al. 2013)

The learning culture in an organisation can further be developed by a good leader-member-exchange, as described as relationships with mutual trust, respect and obligation (Ng, Koh et al. 2008, Barbuto and Hayden 2011). Van Dierendonck and Rook (2010) further argue that three mediating factors describe the balancing act between providing direction and giving freedom to foster creativity in a learning servant organisation. The mediating factors are based on the concept of flow; clear role expectations, feedback, a high quality dyadic relationship and the follower's motivation for self-concordance (pursue goals based on identification with own values and interests). Greenleaf and Spears (1998) emphasise that the believe and acceptance of the intrinsic values of followers shall be in the mind of the servant leader all the time.

The notion of empowerment in the organisation encourages creative thinking and problem solving, because it balances the power distribution. In cultures with a high power-distance, servant leadership is perceived to be weak at times (Dierendonck and Patterson 2010). The culture has also a big influence on the employees' willingness to be empowered, depending on the score on power-distance (Gill, Fitzgerald et al. 2010). They argue that people from a culture with high power-distance may be even reluctant to be empowered. The power used to serve others by the servant leader can not be neglected and used carefully (Greenleaf 1977, Van Dierendonck 2011). The concepts of forgiveness and courage enable the followers to try out new things, to do mistakes and potentially fail with creative ideas. This is in line with Mayer's (2010) finding of the need for freedom and autonomy that every individual possess.

This is in contrast to traditional leadership, where subordinates are criticised and not encouraged to experiment due to strong structures and top-down leadership, like the hospitality industry. Studies in the hospitality industry have found that empowering people has a positive impact on

the service encounter, because it can positively influence employees to take responsibility and satisfy customers beyond their expectations (Lashley 1995). Findings also suggest that it is closely linked to employee satisfaction. It therefore is a key tool of management to gain a competitive advantage over competitors, especially since the intangible part of the service is determined by the employees. (Lashley 1995) This holds also true in the difficult act to balance standardisation with customisation in the provision of service, when every service encounter is different and has to be adapted to (Ro and Chen 2011).

Lashley (1995) assigns the following benefits of empowerment to the hospitality industry: responsive service to customers, improved flexibility in service recovery, increased customer satisfaction, repeated business, motivated employees, less employee turnover, increased productivity, lower labour costs, improved quality and higher profits. This can be achieved when the management changes their mindset from pure controlling to commitment and control. A part of the control is self-control executed by the employees themselves, alongside the company's guidelines and values. Lashley (1995) argues that the emotional engagement of employees can be divided into four sub-categories. It can be achieved through: participation (e.g. individual decision-making), involvement (e.g. consulting for problem-solving), commitment (e.g. job rotations) and delayering (e.g. flatter hierarchies).

Gill et al. (2010) suggest that organisations shall focus on team work, innovative thinking, assisting employees to grow with challenges, show respect for individual feelings, transmit a sense of a shared mission and share their vision for the future. These behaviours can increase the desire for employees to be empowered and hold true for both the transformational leadership Gill et al. studied and servant leadership, due to their similarities. Managers have to encourage that by communicating or breaking down the mission, goals, vision and culture of the organisation to make them feasible for employees. Nevertheless, this will be unsuccessful if the employees are reluctant to be empowered, therefore, their right selection is key (Ro and Chen 2011). On the other hand, they suggest that the wish to be empowered can be increased through training, rewards and communication. Then in turn, the employees will see their jobs as more meaningful and important to the organisation.

To conclude, the notion of empowering employees to develop them and letting them grow, as suggested by servant leadership holds many promises for the hospitality industry. The benefits have been studied, both for organisational advantages through people and on a cultural-emotional level. If the leaders manage to shape an organisational culture that is reflecting a 'learning atmosphere' where mistakes are accepted and not penalised, creativity and innovation will occur. In this context, the culture and cultural change as discussed in chapter 4.1.4. can prove to be problematic obstacles. Traditional and hierarchical thinking, as evident in the German culture, can pose strong boundaries to empowering people. Servant leadership is not without flaws and problems which are discussed in the final chapter of the theoretical framework.

2.8. Questioning Servant Leadership

The most common critiques are concerning the definition and description of servant leadership that are without consensus (Parris and Peachey 2013), as well as anecdotal evidence (Berger

2014). The definition is diffuse, several scholars have been taking different approaches and the empirical research has just only started with Laub (1999), even though the concept has been described for over four decades. Finley concluded that servant leadership is ‘anything but a quick fix’ (2012, p.143) and has to be understood as a transformational approach to work and life, that will take time to develop.

Sun (2013) described the current definitions of leadership styles as a descriptive chaos, because they are all labelled as distinct, whereas they have many characteristics that overlap, which other scholars agree upon (e.g. Liden, Wayne et al. 2008, Van Dierendonck 2011). Additionally, the overall theory of servant leadership is very idealistic and prescriptive. This phenomena is partly rooted in the origin of the theory by Greenleaf in the 1970s and was much discussed in ‘how-to handbooks’ in management since then. The idealistic theory emphasises on the long-term benefits, but ignores the impact on short-term profitability and the pressure to adapt to an ever changing globalised market place with high competition in most sectors. (Whetstone 2002, Avolio and Gardner 2005, Van Dierendonck 2011) The focus of scholars has not been on empirical research, whereas prominent media coverage lacks knowledge about the academic discussions on the subject, when reporting on success stories of so-called servant led companies (Rennaker and Novak 2007).

The cultural aspects’ influence and impact on servant leadership theory remain in the dark in many fields. Only a few scholars have discussed the negative meaning of the word servant in various cultural contexts (Berger 2014) and addressed the perception as a religious concept (Finley 2012). For some cultures with a high power-distance, the terminology of the theory may imply weakness, passivity and loss of power through soft leading and limited control. Furthermore, for researched employees, the many similarities with other leadership paradigms (e.g. transformational) may be causing difficulties to differentiate and distinguish them.

The lack of real focus on subordinates (Laub 1999) in turn leads to problematic aspects, like a ‘hyperculture’ within servant leadership. Some leaders may stage themselves as servant leaders and are studied by scholars, sometimes too positively. Their followers in turn may perceive something totally different and would assess the situation differently, if given a voice. Additionally, servant leadership is used as a marketing phrase for companies today and has not been studied longitudinal within several organisations. One of the examples that was studied is Southwestern Airlines, whereas other prominent service companies such as The Ritz-Carlton or Starbucks claim to implement servant leadership. Their claims are not supported by any empirical research and may be based on statements from the senior management on their self-perception. (Rennaker and Novak 2007)

To conclude, servant leadership is a promising theory that needs to focus on the tenor of itself, the followers of the leader. Furthermore, a clearer definition and agreed-upon less idealistic descriptions that can be operationalised and include context-specifics like culture and personal values is needed. In regard to the issues of the German hospitality industry, servant leadership seems a promising and compelling concept with persuasive aspects that describe an idealistic utopia. Therefore it is very interesting to challenge this utopia by confronting it with the reality and determine difficulties, limitations and contrasting aspects within the frame of this thesis, to determine if it could indeed be the solution to the problem.

3. Methodology

The following methodology chapter outlines the process of the research for this thesis and is structured in four sections. The first section introduces my approach to the field and initial process of gaining access. Thereafter, strategy-as-practice-as the theoretical informed methodology for collection of qualitative data is described with the the process of retrieving data. The third section discusses the narrative-based analysis of the data. In the end, trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitations of the in-hand thesis are described.

3.1. Approaching the Field

This first section of the methodology explains my interest in this field of research, based on my professional background and process of gaining access to both the case company and theory. Thereafter, the pre-study of the company is discussed briefly.

3.1.1. Personal Interest and Gaining Access

During my education as a Hotel Industry Expert⁵ in an upscale Swiss hotel chain and years within various sub-branches of the hospitality industry, I came across various people in leadership positions and was able to lead teams as well. Depending on the highest level of management, there were notable differences in the satisfaction, happiness and motivation in the workforce. When I chose the company to undergo my training in 2008, one of the key aspects was a certain degree of freedom as an employee. Staying true to myself and being empowered led to my decision to take the job offer. In the following years, I discovered that even within one company with a strong corporate culture in regard to these aspects, the reality did not match the description in theory - because it was all dependent on individuals within the company. I wondered why the saying ‘the rot starts at the top’⁶, which was quoted in nearly every interview for this thesis, seems to prove true for me and so many colleagues working within the industry. I started to search for ‘alternative’ ideas in regard to leadership and had many questions, but a rather limited amount of answers.

During the summer of 2015, a friend brought my attention to an annually-held convention by the University of Bayreuth’s Philosophy and Economics Department, called ‘Bayreuther Dialoge’⁷. The convention in October was titled ‘Useful Human - Humane Benefit’⁸ and among the keynote speakers was Bodo Janssen, the CEO of Upstalsboom. I had heard about Upstalsboom in the media, but knew little about their Upstalsboom Weg, their new way of doing business. The panel discussion with Bodo Janssen and Götz Werner⁹ followed by the workshop with Bodo Janssen was very insightful but still left me with many questions. I approached Bodo

⁵ Hotelfachmann IHK

⁶ ‘Der Fisch fängt immer am Kopf an zu stinken’

⁷ for further information see <http://www.bayreuther-dialoge.de>

⁸ ‘Nützlicher Mensch - Menschlicher Nutzen’

⁹ Götz W. Werner, founder and former CEO of dm drogerie-markt, a German drugstore chain and well-known example for an ethical business leader and contrarian (Kaduk, Osmetz et al. 2015).

Janssen and asked him if I could contact him and find answers to my questions, which he agreed to.

After my return, I read up on every article and publication on Upstalsboom that I could find, started to draft a pre-study and kept loose contact with Bodo Janssen. What I learned was really interesting and sometimes even hard to believe. How can Upstalsboom be such a human-oriented company in one of the toughest industries and at the same time be so profitable? Is there a magical formula?

Meanwhile, I came across the servant leadership theory. The theory showed several characteristics that seemed evident at Upstalsboom and I therefore decided to use it as a framework for my thesis. During the literature review I approached Professor Dirk van Dierendonck¹⁰ via mail, whose many publications on servant leadership I came across very frequently. He encouraged me to pursue my intention to discover what parts of servant leadership work in the hospitality industry and which do not. He also confirmed my initial impression that most cases on servant leadership are very positive. Thereafter, I approached Bodo Janssen again and drafted a research issue for my thesis: I wanted to understand how the servant leadership theory could be used in reality, examining Upstalsboom as a case company, as a company that shows characteristics similar to it. Bodo Janssen was excited about the idea to help me out, but the process of finally gathering data proved to be challenging and is discussed in chapter 3.2 in detail.

3.1.2. The Pre-Study on the Company

The aim of the pre-study was to summarise all the information on Upstalsboom and structure it, both to follow the timeline and discover questions that arise from the data. Within this context, publicly available data was retrieved directly from the company's publications, image films and homepage, books and newspaper articles. All the data was systematically noted as presented at first to draw up the known status quo for the beginning of the research. In a second step, I developed notes on gaps in the picture or conflicts of the presented story to critically examine them within the frame of this thesis.

Since most of the information in both primary and secondary data originated in information presented by Upstalsboom, either directly or to journalists and authors, I decided that an industry observer's perspective would be beneficial to understand the information's trustworthiness. I focussed on insights on the industry from friends and acquaintances who have vast experience within the German hotel industry. These interviews and workshops, among details about the participants are presented in chapter 3.2.6.3.

¹⁰ A professor on Human Resources Management at Erasmus University's Rotterdam School of Management in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. For further information see <https://www.rsm.nl/people/dirk-van-dierendonck/>

3.2. A Strategy-as-Practice-Focussed Qualitative Data Collection

The second part of the methodology focusses on the qualitative data collection, beginning with strategy-as-practice as the theoretical informed methodology for data collection. Thereafter, qualitative data collection is discussed in regard to this thesis theoretically and described practically.

3.2.1. Strategy-as-Practice in Business Workshops

Organisational culture defines the rules and boundaries for all the interactions within an organisation. If the leadership of an organisation empowers people to contribute to strategy building, the culture can be an obstacle. To avoid this, the strategy-as-practice perspective on business workshops can be utilised, because during the time of the workshop, the structures of the organisation are suspended and other ‘rules’ apply instead. The suspension of organisational structures starts with the initiation, is held up during the conduct (events occurring during the meeting) and ended with the termination. This suspension allows members of the organisation to step out of routines and practices and question or reflect upon them. This enables the participants to suggest and revise variations to the existing organisational structures, strategies and processes. The events during the meeting can consist of various parts, such as free discussions or autonomous group works, which are usually determined by the agenda. (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008, Duffy and O’Rourke 2015)

The strategy-as-practice perspective is conceptualised as ‘a situated, socially accomplished activity, while strategising comprises those actions, interactions and negotiations of multiple actors and the situated practices that they draw upon in accomplishing that activity’ (Jarzabkowski, Balogun et al. 2007, pp.7-8) and has become a growing interest for researchers in the last decade. Instead of the traditional understanding of strategy as an asset organisations have, strategy-as-practice understands strategy as an activity. Therefore, it is something that is actively done, namely actions, dynamic interactions and negotiations by various actors that shape a situated flow. (Jarzabkowski, Balogun et al. 2007, Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2010)

Such activities can include e.g. formal budget meetings or strategy workshops which serve as practices to socially develop strategies. These encounters can also foster the sharing and understanding of interpretations or another (Duffy and O’Rourke 2015), participants’ sense making and shape organisational goals (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008). Even though they can be informal, e.g. dinner meetings, their overall purpose is organisational, involves several parties and is episodic. They are an episode of organisational life in a certain space and timeframe, including some actors and excluding others. Some encounters like board meetings have been studied in the past, but workshops remain heavily used but under-represented in academia. (Hodgkinson, Whittington et al. 2006, Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008)

Duffy and O’Rourke (2015) refer to the oral exchange during a strategy workshop as dialogue rather than discussion. Even though these terms are often used as synonyms, the word dialogue implies an interactive talk that establishes common understanding of a phenomena. Dialogues are aiming at examining flaws in understandings of individuals through a collective flow of

meaning. In contrary to a discussion, which aims at finding a solution through analysis and winning an argument, they argue that a dialogue shall not have a winner or loser, because it is an exchange of thoughts. A dialogic conversation is usually guided by a facilitator and assumptions are suspended in the introduction to avoid individual perceptions of 'the truth'. This scrutinisation of assumptions provides the opportunity to understand the reasoning for others' thoughts and beliefs. This supports Senge's (2006) understanding of learning teams in a learning organisation where thoughts are exchanged through a dialogue. (Duffy and O'Rourke 2015) Hodgkinson et al. (2006) also discovered that the impact of workshops set up to spread organisational culture and values, develop or motivate people is mostly limited to the participants. They conclude that the overall effects of workshops is hard to distinguish in hard performance measures.

Strategy workshops are commonly used in business life, but remain an under-researched and poorly documented episode of organisational life. Their outcomes and effects on organisations remain unclear. The duration and scale of workshops are dependent on the organisation and last from a few hours to several days and include only some executives or members of the organisation. (Duffy and O'Rourke 2015) Hodgkinson et al. (2006) discovered that they are usually elitist meetings, that rely mostly on top managers instead of all members of the organisation and are of discursive instead of analytical nature. They also argue that the inclusion of line or middle managers could benefit the development of efficient strategies, while they are more likely to be called into strategy implementation workshops today. Within their study, they discovered that the use of external facilitators was not common and argue that their expertise could be beneficial for efficient meetings.

Meetings and workshops can be either seen as instrumental and explicit to achieve specific tasks, such as overcoming a strategic problem or being called on a planned basis as part of a planning cycle. Strategy workshops are scheduled to review, develop or plan strategy and seldom triggered by suddenly occurring problems. The social, symbolic and implicit practice of them to stabilise and foster social systems, build social structures or destroy them. During meetings stories are told about who the individuals and the organisation are, the organisational culture and values are shared and organisational emotions are sustained. Therefore, meetings are not only a tool for problem solving, but also organisational rituals and customs to strengthen the culture, sense of belonging and affiliation. (Peck, Gulliver et al. 2004, Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008, Duffy and O'Rourke 2015) This is in line with Seidl and Guarard (2015, in Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2015), who argue that the outcomes can be organisational, interpersonal or cognitive. Organisational outcomes are the impact of the workshop on the organisation's strategy, interpersonal outcomes are the impact on relations among participants and cognitive outcomes describe the increased understanding of the 'big picture', e.g. the environment, strategy or vision.

These meetings or workshops usually include a sequence of different events, which are planned to a certain degree and have a pre-defined timeframe. When the planning of the workshop is too strict, the outcomes are automatically limited because dialogic conversations cannot occur. The absence of dialogue in turn then inhabits the organic development of strategy or sense-making among the participants. (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008, Duffy and O'Rourke 2015)

Paroutis, Franco et al. (2015) argue that there is a gap in research concerning the use and creation of visual tools as strategic tools. These tools can be e.g. dialogical or documenting and support sense making, emotional aspects or support the knowledge sharing and creation during the workshop. A visual strategy tool can make unstructured issues and knowledge visible and allow the participants to make the intangible tangible. Links and causalities between the issues can be established and discussed more easily. Explicit tools, the events and the people attending can be called the visible part of the iceberg and have been studied, but the narratives are not sufficiently researched (Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2015). They also argue that artefacts¹¹ can be powerful tools in strategy-as-practice, and stress that especially the emotional impact of visual tools needs to be addressed in the future research. The emotional impact of workshops to make sense and trigger emotions is important. It can trigger the sense of belonging, connect them with the organisation and encourage the participants to work harder towards a common goal. This field of research in strategy-as-practice is still very new and has not been studied in depth. (Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2015)

In line with the focus, aim and research question of the in-hand thesis, the strategy-as-practice perspective provides the possibility to gather many valuable insights needed to understand servant leadership in practice. Through the lens of strategy-as-practice, narratives can be identified and researchers can understand the studied phenomena (Fenton and Langley 2011). During the workshop the participants are empowered in the understanding of servant leadership to contribute to strategy building. As previously outlined, within the frame of the workshop, the participants are encouraged to challenge the organisational reality, make sense and connect with the organisation and its culture.

In the next section, the general considerations regarding the qualitative data collection process, followed by an overview on the data collection for the in-hand thesis are outlined.

3.2.2. Qualitative Data Collection

The nature of this study is exploratory and qualitative, utilising the servant leadership theory as its theoretical framework and strategy-as-practice as the theoretical informed methodology. As Bryman (2015) indicated, qualitative research will best assist a researcher in understanding the investigated phenomenon through the more detailed and objective data in the chosen context. The context of this study is vital, therefore HR and HP are discussed as a foundation for servant leadership and later connected to the empirical data.

According to Bryman (2015), the choice of research method is highly influencing the outcome of every research, because the apprehended data is defined by the method. Various scholars embrace qualitative methods to research diverse inter-organisational relationships. Quantitative method and research enables a researcher to get a broad picture of an issue and answer general quantitative questions, whereas a qualitative approach shapes a more detailed picture and assists in answering context-related questions.

¹¹ Artefact is defined as a tangible object representing an abstract, intangible meaning for this thesis in line with the strategy-as-practice perspective

As Bryman and Bell (2011) point out, the collection of primary data is vital for a case study to develop an understanding for the issue, Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest that multiple sources enhance the quality, credibility and validity of the research. Therefore, multiple sources are used for this thesis to understand servant leadership in this context. Based the research question and on my interest on how servant leadership is manifested, I undertook qualitative research and collected my primary data through observations in a strategy-as-practice workshop and complementing semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, I opted to systematically back up secondary data with primary data to broaden the picture. This was done to narrow down the possible bias of mostly being in contact with higher ranking employees in the company.

3.2.3. The Data Collection Overview

The pre-study on the company and a literature review of servant leadership left me with questions and showed gaps. In order to better understand the context of my findings, I collected qualitative data in my fieldwork. Semi-structured interviews with Bernd Gaukler at Upstalsboom (Case company interview 1 and 2) were complemented with and based on observation 1 and 2 from the workshop. This gave me more detailed insights into the company and an interview partner with a very reflective and critical attitude to the company.

The gathered insights were then further complemented with two additional semi-structured interviews I conducted with three industry experts (expert interview 1 and 2). The multiple sources helped me to contrast and question the observations and information I discovered. The reasoning behind is to draw a more diverse picture, where voices from inside and outside the company contribute to my understanding of the phenomena. This is in line with the notion of narrative approach where a researcher is going beyond traditional ways of collecting data in order to capture the richness and complexity of a phenomenon (Czarniawska 1997).

The fieldwork is summarised in table 3 and the flow of the research is displayed in figure 4. The going of the fieldwork and detailed description of how it was conducted are described in the following chapters.

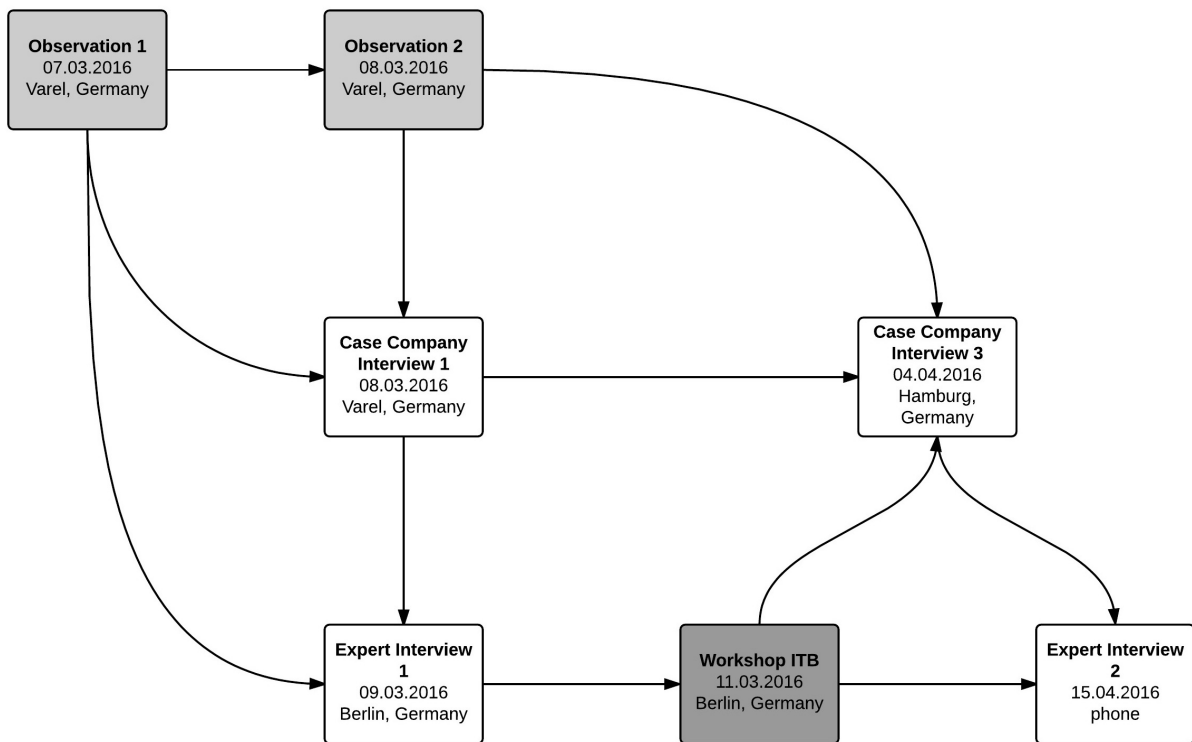


Figure 4: The process of the fieldwork

Table 3: Summary of the fieldwork

Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Place and Date	Duration	Referred to as
Workshop Day 1	Observation 1	Varel, Germany 07 March 2016	280 minutes	observation 1
Workshop Day 2	Observation 2	Varel, Germany 08 March 2016	220 minutes	observation 2
Bernd Gaukler (Head of Human Potential at Upstalsboom)	Case company interview 1	Varel, Germany 08 March 2016	115 minutes	Gaukler A
Informants C and D (industry professionals)	Expert interview 1	Berlin, Germany 09 March 2016	128 minutes	informant C informant D
ITB Seminar	Observation 3	Berlin, Germany 11 March 2016	50 minutes	observation 3
Bernd Gaukler (Head of Human Potential at Upstalsboom)	Case company interview 2	Hamburg, Germany 04 April 2016	165 minutes	Gaukler B
Alfred Gettmann (industry consultant)	Expert interview 2	phone interview 15 April 2016	50 minutes	Gettmann

3.2.4. From Shadowing to Observations

Since Bodo Janssen assured me his assistance to retrieve data directly from company, the question was to determine what method would be appropriate. Therefore, to make the most of his support, I decided to follow the approach of shadowing. Czarniawska's (2014) defines shadowing as 'following selected people for a time in their everyday occupation' (Czarniawska, 2014, p.44), which held the potential to observe the interactions within the company and gain an understanding of their everyday business in an unobtrusive manner. Therefore, I approached Bodo Janssen in February 2016 in an e-mail with these ideas and suggested a two or three day visit at their headquarters to shadow and interviews with him and other managers. This seemed to be a good way to collect a huge amount of data in a relatively small amount of time and then compare it to the servant leadership theory and its characteristics.

Nevertheless, plans changed rapidly when Bodo Janssen called me on Friday, 04 March 2016. He offered me to participate in the first of two annually held 'mission and strategy development workshop'¹² on 08 and 09 March 2016. After considering the opportunity, I happily accepted the invitation, being a very privileged access and started to restructure. The idea of shadowing was abandoned and I started to focus on observing the workshop instead. Without realising it at this point, this workshop then became the core of my research and base of departure.

3.2.5. Two Days of Observations at a Strategy Workshop

Observations enable a researcher to develop a fundamental understanding of a phenomenon (Silverman 2013). In contrast to shadowing, where people are followed in their everyday occupation (Czarniawska 2014), observations follow a group of people during a predetermined framework. Unstructured observations 'aim to record in as much detail as possible the behaviour of participants with the aim of developing a narrative account of that behaviour' (Bryman 2015, p.273). In contrast to structured observations the context is included and the gathered data is richer (Bryman 2015). Therefore, observations of the interactions and behaviour of people are a valid tool for data collection in line with the research question and aim of the study. Several sub-classifications of the types and roles of observers exist. Bryman's field role as 'Non-Participant Observer with Interaction' (2015, p.444) matches my status during the observations best.

Winston (2010) argued that an observer who is familiar with the culture and can understand the culture of an organisation will be able to provide vital insights into servant leadership to understand 'what people do and why they do it' (p.182).

The two day workshop was held at the Upstalsboom Landhotel Friesland in Varel, Germany. I arrived with a basic observational protocol to provide me with a basic structure for my notes, as suggested by Bryman (2015). An excerpt of it is provided in appendix 1. The protocol was structured with a descriptive part for what was happening and the settings, followed by three columns labelled who is speaking, what is said and spontaneous reflections on, e.g. the statement itself, observable group dynamics, reactions of others and my impression of the situation in the room. (Czarniawska 2014) In addition, I focussed not only on the spoken, but also tried to

¹² 'Leitbild- und Strategieworkshop'

reflect on the unspoken and hidden points in the rhetoric, to observe the episode of organisational life at the workshop, as suggested by Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. (2015).

During the observations I followed the suggestions of Bryman (2015) on observation schedules. Therefore, I took notes by hand and tried to keep both my notes and reflections as detailed and clear as possible to get as much information as possible. At the end of the first day, I reflected on the day and wrote a summary of the key findings and encounters that surprised me. On the day after the workshop ended, I started to digitalise and transcribe my field notes into observational protocols to structure them and reflect once more on the observed phenomena. Hereby, I structured my notes into four protocols: the pre-meeting protocol, the morning of the first day, the afternoon of the first day and the protocol of the fishbowl on the second day. The observations of the first day are further referred to as observation 1, whereas the second day is referred to as observation 2.

Bodo Janssen granted me a very privileged free access and encouraged me to take as much information for my thesis as I pleased. In the beginning of the workshop, I was briefly introduced to the participants alongside with other guests. During the observations, I did not always have the possibility to introduce myself clearly and state my intentions to the individuals.

Eighty-five employees of all Upstalsboom outlets participated in the workshop and were accompanied by six guests including me. One of the invited guests was a woman who had written negatively about Upstalsboom on social media and questioned the validity of Upstalsboom's public image, based on interactions with a few employees in one destination. She was a customer of Upstalsboom and is not referred to in this thesis through quotes. Most of the time, the team of Kristian Gründling¹³ filmed the whole event. They had been documenting the change at Upstalsboom for a couple of years and produce all of the company's image videos and documentaries. On the second day, a film team from ARD¹⁴ shot some footage as well.

The goal of the workshop was to understand the change that has happened in the organisation over the last three years and to discover ways to make that change feasible for the guests of the hotels and holiday rentals through all their senses.

The workshop was held in two banquet rooms, one with a small podium and auditorium, the other one with chairs in a circle in the middle and working stations along the walls around with bulletin boards. One part of the wall was spared for a 4.5m x 1.5m white paper that was filled by Barbara Schneider¹⁵, a hired expert on visualising processes, to depict the workshop and its outcomes. Barbara Schneider's graphical recording of the workshop can be found in appendix 2. Another expert to work as a coach and facilitator attending the workshop was Sebastian Purps-Pardigol¹⁶. He has facilitated and attended several workshops at Upstalsboom in the past and combines neuroscience with new management training ideas, specialising in unfolding people's potential in his research and practice.

¹³ See <https://www.vimeo.com/user7937406> for more details on Kristian Gründling's video productions

¹⁴ Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, consortium of Germany's public broadcasters

¹⁵ See <http://www.visualfacilitators.com> for more details on Barbara Schneider and her work

¹⁶ See <http://www.sebastian-purps-pardigol.com> for more details on Sebastian Purps-Pardigol

Together with Sebastian Purps-Pardigol, Bodo Janssen hosted the event and guided through it. Their intention was to set impulses and structure to the process, but most of the actual ‘work’ was conducted in teams of Upstalsboom employees. When the employees arrived, they picked name tags with lanyard keychains in different colours. The colour system seemed arbitrary, but was aimed to avoid the obstacle that people like to partner-up with somebody they already knew and mix ‘newcomers’ to the event with ‘experienced’ employees.

The setting of the workshop poses the frame of my unstructured observations, carefully noted in observation protocols. Strategy-as-practice provided me with a good methodological stance to observe what is done and how the interactions occur.

3.2.6. Collection of Complementary Information

In order to complement the empirical data of the observations at the workshop, several semi-structured and on-the-fly interviews were conducted. The planning and structure of the interviews was carefully planned, following Bryman’s (2015) suggestions on successful interviewing. The selection at Upstalsboom focused on high-level managers who had worked at the company and been part of its change for several years. Due to time limitations, only one top manager at Upstalsboom was interviewed twice instead of multiple managers. The industry experts were chosen due to their experience in the industry and knowledge about leadership, as well as their critical view on contemporary issues in the industry.

All interviews started with a set of background questions, enabling me to motivate why the informants were relevant sources of information for my thesis. The basic interview guideline that was developed and pilot tested beforehand is shown in appendix 3.

The interviews were conducted both with employees of the case company Upstalsboom and industry experts, to bring in an outsider’s perspective as well. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), contextual insights can be retrieved when the researcher is using a rather open, less structured approach. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted to encourage informants to share their personal views and get rich in-depth insights in both the case company and industry. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews give a certain level of flexibility for the researchers as well and both parties can alter the going of the conversation, with a supporting structure aside. (Bryman 2015)

All participants in the semi-structured interviews were made aware of my intentions with the interview, research and gave permission to record the conversations. The recording of the interviews enabled me to exactly reproduce the conversation and enabled me to determine the need for follow-up questions (Bryman 2015). During the introduction, the informants were made aware of the possibility to skip questions, revoke their agreement for the interview or delete certain answers at any time. In the end, all informants were encouraged to contribute with their view on what I missed in my questions and they think would be noteworthy. They were informed about the possibility to remain anonymous and the transcript of the interview would only be made available for myself, Hervé Corvellec and themselves upon request. All interviews were held in German, because all informants have German as their mother tongue, as well as myself. Therefore, a potential language barrier was minimised. The general questions were pilot

tested with German-speaking friends of mine working in the industry and checked by a fellow German-speaking PhD student to avoid leading questions. All interviews were transcribed and made available for the tutor of this thesis to verify the trustworthiness of my findings and conclusions.

3.2.6.1. Semi-structured Interviews at Upstalsboom

The first semi-structured interview was conducted at the Upstalsboom Hotel in Varel on the 08 March 2016. It followed several loose encounters with Bernd Gaukler, Director of Human Potential at Upstalsboom, during the workshop. He has a professional background in the industry and been working with HR issues in various positions for several international hotel chains, even though he has not studied the subject at university level. Bernd Gaukler has been a driving force in the change process at Upstalsboom. The interview took place during the workshop and was only interrupted by passers-by who reminded him about certain stories or side-notes. The duration of the interview was 115 minutes and was loosely structured. The interview with Bernd Gaukler was informal and ended by the next step in the agenda that I wanted to observe. At the end of the workshop, I approached him about a potential follow-up interview, which he agreed to.

The second semi-structured interview with him was conducted as a follow-up interview on 04 April 2016. The duration of the interview was 165 minutes and held in the lobby of the Kempinski Atlantic in Hamburg, Germany. The goal of this interview was to fill in gaps in the data retrieved at the first interview and the workshop, since the focus of the thesis had shifted into researching the workshop in regard to servant leadership. The structure of the interview was made up by key points that I wanted to know more about and brought up during the conversation in an informal manner. The interview was scheduled for three hours, which posed the time limitation for the interview.

3.2.6.2. On-the-fly Interviews During the Workshop

In the beginning of the workshop at Upstalsboom, I was introduced by Bodo as a guest and student who is researching Upstalsboom for his master's thesis. During the two days I had many encounters with several employees, who were both interested in my research and/or wanted to tell me their view on the company. Because many of these short encounters were made on-the-fly, for example over lunch or during a coffee break, I was not at all times able to introduce myself and ask for their permission to use or record the narratives. Therefore, all the comments and statements that I picked up during the workshop are referred to as Upstalsboomer Z, to ensure the anonymity of the informants and names are only used when the informants directly stated their willingness to participate as informants for my thesis. All conversations with their first names, positions and details about their jobs have been noted in the transcripts of these conversations, but remain unpublished.

3.2.6.3. Semi-structured Interviews with Industry Experts

Interviewing industry experts is a perfect match to the data retrieved from the case company itself. The view of them contributes to a critical perspective on the company and draws a clearer picture of the industry and its current problems in regard to leadership.

The original intention for an outsider's perspective was to interview other relevant parties in the industry, to narrow the knowledge gap. Therefore, NGG and DEHOGA were approached for comments on both the industry and the case company. Unfortunately, because of time management issues the contact person at DEHOGA was not available any more for a loosely set date in the beginning of March. Even though several offices of NGG had been contacted several times by mail, no answer was ever retrieved from them. Therefore, I relied on my existing network of people in the industry and approached several, some reacting very positive on my intentions. Furthermore, I tried to retain new contacts at ITB 2016 and was successful in one case.

The first interview with outside experts was conducted in Berlin on 09 March 2016. The interview was conducted with two informants at the same time. I have been approaching them during my thesis process due to their experience and knowledge about the industry. Due to time issues, the interview was held and recorded at their kitchen in the evening. Both informants have received a formal training within the industry in the past, but do not hold a university degree. Informant C had been working in the hospitality industry in leading positions for eighteen years, but she has left the industry in 2014. She has a vast background in HR related issues, serving as an HR manager for an international hotel chain in their Berlin outlet. Informant D has been working in the industry for twenty years now, thirteen of which he has served in a leadership position. He had recently broadened his field of work from the rooms division to the position of an in-house trainer for an upscale hotel group in Berlin.

The notion that all informants working in the industry do not hold a university degree, but received formal education within the sector is a typical characteristic of the German hotel industry. It is common that managers worked their way up in the hierarchy and received trainings mostly on-the-job. (Rothfelder, Ottenbacher et al. 2012)

During ITB 2016 I attended a seminar by Alfred Gettman¹⁷ titled 'good host - good employer', which is the name of his professional project as well. The seminar on 11 March 2016 took around 50 minutes and Alfred Gettmann presented several issues in the industry I had come across my research. Alfred Gettmann is the CEO of his own consultancy firm, currently working with leadership in the hospitality industry. He has been appointed for a project¹⁸ of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to improve the working conditions for employees in the hospitality sector. The information gathered during the seminar is further referred to as observation 3. After his presentation, I approached him for contact information to interview him for this thesis. In March 2016 I submitted a set of questions via e-mail to clarify my

¹⁷ See <http://www.gettmann.de/aktuell.html> for further information on Alfred Gettmann

¹⁸ 'Initiative Neue Qualität der Arbeit', initiative for new quality of work, see <http://www.inqa.de/DE/Startseite/start.html> for more details on the project

intentions. The interview was conducted on the phone due to the physical distance on 12 April 2016 and further referenced as Gettmann (2016).

3.3. A Narrative-based Qualitative Data Analysis

Within this third section of the methodology, the process of data analysis is described in detail. In the beginning, the narrative-based approach is presented, followed by the literature review, choice of theory and general discussion of the data analysis. The chapter ends with a description of the trustworthiness of this thesis.

3.3.1. Discovering Narratives

Storytelling is an effective tool to inspire and influence followers, a way of organisational communication and sense-making (Fenton and Langley 2011). Noting details about rhetorical details that define the interactions help to code them later on (Bryman 2015). In the following, the creation of narrative is discussed, to enable the reader to understand their power and to define the cues that I looked for doing the coding process of my data.

In a study on a workshop by Küpers, Mantere et al. (2013), participants were divided into three groups and assigned to three classical storylines: a tragedy, a comedy and an epic. This example of the use of narratives in business is possible because everyone creates narratives in their private life, for example by passing on anecdotes to friends or family members. Marshall and Adamic (2010) argue that storytelling is very closely connected to organisational culture today. Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. (2015) argue that it is vital for a leader to be a good narrator. The narrative does not only have an impact on the folklore of a company, but influences the unconscious behaviour patterns in the organisation. These stories connect the people in the organisation, influence and persuade them to engage themselves in actions. (Marshall and Adamic 2010) Creating narratives also enables people to commit to a larger goal than their self-interest and create pride by being part of a greater purpose (Brady and Haley 2013).

According to Czarniawska (2004), narratives express identities and can be understood as organisational narratives in a social context. She argues that there are two orders of conversations: strong and weak. The strong order contains text beyond personal experiences to implement standards for behaviour and decision-making. The weaker order allows the confrontation between two parties to exchange personal stories and tries to make sense of daily activities. The latter narrative constructs the organisational story, gives meaning to organisational life and is shaped of activities, knowledge and identity.

Leaders clearly influence their subordinates by using narratives on an emotional level, but the connection between storytelling and leadership remains under researched. In some cases, the narrative reflects the Great Man Theory, where the leader is the hero in the organisation and vital for its success. Narratives have themes, characters, plots and sequence of actions (emplotments) that are told to shape organisational culture and enable the identification with it. (Czarniawska 2004, Küpers, Mantere et al. 2013) A narrative organises different events and actors into a

framework that is acceptable, common and comprehensive for the audience (Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2015).

Organisational strategy itself has been defined as a form of fiction by Barry and Elmes (1997). They argue that the emplotment enables the organisation to learn from the past and present its future in the story by enacting the strategies. These narratives can be understood as scripts that are giving instructions for the future, because they are constructed to persuade others. Within this context, the chosen language is important to enable the listeners of the story to follow it. This can be achieved by choosing the language carefully and utilising stylistic attributes, such as metaphors the listeners can relate to and visualise.

Marshall and Adamic (2010) clarified that a narrative has to be true and of anecdotal nature to be turned into word of mouth and engage the audience, as well to be understood as authentic. The story, once told, develops a certain kind of dynamic and is then out of control of the storyteller, hard to manage and complex. (Marshall and Adamic 2010, Auvinen, Aaltio et al. 2013) Therefore, the purpose has to be unambiguous and has to survive any changes during the spreading process. The people involved are two parties: the storyteller and the audience. Even though some argue that almost everyone can become a storyteller, the ones who possess good speaking skills and a certain charisma will find it easier to transport the story. (Marshall and Adamic 2010)

To be spread, the narrative has to appeal to the audience, this call-to-action has to connect emotionally with the listeners, who then become part of it. (Marshall and Adamic 2010) Thereby, the narrative becomes a strategy that is developed in a dialogical manner and is not constructed by a single author (Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2015).

Auvinen, Aaltio et al. (2013) described several aspects of using narratives. A leader can use the narrative to communicate values in an interactive way and thereby connect with the audience. This connection awakes emotions and feelings in the followers, which are essential in organisational behaviour. Creating narratives can also be means to influence the follower's perception and assist them to discover a meaning or focus in their work. Furthermore, leaders can share their worldview and shape the audience's perception of them. They also criticise the lack of research on the potential negative impact that storytelling can have, due to abuse of misinterpretation and manipulation.

To conclude, the analysis of the empirical data follows a narrative approach, which is a good methodological stance to grasp complex phenomena and understand organisations (Czarniawska 2004).

3.3.2. The Literature Review

The goal of a literature review is to disclose existing knowledge, relevant concepts and theories in the studied area to discover inconsistencies and unanswered questions (Bryman 2015). The review of literature of the thesis in-hand contains two parts. Firstly I started to systematically search for newspaper and academic articles concerning Upstalsboom and then for theories on leadership, especially within the service industry. The research for Upstalsboom and other real-

life examples of good or bad leadership were conducted through Google and the digital archives magazines, such as AHGZ¹⁹ and brandeins²⁰. Two bachelor theses written for Upstalsboom at the University of Applied Sciences in Munich were provided by Bodo Janssen, but not used as sources for the in-hand thesis.

Academic articles and publications were retrieved through Google Scholar and LUBsearch, through search words related to the topic. The search words showcased in table 4 below were combined in the search engines to find relevant publications. This enabled me to narrow the scope of my search. I read articles in scientific journals that were peer-reviewed to maintain the validity of the study and went back to the original source of the studied phenomenon. Books on issue were retrieved through Lund University's library. Greenleaf's (1977) original work is central in servant leadership and constitutes together with Spears' (1996), Laub's (1999), Liden et al. (2008) and van Dierendonck's (2011) writings as the backbone of my understanding of servant leadership.

Table 4: Search words for the literature review

Search words used with Google Scholar and LUBSearch
leadership / servant leadership / transformational leadership
hospitality industry / hotel /
corporate culture / organisational culture
human resources / HR / HRM
empowerment
organisational change
storytelling
strategy-as-practice / strategy as practice
business meetings / workshops

3.3.3. Qualitative Data Analysis

Analysing qualitative data has three concurrent stages: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing (Miles and Huberman 1994). Data reduction refers to the activities that simplifies and organises data. Data display is referred to coding and categorising activities and lastly, conclusion drawing is referred to the interpretation process of the data.

Firstly, the observations were carefully noted in observation protocols and the interviews have been transcribed. The analysis of both the observation protocols and interview transcripts was undergone in several steps, following Bryman's (2015) suggestion of coding in grounded theory to break up my data. While drafting the observation protocols from the handwritten notes, first reflections were noted on reoccurring themes. Later, all protocols and transcripts were carefully read again and important observations and statements were marked. Then, these were classified and grouped into categories. These were then themed accordingly to disclose connections within the fieldwork data and developed from them. During the process of analysing, I used different

¹⁹ a trade journal on the hotel industry in Germany

²⁰ a professional journal dealing with various foci on topics in the economy and different sectors of it

colours for different theories to highlight connections between my theoretical concepts and empirical findings. Finally, these themes were linked and matched with complementary data from the fieldwork and servant leadership.

The combination of the existing theories with the empirical data was done by mapping them together. In the beginning, certain aspects of the company that were repeated during the pre-study were mapped to the servant leadership attributes and served as the frame for the observations. During the observations I paid close attention to more characteristics or patterns that were not described in servant theory, but influencing it. These side-notes then in turn led to other theoretical concepts that are mentioned in this thesis.

During the coding process, I focussed on storytelling and narratives, which is well-suited to understand the nuances of an emerging phenomenon (Edmondson & McManus, 2007). Especially to understand organisations in connection with observations, the determination of narratives is a powerful tool for researchers (Czarniawska 1997, Czarniawska 2004). Czarniawska (2004) argued that the core of managers in an organisation is telling narratives which I identified in the workshop at the case company.

3.4. Trustworthiness, Ethical Considerations and Limitations

In the last section of the methodology, trustworthiness, the considerations of ethical aspects and reflections on the limitations of this thesis are outlined.

3.4.1. Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that the term trustworthiness should be used in qualitative research instead of validity and reliability. Within trustworthiness, the aspects of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability should be considered (Bryman 2015). The trustworthiness of this qualitative research is increased through credible informants, well-established research methods and independently-funded research. On the other hand, one could argue that the findings are hardly transferable and can only be confirmed in the context of this thesis. These issues are addressed by a detailed methodology chapter which enables the reader to follow the process of the study and a ‘thick description’ (Bryman 2015, p.392) of the observed and analysed findings in chapter 4. Furthermore, I acted in good faith and tried to be as objective as possible during the process.

As suggested by Fisher (2010) the research was based on primary and secondary data to gather more accurate data. The combination of the data enabled me to critically question and examine the findings. The trustworthiness of the analysis of the data is increased through a detailed description of the process, as well as by stating the limitations of the thesis. In the data analysis, by using triangulation method all the gathered data have been brought together to perform a rigorous analysis and improve trustworthiness of the study.

The empirical data from the case company was in some aspects supported or criticised by industry experts’ statements and critically questioned by myself to increase the trustworthiness.

The observations and interviews were conducted by the same person which increases the trustworthiness. The usage of multiple sources increases the trustworthiness of the data as well. (Bryman 2015) Furthermore, critical voices within the company were encouraged to speak up anonymously and therefore a more objective picture was achieved. The interview informants were not influenced and have vast experience in their field, thus can be considered trustworthy and credible sources. The size of the data collection and this thesis itself limits the transferability and confirmability, because it is highly context-specific.

In order to further increase the trustworthiness, a pre-study was drafted and guidelines for observations and the interviews were developed beforehand their utilisation. These were piloted with industry experts and a PhD student, to increase their practical and theoretical correctness.

3.4.2. Ethical Considerations

In regard to research ethics, many various factors had to be taken into consideration. When one researches a phenomenon for or with a case company, there is a risk that the researcher may become biased and native to the company (Bryman 2015). Factors can be plentiful, such as uncritical examination of company-provided data or financial incentives. I tried to minimise potential sources of bias by constantly keeping a self-critical view on my research. This thesis was not funded by the case company Upstalsboom, but the hotel room and meals during the workshop in Varel were provided free of charge. Other expenses, such as travel expenses and costs related to the interviews were covered by myself and an independent research scholarship by Campus Vänner²¹. Thereby, I was able to keep my distance to the researched company. Nevertheless, one could still argue that balancing between being invited to such a rare research opportunity could negatively impact my professional distance. I tried to limit that risk by keeping very detailed and critical notes during the fieldwork.

Another important issue in regard informants, where I followed Bryman's (2015) suggestion of informant consent. In regard to ethics, the anonymity of the participants of the workshop and the voluntary interview partners is important. In order to achieve this, for several informants no company names, positions or destinations have been mentioned, they only have been characterised with their professional background to prove their expertise. I encouraged them to share their thoughts very openly and guaranteed their anonymity within this thesis. The informants during the semi-structured interviews were given the opportunity to withdraw their consent at any time during or after the interview. Therefore, their risk of facing restrictions in their professional environment is minimised and they are encouraged to speak their mind. The situation of the interview itself may pose a unusual situation for the participants, therefore I tried to avoid stressful situations or questions and keep the participants in their comfort zone, as suggested by Bryman (2015).

As mentioned before, I picked up conversations and loose interactions and did not always had the chance to formally introduce myself in the workshop. These statements are anonymous and further referred to as Upstalsboomer Z. One could argue that I observed the participants at the

²¹ Campus Vänner, a foundation in Helsingborg, Sweden aiming to support students in their projects and research Lund University's Campus Helsingborg, see <http://www.campusvanner.se> for more details

workshop and this could be immoral. But, two camera teams were documenting most parts of the process. Since I used neither audio nor video recording, I am confident that my observations did not invade the participants' privacy.

To ensure the safety of my collected data, it was handled with the utmost care and stored encrypted. It was only made accessible to the tutor of the in-hand thesis and to the interview informants upon request.

3.4.3. Limitations

Every method, qualitative or quantitative, has limitations. Common critiques on qualitative studies include aspects like replicability, generalisation and transparency (Bryman 2015). To address these issues, I am outlining several potential limitations discussed by Bryman (2015) and my way of addressing them in the following part.

As could be said about almost every study, a bigger sample size and more empirical data could be beneficial. In line with this, the time frame for this thesis did not allow any more fieldwork and poses another limitation. On the other hand, the invitation to the observed bi-annual workshop is a very rare opportunity and provided a thick set of data, whose relevant parts are described in detail in chapter 4.

In the beginning of the research, I set out with a clear focus on servant leadership and was not aware that the observations at the workshop would become the core of my study. This was partly overcome through my open mind during the observations and very detailed note-taking about the processes, gathering rich, thick data. The findings of the observations in the strategy workshop are an episodic chapter of the reality at Upstalsboom. The servant leadership-inspired characteristics of the company are strong and could still be observed in the workshop, even though these should be suspended in a strategy-as-practice perspective (Duffy and O'Rourke 2015). Furthermore, I did observe leader - employee interactions during the workshop, but it bracketed the customers out of the equation. Thereby, the observations are not representing the organisation's reality, but an episode of organisational life. Therefore, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions about the daily reality from only the observations. This is compensated by long interviews with Bernd Gaukler, who provided a critical perspective from inside the company.

Even though I tried to keep my distance to the case of Upstalsboom, the conclusions I draw may be non-replicable in regard to the company, due to my involvement in the issue and process. The structure of a family-owned business, without any outside shareholders and the personal commitment of Bodo Janssen can pose a limitation. The change of leadership, culture and overall company at Upstalsboom is ongoing and in a fluid state.

The observations contain only one workshop with a big, but limited amount of participants and only provide a snapshot of contextual understanding in this point in time. Due to the number of participants and nature of observation, I was not able to observe everything and multiple interactions at the same time. Some critics of Upstalsboom may even have avoided to approach

me, which I can not fully foreclose. Therefore, the idea of this thesis is to draw up inspirational hints that may either serve as an impulse for others to take on or adopt according to their needs.

My professional background in the industry served as a starting point and thus could pose a threat of imposing a limited view on the problem, based on my interpretations and attitudes. On the other hand, it has been argued that every research is based on the researchers' individual backgrounds, experiences and can never be totally ruled out. Also, my knowledge of the German hospitality industry enables me to discover 'the unusual' at the case company, because I am familiar with 'the usual'.

All interviews were conducted in German, the mother tongue of the informants and myself²². The notes during the observations were also taken in German, but the reflections were noted in English. I think conducting the interviews in German was helpful, because the informants were not all fluent in English and it would have posed an even stronger limitation for good and reliable data. Therefore, transcribing the original data and translating it later reduced major flaws in the processing of data. To enable the reader to verify my translations, quotes are provide with the original German statement in a footnote.

Another potential limitation is the cost of research, which I had to limit to a certain amount. Luckily, the scholarship from Campus Vänner enabled me to gather more data than originally hoped for. Still, I believe that no other research methods would have given me such deep insights into the case company and the informants' mindsets.

Finally, servant leadership theory is a very complex theoretical construct that, to my best knowledge, has not been researched and supported enough in a real-world context. It therefore is important to explore the complexity in reality with supporting concepts. Due to the very theoretical and philosophical characteristics, the theory poses a limitation itself when researched in practice and not in theory. Furthermore, the overlapping with other leadership theories makes it hard to distinguish apples from oranges.

²² quotes in the text are translated by myself and double-checked, the original German quotes are noted in footnotes

4. Empirical Findings and Analysis

In the first part of this chapter, the findings on the current situation of the hospitality industry are presented and analysed. Thereafter, the case company Upstalsboom is described in more detail. The initial situation and process of change are discussed briefly, to develop the base for observed the workshop. In the third section of the chapter, the observations at the workshop, alongside the findings from the interviews are analysed in regard to the theoretical framework.

4.1. Germany: Culture and Industry Problems

To understand the impact of German national culture on organisational life, the particularities are briefly outlined in the following chapter. This is needed, because the company serving as the case study for this thesis is operating within the German hospitality industry.

4.1.1. German National Culture and Language

The concept of culture can be considered to be fluid, constantly evolving and changing, which makes a concrete definition of what a culture is nearly impossible (Adler and Gunderson 2008). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1957 in Adler and Gunderson 2008) described it as a system that is shared by all or almost all members of a group. This system defines behaviours and attitudes of an individual and influences an individual's stance on the world. Cross-cultural studies indicated the acceptance of servant leadership throughout, but the national culture still has an impact on how it is understood (Mittal and Dorfman 2012, Parris and Peachey 2013).

Organisational culture is not developed independently from national culture, which can be assigned to a group of people living within a geographic area or nation (Verluyten 2010). Based on the GLOBE study, German culture can be defined to some extent, even though the study initially differentiated between West-Germany and the former East-Germany (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002). The GLOBE study is based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, but consist of nine instead of six dimensions, which are displayed in appendix 4. The findings of the GLOBE study provide interesting hints into potential difficulties and obstacles in regard to the problems in the hospitality industry in a German context and are outlined below.

The low scores on *Institutional Collectivism* and *In-Group Collectivism* indicate an individualistic society, both in regard to private and professional levels. Germany scores rather high on *Uncertainty Avoidance*, which indicates a high level of relying on existing and proven practices to avoid any potential risks. The high score on *Assertiveness* reflects the high level of trust that individuals have in institutions or organisations, as well as the direct approach to conflicts in a business environment. The score on the *Humane Orientation* is very low and reflects a very task-oriented and direct approach to problem solving in an organisational context. This efficiency and strive for quality is more important than compassion and interpersonal relationships, as can be seen in the medium score of *Performance Orientation*. In regard to *Power Distance*, Germany also scores in the middle, reflecting a fairly strong hierarchy with some participative and team-work orientation. Germans score high on *Future Orientation*, which indicates a focus on long-term

objectives and adaptiveness to change. The low score on *Egalitarianism* reflects the dominance of traditional and stereotypical gender roles. (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002, Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2007) It is important to keep in mind, that these indications are national averages and therefore in some cases may not at all reflect some individuals in the nation (Gill, Fitzgerald et al. 2010).

As mentioned before, the use of words is important in HRM to differentiate. The term 'human resources' is widely used among companies in Germany, even though some refer to their HR departments as 'Personalführung'²³ or 'Personalmanagement'²⁴. The word 'Humankapital'²⁵ was voted the ugliest word of the year 2004. This topic was highly debated in the media and the jury awarded the word to be cynical and claimed that it degrades humans to a pure economic factor and neglects their dignity. (Creutz 2005, FAZ 2005) Kalra (1997) stated that treating humans as a resource is demeaning and pejorative, as the use of the term HR implies. On the other hand, Hörl (2013) argued that associating humans as capital proves the point of them being invaluable assets to any firm and the core of their business model. Careful use of language is important for servant leadership (Gutierrez-Wirsching, Mayfield et al. 2015) and also a big part of national culture and identity.

Some words can be associated with negative images, due to a nation's history. People may e.g. associate the term 'servant' with slavery which does not seem to hold true in the context of the German language. The term 'the leader'²⁶ on the other hand has a very negative meaning for many Germans, because it was used as a synonym for Adolf Hitler in Nazi-Germany. In my experience of the hospitality industry, titles are very prominent to clarify hierarchies and assigned functions. But, the people with leadership functions are always referred to as 'Manager' leading the organisation, never as 'Führer', even though this word would be more suitable. In my understanding, this word is intentionally avoided and this further increases the lack of understanding of the differences evident in Germany. This problem is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.1.4., based on the expert interviews.

To summarise, the insights that GLOBE study provides on German business culture, it could be said that: Germans are individualists, trust in established processes, are low on compassion and strive for efficiency. Furthermore, Germans appreciate fairly strong hierarchies while traditional gender roles contrast their long-term orientation. Some indications exist that German managers are beginning to adopt modern leadership practices (Rothfelder, Ottenbacher et al. 2012). As any other language, German-speakers associate certain connotations with terminology, based on their own values.

4.1.2. Organisational Culture and Change

The culture of an organisation is based on the (sometimes even subconscious) values, meanings and beliefs of the individuals in an organisation. Organisational culture is either a key aspect that has to be changed or a facilitator needed for the success of an organisation in the long run. (Martins and Terblanche 2003, House, Hanges et al. 2004, Jung, Scott et al. 2009, Alvesson and

²³ 'staff leadership'

²⁴ 'staff management'

²⁵ 'human capital'

²⁶ 'der Führer'

Sveningsson 2016) One of most common and straightforward definitions is 'the way we do things around here' (Lundy and Cowling 1996, in Martins and Terblanche 2003). The approach to HRM of any organisation is deeply rooted and reflected in the organisational culture. The 'way things are done' has to be evident in the HRM practices and in the organisational culture. Because culture is 'man-made', it is dependent on the individuals.

The comprehension of organisational culture can be difficult. One has to focus less on structures, but develop an understanding of lived experiences, people, meanings, emotions and their representation in the organisational life. If there is a lack of emotionally engaging the people in the organisation, the culture will not be strong and sustainable. It has to be brought to life, which is often visible in language, storytelling, myths and the use of artefacts thought the organisation. If the organisational culture is implemented in a fast, superficial way and does not target people's thinking, emotions and feelings, it is unlikely to be a strong and successful tool for the organisation. The change needs time to grow and has to be followed persistently, otherwise it will not succeed. (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016)

In regard to the service sector, research has found that transferring values and organisational culture to a low paid, low skilled workforce with a high turnover rate is generally poor. Lower level employees face worse working conditions and less career prospects than managers. Therefore, managers are more invested and more likely to identify themselves with the organisation and its culture. In most research, managers are seen as the agents of cultural changes, whereas lower level employees are seen as the targets. (Ogbonna and Wilkinson 2003) This description holds true for the hospitality industry in Germany (Maack, Haves et al. 2013, Verlemann, Kipker et al. 2013).

Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) argue that the change of organisational culture usually needs a driving force from the top, an initiator and change agent. The wish to change needs to be evident in an organisation to be successful and can be assisted by a learning organisation. The process can be a problem, if the diversity of the people in the organisation is ignored and their values are not understood. People are not homogeneous and make sense differently within their individual context. The same message spread among people can result in diverse understandings and responses, depending on education, hierarchy or departmental structures. Therefore, there is a risk that the outcomes of the cultural change process will result in cultural differentiation throughout the firm and not in the intended integration. Cultural change needs time, constant follow ups and a level of determination to be successful. One key issue here is the lack of time for managers to engage in the process due to their daily duties. They tend to prioritise their daily business higher, resulting in a lack of investment into cultural change. (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016) According to them, the biggest interest in research is at the importance of the 'cultural level'. This line of thought follows the idea that the change of people's beliefs and values will result in the overall change in culture. Creating an organisation where everyone shares the same values, beliefs and attitudes is almost impossible. This makes culture hard to 'manage' in any context. (Ogbonna and Wilkinson 2003, Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016)

The lack of time and diversity of the workforce in the hospitality industry pose hereby a potential obstacles for cultural change. Adding to that, the German reluctance to challenge the established (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002) could cause difficulties for cultural change.

Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) discuss the phenomena of ‘hyperculture’ as one downside of organisational culture. Hyperculture is a claim of positive-sounding values, missions and visions, manifested in documents or rituals, that are interchangeable and widely spread in management writings. These values can be abstract and hard to understand for some members in the organisation, who may attribute diverging meanings to them. Hyperculture is overlapping to some extent with the real, ‘experienced culture’ that members of the organisation encounter on a daily basis. It is institutionalised while being claimed to be unique to the organisation. It is a narrative describing the culture as clear, strong and homogenous in the organisation, but has a somewhat unrealistic side to it, since it is often disconnected from the reality in an organisation, which is complex and diverse. There is a risk that if the culture is very disconnected from reality, it becomes ceremonial talk with no real impact, manifested in rituals, but not a strong guideline for people in the organisations. ‘Walk the talk’ is a commonly used expression to overcome this issue and implement the culture by living up to it. This is especially true if the reality shows that the management does not live up to be a role model and showcasing the culture and values. (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016)

In their review on HRM issues in the hospitality industry, Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. (2010) discovered many studies that researched the direct or indirect consequences of organisational culture on performance. These consequences included, among others: effectiveness and performance, employee commitment, employee satisfaction and intend to remain, profitability, customer satisfaction, commitment to shared organisational values and goals, openness to learning and change, teamwork, creativity, stability and growth, decentralised decision-making, motivation and role clarity. Sparrowe (1994) and Lashley (1995) disclosed also positive effects or correlations to these aspects in the hospitality industry.

In conclusion, organisational culture is a vital tool, not only in HRM for any organisation in the hospitality sector. The positive effects of a strong culture for an organisation are clear, but the context can be problematic for the change of culture or its successful implementation. This context in the German hospitality industry is further analysed and connected to servant leadership in the next two sections that represent the information from industry experts.

4.1.3. Problems in the German Hospitality Industry

The bad reputation of the hospitality industry, as described by Maack, Haves et al. (2013) and Verlemann, Kipker et al. (2013) also was evident during the interviews with industry experts. During the ITB seminar, the consultant Alfred Gettmann stated that the reputation of the industry contains aspects like exploitation of employees, bad work conditions and low wages. Many employers face major problems when they try to recruit workers, because they can’t attract them. This holds especially true for small-to-medium-sized family-owned hotels, that are very diverse. It is impossible to disclose one basic underlying reason for the whole industry, but Alfred Gettmann came across several problems in his daily work that are reoccurring in many companies. These key problems, mostly linked to bad leadership, he identified are summarised in table 5 below. (observation 3)

Table 5: Problems in the hospitality industry, according to Alfred Gettmann (observation 3)

Industry problem	Problem description
Communication	everyone talks about another, but not with another; chefs are usually not talkative
Appreciation	hotel owners do not know how to show appreciation; employees feel their work is not valued
Staff shortage	there is never enough staff on duty and new people are not hired because it always works out somehow; employees feel exhausted
Feedback	feedback is not given, because managers are not trained to give that; yearly feedback sessions are not scheduled; there is no sense of trust encouraging to speak up
Time dependence	employees are dependent on guests, if guests are not there time is wasted while waiting; productivity varies significantly between high and low times
Health	the rate of sick leaves is way higher than in any other sector
Negativity	there is no acceptance to learn from mistakes; mistakes are perceived as bad and not understood as chance to learn something
Bad Leadership	the leaders do not know what leadership means; high hierarchies grew in the past; a lack of social skills in the management; tasks are not delegated and responsibilities are unclear
Bad Strategy	a general lack in strategic thinking; employees do not know what the hotel stands for and what they want to achieve

4.1.4. The Roots of Problems: Leadership, Culture and Investments

The problems that Alfred Gettmann addressed (compare table 5 in chapter 4.1.3.) are connected with another. From the interviews with the industry experts, I came to the conclusion that they are circling around three main aspects: leadership, culture, and investments, both monetary and time-wise.

Gettmann also stressed the close connection of the problems mentioned above to leadership and the culture at the company. If the owner of a hotel (or leader) is reluctant to learn and adapt, the employees are not willing to do so either. Furthermore, he discussed that small-to-medium sized hotel owners do not want to invest into their employees, they rather invest into tangible, more stable products (e.g. equipment or new furniture). Gettmann assumes this is related to the high level of employee turnover and the threat to lose the investment, which is unlikely in regard to physical goods. (observation 3) This reluctance to invest into HR rather than physical goods poses a big obstacle, because many scholars agree that the employees are very much determining the outcome of a service (e.g. Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. 2010). Furthermore, this risk avoidance and low humane orientation is typical for German business behaviour (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002).

This dangerous resistance to investment is in line with the experience of informant D and the German mindset tends to minimise risks (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002). He stated that even big cooperations are hesitant to invest into intangibles, such as the development of a mission statement. According to him, the need for a shared mission is clear: ‘everyone knows that ... to target the employees on an emotional level, to enthuse them about their tasks, the product and

the industry ... apart from the one who gives clearance on the money²⁷. For informant D, emotions triggered by a shared vision or mission are key to convince, lead and keep people in the organisation, but are often ignored. In his example, the investment of 20.000 Euro for a mission statement was cancelled, because it was considered too expensive. On the other hand, the owners of the hotel invested eight million Euro into redecoration in the same period. They considered the impact of the mission statement to be unimportant and not worth the money, in stark contrast to informant D's belief:

‘The really big creed is emotion, that is key. You have to awake feelings in your employees and shape them through them. If you understand that, then you you know how to do things. ... You have to be consistent in what you are doing. But you cannot awake expectations and not live up to them.’²⁸
(Informant D).

These insights, that HR and the investment into it are very important, are stressed by scholars, such as Longenecker and Fink (2015) and Ulrich and Dulebohn (2015). The idea that people have to be involved on an emotional level to create a successful culture and organisation were stressed by Vogt (2005) and Clarken (2012). Sharing visions, empowering people to contribute are characteristics of servant leadership (Laub 1999).

Alfred Gettmann discovered that especially in smaller companies, where the owners are working full-time in operations, they will lack the time to develop the business and act as leaders. These over-worked leaders also have no patience and focus to improve the business by consulting their subordinates. The aspect of leaders who are stuck in daily business was also discussed by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016) as an obstacle to cultural change. According to Alfred Gettmann, hotel owners focus on repeated mistakes and not their origin, which in turn leads to stagnation: ‘This is a culture of negativity which inhibits learning, is not useful and does not lead to any change’²⁹. Also, they simply have not enough time to take a look at what their employees deal with and the employees in turn do not step forward, because the culture is characterised by fear to make a mistake, contrary to Senge's (2006) learning organisation. Some owners even seem to be generally uninterested and uninvested in their workforce; they have no interest in asking them for ideas, help or initiate change together. (Gettmann) The problems that subordinates have, even when they complain in a very negative way, always hold valuable information for informant D. Furthermore, understanding what ideas the lower-level employees have holds a lot of potential for improvement of processes, but the problem is the lack of time to have these conversations. Informant D also thinks that everyone is only able to complete one task fully, either to lead or to deal with operations on the ground. Leadership also requires the development of an understanding of people, which takes a significant investment of time.

Empowering employees to contribute and speak up is core of good HR policies (Lashley 1995) and one of the cores of servant leadership, the aspect of interpersonal acceptance, building trust

²⁷ ‘Jeder weiß das ... dass wir unsere Mitarbeiter an der emotionalen Schlaufe packen müssen um sie für die Aufgaben, das Produkt und die Industrie begeistern zu können ... außer der wo das Geld freigibt’ (Informant D)

²⁸ ‘Das ganz große Credo heißt Emotion, darum geht es. Du musst Gefühle bei den Mitarbeitern entfachen und sie damit formen. Wenn du das verstanden hast, dann weißt du wie du Dinge angehen kannst. ... Das musst du eben auch alles regelmäßig tun, aber du kannst keine Erwartungshaltung wecken und sie dann nicht erfüllen.’ (Informant D)

²⁹ ‘Es ist eine Negativkultur, das erschwert natürlich das Lernen, es ist nicht nützlich und führt zu keiner Veränderung’ (Gettmann)

(van Dierendonck 2011). If mistakes are understood as means to learn something and not a purely negative incident, Senge's idea learning organisation is reflected in the organisation's culture and will increase performance (e.g. Kusluvan, Kusluvan et al. 2010).

Alfred Gettmann's bread and butter as a consultant is to identify problems at hotels and suggest solutions. After the initial consultation at the company, one of the first steps usually includes the development of shared leadership guidelines with the management team. They have to establish rules, that are commonly agreed on. The communication of these guidelines, together with training on giving feedback are the next steps in the process to bring them alive. Gettmann also stressed that it is very important to make time for meetings to talk, which in general is an issue in the industry and makes his work difficult. (Gettmann) A similar comment was made by Informant C: In her view, a good leader has to encourage people to strive for a common goal by sharing it: A good leader does not only provide a vision, but shares it with subordinates and also provides assistance to reach that goal. The goal and how it can be achieved have to be communicated clearly and the leader has a mentoring function during the process. As discussed by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016), common and communicated values benefit the organisation. The understanding among the workforce can be supported by means of storytelling, to make the values and vision more feasible. Because a servant leader provides direction and helps the subordinates to grow (van Dierendonck 2011), he matches in some regard the description of Informant C's ideal leader.

The common, shared goal enables the employees to identify themselves with the company and reach for it together as discussed by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016). Informant D provided a practical example from his daily life what happens when this is not practiced in reality: Guests frequently complained that they are not greeted by front office staff, which is an unacceptable issue for the general manager. Informant D was then facing a dilemma: He could not demand the employees to greet the guests, because their general manager herself does not greet the employees. The role model is non-existent, authenticity is not perceived by the employees and therefore 'the rot starts at the top'. Informant C added, that in her experience this problem usually originates in the top of the hierarchy, where the appointed people lack of social leading skills, the ability to provide guidance and serve as role-models. She concludes that it is impossible to act as a leader in the organisation, when the highest leader in the company is not serving as a role-model to look up to. Within this context, servant leadership could provide a solution to the issue, because being an authentic role model is one characteristic of a servant leader (Laub 1999). Furthermore, living up to expectations and 'walking the talk' can result in positive storytelling throughout the workforce (Gill 2015), whereas the bad real-life examples are instances to the contrary.

Gettmann's description of bad leadership (compare table 5 in chapter 4.1.3.) was also reflected by Informant C, who stated that self-centred leaders are rather common in the industry and very bad for a hotel. She stated that these individuals misinterpret their function. Informant D added that they lack the crucial understanding about the differences between a manager and a leader, which he defines as the following: 'a leader understands to lead his team to the previously communicated success. A manager is rather the executive force in that regard, he is not the one

who has a vision and guides his team there³⁰ He continued that this lack of understanding is evident in the synonymous use of the two words in the German hotel industry. In his view, a manager can only become a leader when he or she develops an understanding of the differences and the characteristics a leader needs over time. This includes questioning the self-perception and the own behaviour as a first step, because reflective-thinking is needed to lead others.

This lack of social skills could be overcome, if the training of a (servant) leader follows the idea of Sendjaya (2010), who stressed the importance of character development and not the development of competences. Another issue is the general avoidance of the terminology 'the leader'. Thereby the differences are not minimised, which contributes to the misunderstanding.

In regard to organisational culture, informant D stated: 'That is especially important in our industry, to be emotional engaged and able to identify'³¹. He believed that culture then becomes part of an employees' identity and believes after a couple of years, if it is consistent and brought to life everyday. That shared identity is also described by Brady and Haley (2013). This identification can prove problematic for the individual when it switches companies and is confronted with another culture. The values, mission and vision have to be clear, straightforward and aligned throughout the company. This emotional identification with the company provides sense to employees and enables the drive to make an impact together. If that is not given, everyone does their job unconnected with another in their respective department, but not as a football team that follows a common goal. This connection can only be established by a charismatic leader, who is able to spark enthusiasm among his followers. But, however great the leader is at targeting his employees, it is never possible to motivate everyone to participate. (informant D) Therefore, informant D describes culture as a tool for an organisation to emotionally engage with employees and lead them to a common goal. This understanding is in line with Clarken's (2012) idea that an employee's mind, heart and will need to be stimulated to unfold the potential. The identification with the company creates pride and motivates people to give their best at work, if stimulated by emotional engagement. (e.g. Brady and Haley 2013, Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016)

This culture should hold a certain degree freedom for employees to create new ideas and encourage creative thinking and problem-solving. On the other hand, the supervision and control of that is very important to assure that no resources are wasted. (informant D) The availability of freedom to contribute is also important for informant C, who added that it is important people get the chance to be part of and that 'everyone can contribute and is appreciated for it'³² This level of freedom to participate which the informants described can be understood within the context of empowerment as described by Lashley (1995) and Gill et al. (2010). As discussed before, this empowerment in turn is in the focus of servant leadership.

When I described the workshop at Upstalsboom to informant C and D, both were very surprised about the size of the monetary investment made. The salary for 85 people, travel expenses, hotel costs and trainer fees would easily turn out to be more than 100.000 Euro. They estimated that making such an investment would be potentially possible for most big hotel cooperations, but

³⁰ 'Ein Leader versteht es sein Team zu führen, zu dem besprochenen Erfolg. Ein Manager ist eher die ausführende Gewalt dessen, er ist nicht derjenige, der die Vision hat und sein Team dahin führt' (Informant D)

³¹ 'Das ist gerade in unserer Industry so super wichtig, emotional engagiert sein und sich identifizieren können' (Informant D)

³² 'sie was bewirken können und dafür geschätzt werden' (Informant C)

their shareholders in turn may refuse to make the investment, due to the unpredictable long-term effects. Furthermore, they think that the investment of time into the people may be difficult to justify for a company that is not privately owned. Informant D considers that this is also due to the predominant focus in the industry on money:

‘If I take a look at our meetings, we celebrate that we are 50 Euro over the compset³³. But when we take into consideration that we had a sick-rate of more than 20% in February - then the question is: What are we doing?’³⁴

In regard to research question 1 and to indicate the potential solutions and limitations servant leadership holds for the problems of the hospitality industry, table 6 below was developed. In table 6, the previously analysed findings about problems in the industry, taken from the experts’ opinions (Gettmann, informant C, informant D) are summarised and linked to their respective roots. In the right column, potential solutions and limitation the servant leadership literature describes are briefly stated.

³³ Compset: ‘competitive set’ of hotels that are rivals, whose performance is compared to determine the position in the market and price segment

³⁴ ‘Wenn ich mir unsere Meetings anschau, da wird gefeiert, dass wir 50 Euro über dem Compset liegen. Aber wenn wir uns dann anschauen, dass wir im Februar einen Krankenstand von über 20% hatten, dann stellt sich die Frage: Was machen wir hier?’ (Informant D)

Table 6: Roots of problems and promising servant leadership solutions

Problems	Rooted in	Solutions in servant leadership
Lack of emotional connections	Lack of investments in culture and emotions	Building community (Laub 1999, Spears 2010) Building relationships (McGee-Cooper and Looper 2001)
Lack of role model	Lack in leadership behaviour	Modelling (e.g. Russell and Stone 2002) Stewardship (van Dierendonck 2011)
Lack of acceptance of failure	Culture of negativity Management instead of leadership	Moral love (Patterson 2003) Interpersonal acceptance (van Dierendonck 2011) Learning through listening (Spears 2010)
Lack of appreciation of employees	Lack of understanding employees as potentials	Developing intrinsic values (van Dierendonck 2011) Moral love (Patterson 2003) Appreciation of others (Russell and Stone 2002)
Lack of provision of direction, vision	Management instead of leadership	Core focus on 'people first' in servant leadership Conceptualisation (Spears 2010)
Lack of sharing goals	Lack in leadership behaviour	Sharing of leadership (Laub 1999) Communication (Russell and Stone 2002)
Lack of empowering	Managing people instead of leading them	Empowering (e.g. Russell and Stone 2002, Laub 1999) Commitment to growth (Spears 2010)
Lack of general leadership	Lack of understanding of leadership, lack of skills	Core understanding of 'serving' in servant leadership Need for leader's education and training of skills (Sendjaya 2010) BUT: Linguistic boundaries in German
Lack of investments in culture	Lack of understanding of importance	Building community (Laub 1999, Spears 2010) BUT: Lack of understanding for the need in the industry
Lack of investments in training	Understanding employees as resource	Commitment to growth (Spears 2010) Developing people (Laub 1999, van Dierendonck 2011)
High sickness rates	Mechanistic exploitation of employees as resource	Healing (Spears 2010) Moral love (Patterson 2010)
Staff shortages	Industry image	Understanding people as potential not as resources BUT: Low wages, unattractive perspectives in industry
High time dependence	Service characteristics	Delegation (Russell and Stone 2002) BUT: Not possible to solve

4.2. Upstalsboom: A Company in Transition

Upstalsboom is a hotel chain that made a significant process of transition from a typical German hotel machinery towards a very successful company with a strong employee focus. The following three sections briefly outline the transition process of the company and form the bedrock to understand the context of the observations of the business workshop.

4.2.1. The Status Quo: High on Profits, Low on Compassion

When Bodo Janssen joined the company of his parents in 2005, he began to restructure the management contractor for hotels into company-owned and run properties. After the sudden death of his father in 2007, Bodo took over Upstalsboom as the managing director, earlier than originally intended. In contrary to the industry's average investment rate of 3% of the turnover, he invested up to 15% in the following years in the properties (AHGZ 2007, Laudenbach 2014, Janssen 2016).

Back then, Upstalsboom was a profitable and healthy company, at least according to KPIs, turnovers and revenues. (Upstalsboom n.d.) Bodo Janssen describes his understanding of entrepreneurship back then as a focus on quality and profitability. (Gründling 2013) Nevertheless, the results of an employee satisfaction survey in 2006 were showcasing a different picture. Employee's didn't feel satisfied and could not identify themselves with the hotel chain. Bodo Janssen decided to hide this data and not communicate it, due to the good overall performance of the organisation and the company values that he had shaped together with the top management. (Janssen 2016) This thought of mind is reflected in the traditional, Tayloristic understanding of HR: that it is merely a cost-factor and resource that is utilised, thus, means to an end. Back then, Upstalsboom only had one part-time employee in HR, focussing on payslips and nothing else (Gaukler A). This description somewhat reflects the unprofessional and underdeveloped concept of HR which Kuslivan et al. (2010) found to be so common in the hospitality industry.

In 2010, Bernd Gaukler joined Upstalsboom and was assigned to develop and implement a HR department and strategy. Bodo Janssen described Upstalsboom to Bernd Gaukler before as profitable organisation with a good reputation, a fair business partner with very satisfied customers and engaged employees who are longstanding and personally known. The first impression upon arrival at the hotel chain's headquarters differed significantly: The secretary didn't know that he had an appointment, she only knew that Bodo Janssen was on vacation. No one offered him a chair, coffee or just greeted him with a warm welcome after arrival. The meeting was scheduled for nine a.m., but Bodo Janssen arrived over two hours later. Bernd Gaukler described his encounter as unprofessional and contrary to the self-perception of the company: 'Familiarity, a sense of hospitality, welcoming behaviour - I did not encounter any of that!'³⁵ This was supported by the encounters he had with employees in the headquarter. They could state what task they were hired for, but could not clarify why they were fulfilling a certain

³⁵ 'Familie, Gastfreundlichkeit, Willkommenskultur - all das habe ich nicht erlebt!' (Gaukler A)

task nor give sufficient answers why they were working at the company for several years. (Gaukler A)

These impressions, as well as the lack an available office for him, led to the decision to investigate the situation further. Therefore, Bernd Gaukler travelled to all destinations of the hotel chain to understand the bigger picture. Unfortunately, he had to conduct the trips by train - because the previously agreed upon company car had not been ordered, for him another sign of unprofessional business behaviour. During the trip, his goal was to understand processes, get contacts and understand the differences between the outlets. He talked to over 500 people and arrived at the conclusion that two organisations were existing parallel to another: One perceived by Bodo Janssen and the other one being the reality for the employees. (Gaukler A, Gaukler forthcoming) The culture back then reflected the values of the top management, but did not mirror the reality and can be classified as a hyperculture in Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) comprehension.

Bernd Gaukler discovered an atmosphere dominated by fear to speak up, no motivation for change and to take initiative. Only a few people spoke up, they claimed that critique and participation in decision-making was unsolicited and their work was not appreciated. This is in line with many general descriptions of the German hospitality industry, being characterised by high hierarchies, top-down management and a lack of employee integration. Bernd Gaukler disclosed several key problems at the company: no clarity about the vision, a high sickness rate, uninformed and unmotivated employees, inefficient processes due to a lack in training, a lack of leadership throughout all levels and a culture of fear. (Gaukler A, Gaukler forthcoming)

These problems were also discussed in the last chapter, based on the industry experts' experiences and are somewhat typical for a large share of the industry, as described in chapter 1.1. of the in-hand thesis. To conclude, the initial status quo of Upstalsboom reflected the characterisation of the German hotel industry and a typical German business culture rather well.

4.2.2. Challenging the Status Quo - Breaking Patterns

Based on the initial findings during his visits of Upstalsboom's destinations, Bernd Gaukler suggested to conduct an anonymous, web-based employee survey. In the survey, only 52,3% of the employees took part, which he later related to the previously ignored survey that was not anonymous and employees had fear to state their believes: 'If I don't make the results of an election public, I cannot be surprised if no one votes.'³⁶ The measured results were rather shocking: overall satisfaction was between D and E in ECTS grades (59%), whereas Bodo Janssen expected a satisfaction rate of 80%. (Gaukler A, Janssen 2016)

In the end of the survey, an open-answer part was provided to enable the employees to speak up. Within this section, positive comments were rare, but the vast majority of comments showcased frustrated, disillusioned and scared employees. Bernd Gaukler quoted the following examples: 'Our F&B³⁷ manager steals'³⁸, 'I work in housekeeping, I am scared to go to work because the

³⁶ 'Wenn ich das Ergebnis einer Wahl nicht bekannt gebe, dann kann ich mich nicht wundern wenn niemand wählt.' (Gaukler A)

³⁷ Food & Beverage Manager, title for a manager dealing with all food and beverage-related departments in a hotel

³⁸ 'unser F&B Manager klaut' (Gaukler A)

executive housekeeper harasses me every day³⁹ and ‘I am an apprentice, I work 16 hours every day. PS: I am 16.’⁴⁰ (Gaukler A) These comments peaked in the answer of one employee to the question ‘What do you need to be able to do your job?’⁴¹: ‘Another boss than Bodo Janssen’⁴². (Janssen 2015)

Especially this statement was devastating for Bodo Janssen, ‘a nasty shock’⁴³ and he had to reconsider his self perception. The first step to show the employees that their criticism was taken seriously was to present all of the results in all hotels. This led to pushback by some general managers, some refused to present the survey unfiltered. Two general managers resigned instantly, without any direct consequences: No guests complained, everyone kept working and there was no significant change in turnover. Bernd Gaukler felt that the management team in general was sceptical and reluctant to change, in regard to the GLOBE study therefore typical German (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002). Bodo Janssen decided to reflect upon himself and went to a monastery over a period of eighteen months to meditate and get guidance by the Benedictine padre Anselm Grün⁴⁴ and Friedrich Assländer⁴⁵. Padre Anselm Grün mixes spiritual leadership with servant leadership in his courses and books and emphasises the aspect of humility within this context. Self-awareness and self-reflection are important for a servant leader, as described by Finley (2012).

Bodo’s self-reflection at the monastery led to two main conclusions: There is a significant difference between management and leadership, whereas management seems to be too dominant in the work context in Germany (Janssen 2016). This belief is also supported by academics and linked to a lack of comprehension of the differences (Kaduk, Osmetz et al. 2015). The second insight was that leadership is a two-staged process, firstly a focus on the self and then on others is needed. It is impossible to lead others when someone is unable to lead him or herself. (Janssen 2016) This insight also reflects Sendjaya’s (2010) notion that the character building and development of social skills are important for a leader.

From these insights, Bodo Janssen developed a new attitude towards his own profession and the company’s management in regard to their employees: ‘Leadership is not a privilege, leadership is a service’⁴⁶. This quote, also being the title of this thesis is a good summary of an understanding of servant leadership’s core. The leader provides a service to the employees and does not understand his position as a tool to utilise any privileges associated to it. To gain a sense of this new vision, all members in managerial positions were invited to join the seminars at the monastery. Some managers who were sceptical about the religious atmosphere grouped in task-forces to work jointly with the project ‘Corporate Happiness’⁴⁷ instead. Corporate Happiness is a concept developed by Dr. Oliver Haas and rooted in positive psychology. The combination of

³⁹ ‘ich arbeite im Housekeeping, ich habe Angst zur Arbeit zu gehen, weil mich die Hausdame jeden Tag schikaniert’ (Gaukler A)

⁴⁰ ‘Ich bin Azubi, ich arbeite jeden Tag 16 Stunden. PS: Ich bin 16.’ (Gaukler A)

⁴¹ ‘Was brauchen Sie um Ihren Job machen zu können?’ (Janssen 2016)

⁴² ‘Einen anderen Chef als Bodo Janssen.’ (Janssen 2016)

⁴³ ‘ein Schlag ins Kontor’ (Janssen 2016)

⁴⁴ for more information on the ‘management padre’ see <http://www.teambenedikt.de>

⁴⁵ for more information on the psychologist Friedrich Assländer, see <http://asslaender.de>

⁴⁶ ‘Führung ist kein Privileg, Führung ist eine Dienstleistung’ (Upstalsboom n.d.)

⁴⁷ for more information on Corporate Happiness in organisations, see <http://corporate-happiness.de>

these two schools of thought was established to provide different ways for the management team to reach a common goal. (Janssen 2016)

The goal was to implement a new efficient, sustainable and value-oriented leadership, complemented by the concept of Corporate Happiness to develop satisfied and high-performing employees. (Upstalsboom n.d.) The paradigm change is summarised by Bodo as a change from value creation through utilisation to the unfolding of potential in everyone. (Gründling 2013) This change in mind is strongly connected to the characteristics of servant leadership (e.g. van Dierendonck 2011) and the notion of empowerment in a context of human potential instead of human resources.

The management team was separated in seven peer groups and reflected upon leadership in the fields of humanities, natural sciences and business administration. Within these peer groups, three modular steps were developed:

1. Leading yourself ('only who can lead himself can lead others'⁴⁸): Within this module, the participants focus on the differences between management and leadership and clarified concepts such as values, self-consciousness and personal goals. These insights are in line with Senjaya's (2010) argument that the focus of the training of a servant leader has to be on the self and character.
2. Leading others ('value creation through appreciation of others'⁴⁹): Within this module, the focus lays upon the sources for good leadership and tasks of a leader, discussing issues such as attentiveness, discipline, gratefulness and humility. These characteristics of the module are reflecting servant leadership (e.g. Laub 2010, Spears 2010).
3. Language as a tool for leadership ('talk with another rather than about another'⁵⁰): This module dealt with the awareness about the power of language in regard to leading yourself and others. (Gaukler forthcoming, Upstalsboom n.d.) The importance of language in organisations in a German context has been described in chapter 4.1.2.

The new values, corporate vision and principles were developed together with 100 employees in a strategy workshop. This is in stark contrast to the findings of Ogbonna and Wilkinson (2003), because the employees are not the target but the developers of organisational change. The underlying reason for the workshop was to develop a shared vision, based on the personal values and beliefs of the individuals, which reflects the building of culture of Martins and Terblanche (2003). These corporate values and their definitions can be found in appendix 7. These values shape the 'tree of values'⁵¹ (appendix 6) which is present in every hotel lobby. The implementation values in every hotel are dependent on the employees and thus, differ at every place slightly. (Janssen 2015) This reflects the acceptance and appreciation of servant leadership,

⁴⁸ 'nur wer sich selbst führen kann, kann andere führen' (Gaukler forthcoming)

⁴⁹ 'Wertschöpfung durch Wertschätzung' (Gaukler forthcoming)

⁵⁰ 'miteinander sprechen anstatt übereinander zu reden' (Gaukler forthcoming)

⁵¹ German: 'Wertebaum'

as e.g. described by Russell and Stone (2002). The values in turn reflect the mission statement of Upstalsboom: 'Upstalsboom - Friesian, open, hearty - Just different, that's who we are!'⁵² (Von Freyberg and Zeugfang 2014). This shared building of culture reflects the idea of servant leadership to build communities (Spears 2010, van Dierendonck 2010) and indicates the change towards a strong corporate culture, by including many different voices in line with Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) call important for a powerful culture. The building of culture from the bottom up by employees also reflects the aspect of empowerment in servant leadership (Laub 1999 and Stone, Russell et al 2004).

Over time, other ideas by the management were dropped, because they were not acceptable for the workforce at Upstalsboom, reflecting the acceptance dimension of servant leadership (van Dierendonck and Patterson 2010). Gaukler describes the overall process as often painful and a constant process of trial and error, which sometimes squandered money, time and labour. Reflecting on the time in the beginning, Bernd Gaukler stated: 'I am grateful for these first five months in the beginning. ... That was the best-invested time.'⁵³

Upstalsboom parted ways with some of their managers, even though they had proven to be very profitable. A total seven managers left Upstalsboom because of the new vision and mission, which did not match their beliefs. (Gaukler A, Izmir 2014, Unrast 2014) Bernd Gaukler considers this to be a normal reaction: 'This is the most difficult thing you can ask of a person - to change the personal self and their attitude'⁵⁴ In regard to the new vision, the overall execution of the new Upstalsboom values and their long-term benefits were more important than the financial profit in the short run. This is in line with Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2016) argument that the change of individual held beliefs results in a change of organisational culture, but 100% shared values are not achievable, because organisational values have to reflect the values of the individuals (Martins and Terblanche 2003).

4.2.3. The Fruits of Transition

The massive investments of between four to five million Euro into employees' development were fruitful and can already be measured in some statistics, visualised in figure 5 below. Over the last years, the satisfaction rate at Upstalsboom has been increased significantly. The employees are more satisfied than before, with a total score of 68% and a 70% participation rate. The increased guest-recommendation rate of 98%, compared to previously 93%, is a direct consequence of the more satisfied employees for Bernd Gaukler. This in turn led to an increase in guests and doubled the company's revenue. Compared to six years earlier, the revenue of the hotel chain has almost doubled and the profit has increased by 41%. Furthermore, the employees stay an average of six years with Upstalsboom, compared to the industry average retention rate of eighteen months. This is represented in the labour turnover rate of 19,5%, compared to 32,4% in 2011. The average rate of sick leaves is now 3%, under half of the industry's average of 7%, compared to the company's rate of 12,8% in 2011. In regard to

⁵² 'Upstalsboom - friesisch, offen, herzlich - Einfach anders, das sind wir!' (Von Freiberg und Zugfang 2014)

⁵³ 'Ich bin dankbar für diese ersten fünf Monate. ... Das war die am Besten investierte Zeit.' (Gaukler A)

⁵⁴ 'Das ist ja das schwierigste, was man von einem Menschen verlangen kann - sich persönlich verändern und seine Einstellung' (Gaukler A)

employee recruiting, Upstalsboom receives 500% more applications for vacancies. (Gaukler forthcoming)

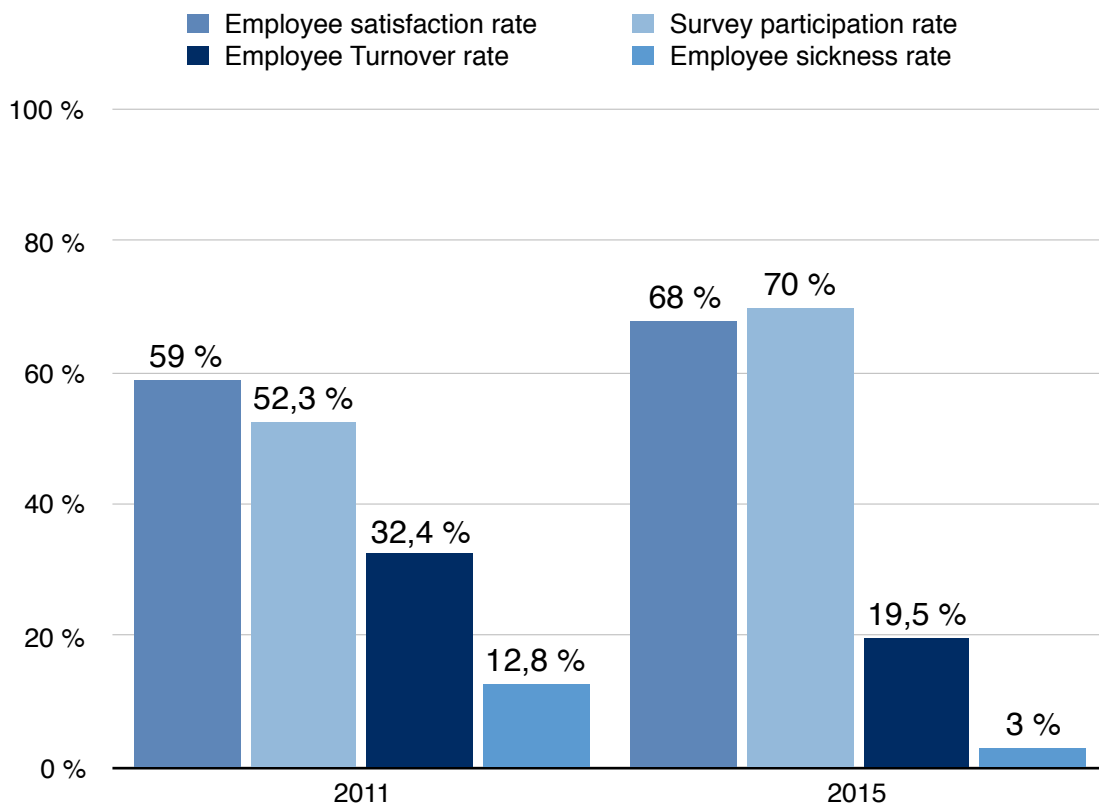


Figure 5: Measurable factors reflection the transition (Gaukler forthcoming)

These measurable factors prove some sceptics wrong, who were certain that profitability and investments in satisfied, happy employees cannot be achieved at the same time. (Gründling 2013) Bernd Gaukler thinks that this is partly occurring because the employees identify themselves in another, better way with the company (Gaukler A). On the other hand, this is also owed to the boost in prominence due to media coverage and awards⁵⁵ the hotel chain has received for their new orientation. One example is the most prominent price for economy in Germany, the ‘Querdenker’ Award⁵⁶. Upstalsboom has been awarded for focussing on the ‘human’ in the organisation again and their value-oriented leadership philosophy (Upstalsboom 2014).

‘I have a feeling that it will never end. ... Bodo said once that he thought he would just quickly run a marathon, but in reality it is a life-long endurance run. ... All of these changes takes their time, so everyone understands them, we heard that here today. But we are not taking this time!’⁵⁷ (Gaukler A).

⁵⁵ for a full list of awards see <http://www.upstalsboom.de/ausgezeichnet.html>

⁵⁶ Querdenker Award, ‘contrarian thinker award’, awarding people and organisations for unconventional thinking in a business context, for more information see <http://www.querdenker.de>

⁵⁷ ‘Ich habe das Gefühl, das wird nie aufhören. ... Bodo hat ja mal gesagt, er dachte er rennt mal schnelle einen Marathon, aber in Wirklichkeit ist es ein lebenslanger Dauerlauf. ... All diese Veränderungen brauchen ihre Zeit, damit jeder sie begreift, das haben wir hier heute gehört. Aber wir nehmen uns diese Zeit nicht!’ (Gaukler A)

As evident from the quote above, Bernd Gaukler considered to be only half way (if even) up the road of change and stressed implementation of processes takes time. One of the most difficult factors is the geographical distance between the hotels, that hinders team building and quick interactions. Others are the various levels of education among the very diverse 650 employees and their different personal and professional backgrounds. Especially interesting was the finding that managers, who have been working in international chains for years face serious problems when they suddenly have to work with independent decision-making, instead of top-down action plans. (Gaukler A) The problem to transfer cultural change to lower level employees was also named to be a major issue in the service industry by Ogbonna and Wilkinson (2003).

As a visual aid to grasp the transition at Upstalsboom, the key changes of the initial situation, reflecting a typical German hospitality company and its problems (red circle, left side) is contrasted with the situation today (green circle, right side) in figure 6 below.

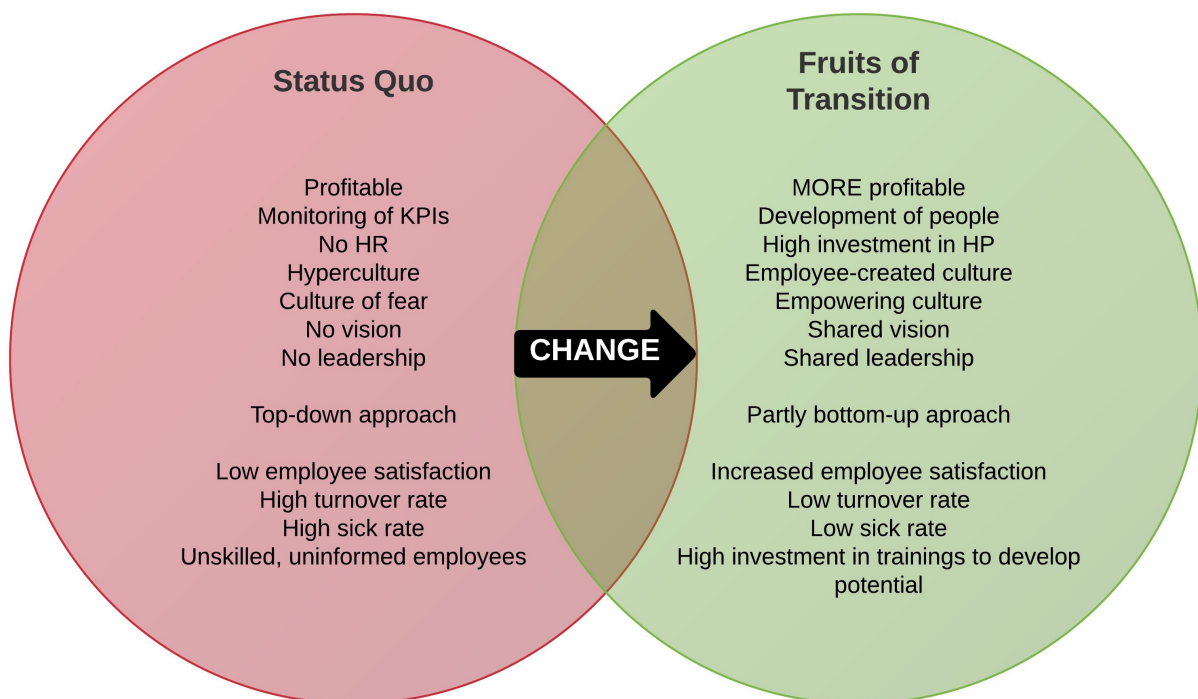


Figure 6: Visualising the status quo before and after the transition

4.3. Observations of Servant Leadership Behaviour and Characteristics

Taking the previously described transition of the company that was initiated from the top, but employee-driven in most parts as point of departure, the following section describes the observations in detail. Firstly, the utilisation of workshops at Upstalsboom is briefly introduced, followed by a detailed sketching of the observed workshop while matching it to the servant leadership. Thereafter, six different themes that returned during the data analysis are picked up and discussed in connection to the theory.

4.3.1. Employees Shaping Strategy

Bi-annually, a strategy workshop is undergone at Upstalsboom. The events are scheduled long ahead, but the topics are set typically around four weeks prior the event. In the first ones in 2013, the vision and the values were developed together. Thereafter, the meetings dealt with a change of the mindset from ‘I’ towards ‘us-thinking’ and ‘must’ to ‘want-thinking’. The outcome of these workshops was the insight that not everything works as planned and therefore the fifth was dealing with ‘one’s weaker self’. The participants consist of around 100 employees, usually 50% are newcomers to the event. The invitations are sent out to the hotels and they in turn are allocating people according to their business priorities and people’s willingness to attend. There can be a clash between the planned and real outcome, because some employees may be sent from their respective outlet, but not willing to actively contribute. Due to the high cost of around 40.000 to 50.000 Euro per workshop, excluding labour cost, there is a risk to squander money. Some people may attend only for the fun part of being together on a trip and enjoy themselves, but have no real interest in contributing to the development of the company. (Gaukler B) The basic concept of the workshop to get together and include people in decision-making processes while building community is in line with Spear’s (2010) description of servant leadership.

Bodo and Bernd disagree on the effectiveness of the workshops to spread the outcomes throughout the company (Gaukler B). Bodo believes that 100 people will reach a big audience and communicate with the others in the organisation, whereas Bernd believes that out of the 100 people only a small portion is very engaged and will actively spread the message. As stated by Hodgkinson, Whittington et al. (2006), the reach and effectiveness of strategy-as-practice workshops is also unclear in academia. This is a constant learning process and Bernd assumes that his perceptions of how workshops have to be organised today will be different in the future. Reflecting on the cultural change of Upstalsboom he said: ‘I would do many things differently today. What we did was good that way. At this point of time it was just right, we could not have made things differently.’⁵⁸ (Gaukler B)

The mixture of people attending the workshops is uncommon, because it includes employees throughout all levels of hierarchy which is beneficial for the workshop as suggested by Hodgkinson, Whittington et al. (2006). By connecting the people with another, their understanding for various perspectives can be increased (Duffy and O’Rourke 2015) and they

⁵⁸ ‘Ich würde heute vieles anders machen. Was wir gemacht haben war gut so. Zu dem Zeitpunkt war es richtig, das hätten wir nicht anders machen können.’ (Gaukler B)

jointly make sense of the organisation in line with Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008), which Bekker (2010) also calls vital. Peck, Gulliver et. al (2004) also discussed that these meetings create organisational emotions that are shared among participants.

4.3.2. Sketching ‘Die Entwicklungswerkstatt’

In the following, I describe the workshop called ‘die Entwicklungswerkstatt’ that I attended in March 2016 and some relevant processes, surroundings and encounters that I observed during. The goal of this workshop was to reflect upon the last three years of development and understand what happened since then (Gaukler A).

I was surprised by the friendliness of the staff and smile of the employees on my arrival, which seemed more honest and natural than in most hotels I visited in the past. The service at the front office was very professional and welcoming. Shortly after, I met Bodo Janssen and he invited me to the pre-workshop meeting and explained me briefly what was going to happen. Because it is a common policy at Upstalsboom’s workshops to interact on a first-name basis, I use first names only in the following. (observation 1) In my experience, the informal interaction with another is rather unusual in the German hospitality industry and contradicts the traditionally stiff and high hierarchies. In line with the strategy-as-practice view, the frame of the workshop was pre-defined with a broad topic, certain activities and a time frame (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008).

The workshop started at 11.00 and ended at 13.30 with a lunch break at the hotel’s restaurant. After a short welcome by Bodo, he asked the staff to gather with people that had the matching colour on their lanyard keychains. The task was to introduce one and in a second step briefly reflect within the group on the question: ‘what does ‘a happy human’ mean to me?’⁵⁹. In the introduction to that task, Bodo stated that the overall atmosphere of the workshop shall be ‘a place beyond true or false’⁶⁰, thereby defining the atmosphere and setting the frame. Thereafter, Sebastian and Bodo walked around and choose employees to summarise what their group had stated to be the most important aspects of happiness. (observation 1) It was interesting to see that the ones who presented the discussions of the groups were in seven out of nine cases not general managers, but other employees. This is an example of actively empowering people to take courage, step up and help them leave their comfort zone and grow, as represented in servant leadership (e.g. Spears 2010), the concept of developing human potential (e.g. Vogt 2005) and empowerment (e.g. Gill et al. 2010).

In the following, Bodo’s assistant pointed out that exactly three years to the day ago they developed the organisational values in Varel at the first workshop of its kind. This is very characteristic for the mode of presentations during the workshop. They do not consist of flashy power points, but the many people bring up small anecdotes or artefacts to share their story. The told story varied and were supported e.g. by the screenshot of Bodo’s e-mail three years ago about the outcomes of the first workshop. (observation 1) These visualisations and artefacts in strategy-as-practice serve as objects to make the story more tangible and make identification easier (Golsorkhi, Rouleau et al. 2015).

⁵⁹ ‘Was bedeutet für mich ein glücklicher Mensch?’ (observation 1)

⁶⁰ ‘ein Ort jenseits von richtig und falsch’ (observation 1)

Thereafter, employees and Bodo presented their trip to Rwanda where they opened a school funded by Upstalsboom's guests and employees in January 2016. The presentation was accompanied by a video and was very emotional for both the presenters and the audience. The school project was the outcome of Bodo's idea to do set a meaningful purpose in everyone's life and is presented in chapter 4.3.7. in more detail. (observation 1, Gaukler B) Because the audience connected with the storytellers on stage, this is an example of the creation of organisational emotions through storytelling, as stressed by Peck, Gulliver et. al (2004).

The following hours consisted of short presentations of the Upstalsboom outlets. They presented what they 'took home' as their task from the last workshop. The examples were plentiful and differed between the hotels, since they all interpreted the task according to their needs. The presentations were of differing quality, presented by various employees. In some cases the general managers took the lead, in others lower-level employees presented, even apprentices. (observation 1) According to Bernd, this was done to keep a follow up on the results of the previous workshop and connect everyone with another (Gaukler B). These presentations are another example to provide a stage to people to share a story and facilitate bonding, similar to the introduction round in the beginning of the day.

After lunch, the presentations of the individual hotels continued and a newly introduced club was presented. In the past, a 'Culture Club' (CC) was implemented at Upstalsboom to develop new ways to spread the Upstalsboom Weg throughout all outlets and among all of their departments. In 2016, the 'Management Club' (MC) was founded to cater to the issue discovered in the last workshops: the company needs more structure and streamlined guidelines that enable everyone to work more effectively. The MC consists of managers and employees throughout all hierarchies which are developing 'rules of the game'⁶¹ for the company. An apprentice presented the MC and proudly announced that they only took four hours to develop the rules, in contrary to many other meetings at Upstalsboom. (observation 1) These clubs at Upstalsboom are one example to make use of the ideas of lower-level employees, which is important and usually neglected in other hotels, according to Informant D. These clubs another examples of workshops at Upstalsboom. They are small strategy-as-practice workshops in themselves throughout the hierarchies, they utilise the potential knowledge of different employees, which is uncommon (Hodgkinson, Whittington et al. 2006).

During the presentations, an interesting aspect was that not only the successes were celebrated, but also problems were mentioned. In one case a general manager described that one of the projects that was supposed to be implemented hadn't been a success, due to a lack of his attention to it. He didn't find the time to follow up on it and criticised himself for that. This is an example of servant leader characteristics, displaying humility (Van Dierendonck 2011) and accountability (Laub 1999). Only one presentation used a projector, but many used artefacts to support their point. These included flip-chart papers that showcased how they reached agreement on discussion points or leaflets that they developed. Another example was a calendar displaying project and their implementation process visually for all employees in the break room. The calendar also showed abandoned projects and explained why they were abandoned, helping everyone to make sense of the information. (observation 1) These artefacts enabled the

⁶¹ 'Spielregeln' (observation 1)

participates to connect with the stories shared and make sense together, as discussed by Paroutis, Franco et al. (2015).

Between the presentations of the hotels, Bodo stepped in and praised them for the achieved outcomes, displaying interpersonal acceptance and direction (Van Dierendonck 2011). He also mentioned that this is important to get rid of the old perception of the company as ‘the company of many secrets’⁶² and encourage the exchange of knowledge and ideas. This reflects Laub’s (1999) displaying authenticity and Russel and Stone’s (2002) attributes of integrity, empowerment, communication, credibility and encouragement. Bodo focussed on the positive aspects and did not comment on the self-critical perspective of failure. The headquarter presented their progress as well and openly criticised Bodo’s structure and professionalism, which he accepted as his weaknesses. This was really surprising for me as an observer, because I have not encountered such a level of openness in the hospitality industry. On the other hand, this is showcasing servant leadership behaviour, as described by Laub (1999) and connects on the level of acceptance of mistakes. (observation 1)

The second part of the presentations in the afternoon shared the second major project in 2016 with the audience: the ascent of Kilimanjaro of eight apprentices, alongside with Bodo and another manager. The goal of this project was to create a ground-breaking memory for the young employees to change their pattern of thinking and overcome the barrier, most young people have in their head in regard to capability. (Gaukler B) This is based on findings in neuroscience, Sebastian’s field of research (Purpus-Paridigol 2015). The presentation started with a video of the trip, produced by Kristian Gründling and team. It was the first time the video was shown to the participants and other employees. The reactions were very emotional once again and ended with long standing ovations for the young apprentices. (observation 1) This episode is further described in chapter 4.3.7., because it is another example of creating a higher meaning and creating a shared narrative.

The conference room was abandoned at this time and after a short break everyone made way in another banquet room. Alongside the walls, the employees gathered in ten teams with colleagues from their hotels. The task was presented by Bodo and every team was handed a five meter long string that should be put on the ground to represent each hotel’s ‘timeline’. The starting point was in 2010, when the change at Upstalsboom began with the employee satisfaction survey. Every team reflected on highs and lows in the last six years and marked them in peaks or lows along the string. Then, they were asked to label them and choose four milestones which were most important for them in their respective outlet. These four milestones were then associated with characteristics that made it a positive event and characteristics that enabled the teams to overcome it. Thereafter, they were asked to associate feelings and emotions with both the milestone and the characteristics that defined it. Bodo put a strong emphasis on the differences and notion of individuality of each hotel. He emphasised that the timeline will be different for every one of them, because the people in the outlets have different characteristics and backgrounds. (observation 1) Within this sequence, Bodo provided direction as e.g. described by van Dierendonck (2011) and enabled the participants to build their own story and become storytellers themselves, while engaging emotionally with their own ‘history’ (Auvinen, Aaltio et

⁶² ‘die Firma der vielen Geheimnisse’ (observation 1)

al. 2013). He further reflects Spears' (2010) characteristics of stewardship, building community and empathy. The string used to build the storyline serves as a tool to visualise the peaks and lows and make the story tangible, in line with Paroutis, Franco et al.'s description of a visual tool (2015).

During this task I joined the team of one hotel. I was surprised by their attentiveness when another team member shared her thoughts and the overall respectful interactions with another. They seemed to have received training of the use of language, which is important to transmit the mindset of servant leadership (Gutierrez-Wirsching, Mayfield et al. 2015). The general atmosphere in the room was very focused and active, only a handful of employees did not actively participate in the dialogues and discussions. Bodo walked around to pitch some ideas, comment and mostly give praise about the process of the teams. Hereby, he reflected some attributes from Russell and Stone (2002), including stewardship, encouragement, teaching and delegation, as well as appreciation and trust. The peaks and lows were not presented, as they were something very personal for each hotel and for their reflection only. The groups were then asked to take the essence out of their timeline and to note the two characteristics that they made good use of in the past and don't want to miss in the future. The groups drafted small drawings or symbols to represent these key words, which in turn were then implemented in the big picture by Barbara, the visual artist. (observation 1) Barbara visualised the whole process of the workshop in the graphic record shown in appendix 2 and created a powerful visual tool within the workshop to take a look at and connect with the story told. The picture structured the past, made it tangible and documented the process of the workshop, in line with Paroutis, Franco et al.'s description of a visual tool (2015).

The second day started with a 'fishbowl' setup. Four chairs were placed in an inner circle, facing another and everyone sat on chairs in a circle around them. All employees and guests sat in the outside circle and Bodo was the initiator. He introduced the idea that everyone should reflect on the characteristics they had developed the day before in the timeline and think about the Upstalsboom Weg. The goal of the fishbowl was to understand how everyone perceives the Upstalsboom Weg in their everyday life to create the basis for the goal of the workshop: transporting the emotions to the guests. Therefore, Bodo asked: 'How did you perceive the Upstalsboom Weg for yourself?'⁶³ (observation 2)

During the fishbowl, three people at a time stepped forward and sat down in the inner circle and presented their view of the question. The people contributing were manifold and came from various levels of hierarchies, e.g. a chef's apprentice and several general managers. The discussion was rather uncritical after one extroverted general manager made strong points against one critical voice in the beginning. (observation 2) I addressed this issue in my second dialogue with Bernd and he considered that this was a weakness of the procedure. The problem in the whole setting of the workshop is that introverts who may not be comfortable with speaking up in front of a crowd or critical people who don't find the courage are not given a voice. Bernd reflected and stated that this should be addressed in future workshops to ensure that all voices are heard. (Gaukler B) Even though the culture of Upstalsboom encourages trust and Bodo

⁶³Wie hast Du den Upstalsboom Weg persönlich wahrgenommen?' (observation 2)

emphasised several times the ‘place beyond right and wrong’, these group dynamics and a perceived hyperculture can silence people, being a big obstacle (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016).

After around thirty minutes in, Bodo introduced the second question, building upon the discussion: ‘What opportunities can you find to enable our guests to experience the Upstalsboom Weg? With which senses? How can they participate from our experiences?’⁶⁴. This question was discussed for almost thirty minutes as well. (observation 2)

The next step was to form ten separate groups of a roughly equal number of people. They were allocated to the senses; taste, smell, hear, see and feel. Based on the second part of the fishbowl, they were asked to develop ideas how they could operationalise transporting the Upstalsboom Weg through these senses. During this process, I conducted an interview with Bernd and did not observe the working process in full detail. Later on, the ideas were presented and briefly discussed by the groups. Thereafter, each hotel chose one specific idea or project to further develop it and brainstorm about it. They were asked to clarify a goal and the next steps in the process to fulfil the envisioned idea by writing it down as a concrete goal. (observation 2) Hereby, the participants followed up on their own story-building and were empowered to take part the development of Upstalsboom. This whole process reflects all Laub’s (1999) descriptions of servant leadership by developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, as well as providing and sharing leadership. But, it is initiated from the top within the frame of the workshop where participants can only develop within the box of it that is predetermined.

Later on, Sebastian took over and asked everyone to form a large circle and then take six small steps backwards. He introduced the concept of mediating together to envision and strengthen the goal in everyone’s mind. Sebastian then asked everyone to close their eyes and asked them to take six small steps representing six levels. He introduced the six levels one after another and connected them with questions the participants should reflect upon:

- I. Level of the surrounding⁶⁵: Envision the goal and think where you see yourself, who do you see and how does that feel?
- II. Level of behaviour⁶⁶: What kind of behaviours do you associate with that situation? Have they changed? Have you left behaviours behind? How does your surrounding react? Can you think of a word that describes that?
- III. Level of ability⁶⁷: What set of competences have you newly developed or let go? What do you feel and how do you interact now your surrounding? Can you think of a word that describes that?
- IV. Level of values⁶⁸: What is important for you now?

⁶⁴ ‘Welche Möglichkeiten seht ihr, dass unsere Gäste den Upstalsboom Weg erleben? Mit welchen Sinnen? Wie können sie an unseren Erfahrungen partizipieren?’ (observation 2)

⁶⁵ ‘Ebene des Umfelds’ (observation 2)

⁶⁶ ‘Ebene des Verhaltens’ (observation 2)

⁶⁷ ‘Ebene der Fähigkeiten’ (observation 2)

⁶⁸ ‘Ebene der Werte’ (observation 2)

- V. Level of identity⁶⁹: Who is with you now, whom do you see? How would a friend describe you now?
- VI. Level of fellowship⁷⁰: Who or what is there with you now? Is there a symbol that represents that for you? Imagine the symbol and draw it afterwards to keep it with you.

This task was done in absolute silence, no one talked or disturbed the meditation. Everyone seemed to follow Sebastian's instructions⁷¹ and took part in the process. (observation 2) Within this task, the use of an external facilitator is important. The people are empowered and taught in the sense of servant leadership (Russel and Stone 20002) to build their own storyline and this consequently strengthens the feeling of the group and sense of belonging.

As Bodo stated earlier, one goal was to re-name the workshop with a name that the participants developed themselves. After a quick brainstorming session, several options were presented in a circle and voted for. They lined up behind the people who presented the ideas in a circle. Bodo participated in the process as well and with only one or two votes ahead, his 'team' won. The new name of the workshop was chosen to be 'Development Workshop'⁷² and is going to be the new name for the forthcoming meetings. This again is an example for employee-driven decision-making, but it can be questioned if some employees felt obliged to choose the name that Bodo presented. From a servant leadership perspective, it would have been 'better' to not interfere in the process, as discussed by van Dierendonck (2011).

The workshop ended just after five in the afternoon, Bodo thanked everyone for their time and showed two videos; once again the video of the Kilimanjaro tour and another one that showed various employees of Upstalsboom, playing a live version of Robbie William's 'Angels' in the background. The song is without doubt emotional and the faces on screen facilitated the identification with another, being an emotions-triggering artefact. The end of the video is a list of all names of Upstalsboom's employees, shaping a tree and company name. Again, this tree is not only reflecting the name and values, but also everyone in the company. After the video ended everyone split up rather quickly and was on their way home. (observation 2)

4.3.3. Problems and Benefits of the Workshop

During the pre-meeting of the workshop, Bodo told me the goal of the workshop and his goals with it: 'The point is to create a place beyond right or wrong for the next two days. Everyone should interchange, talk with another and listen to another.'⁷³ This is very much defining the frame of the workshop in a strategy-as-practice perspective, where organisational life is substituted with a temporal change of rules (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008). Also this reflects the intention of a servant leader, as described by McGee-Cooper and Loooper (2001) to create a safe place where people can bond.

⁶⁹ 'Ebene der Identität' (observation 2)

⁷⁰ 'Ebene der Verbundenheit' (observation 2)

⁷¹ for detailed information on Sebastian's approaches see his book 'Führen mit Hirn' (Purps-Paridigol 2015)

⁷² 'Entwicklungswerkstatt' (observation 2)

⁷³ 'Es geht darum hier einen Ort zu schaffen für die nächsten zwei Tage, jenseits von richtig und falsch. Alle sollen sich austauschen, miteinander reden und einander zuhören' (observation 1).

Bodo stated that the key idea was to foster the team atmosphere and create a sense of familiarity with another, to understand how patterns were changed and ensure that everyone feels able to contribute (observation 1). This is closely related to sense-making in a strategy-as-practice perspective by Jarzabkowski and Seidel (2008) and building community as a characteristic of servant leadership by Spears (2010). Furthermore, the goal of the workshop was not to only to create a new strategy to transport the Upstalsboom Weg to the guests, but to also make sense for everyone and ensure that everyone understands the common goal. This sharing of goals and providing meaning is a part of servant leadership as described by e.g. van Dierendonck (2011). Very interesting was the aspect that Bodo stated that not all the hotels are similar, therefore they shall develop their own way to address the issues. This is contrary to the traditional top-down management and gave me the impression that the focus is on the people in the organisation instead of the outlets. (observation 1) This idea was manifested in my conversations with Bernd, where he repeated that due to the diversity of the hotels, there is no single solution to a problem (Gaukler A, Gaukler B). This is in line with the mode of thought as an organisation being built up of the humans inside and not of tangibles, maybe even Morgan's (2006) understanding of the organisation in the metaphor of an organism and the valuing of differences in servant leadership (van Dierendonck and Patterson 2010).

The level of concentration and focus that the participants displayed during the workshop was very high during both days. It was interesting to observe that around ten to twelve people didn't contribute as much and were sitting aside during group projects. These non-participants are normal in every case of workshop, but here at Upstalsboom there were fewer compared to my previous experience. Furthermore, during the fishbowl several chefs spoke up, a species that is rather reserved and doesn't speak up when they are faced by an audience of non-chefs, contrary to my experience and supported by Bernd (Gaukler B). Especially the people with a longer affiliation were very attentive listeners and didn't interrupt their counterparts during conversations. Discussions were of a dialogical matter and characterised by mutual respect and attentiveness. A dialogical conversation in the workshop facilitates a better learning and organic exchange of ideas than a discussion, as discussed by Duffy and O'Rourke (2015). The tone of the interactions also reflects the values of Upstalsboom and are also in line with Laub's (1999) description of a servant organisation.

The follow-up and control of the objective targets from the workshops is insufficient and are not well-structured. The ROI on these investments is unclear and has to be measured more clearly to sustain the company in the future. If the investments are lost, this can result in financially troublesome times for the company. (Gaukler A) The workshops are mostly planned with the time-frame around them and certain tools to discuss them or to develop solutions in groups are utilised. These tools are mostly classic tools, which have been around for a while. Apart from the basic structure, everything stays open, because the outcomes shall be developed with a dynamic from within the workshop. It becomes dangerous if the workshop structure has flaws, such as during the workshop dealing with one's weak self at Upstalsboom. According to Bernd, due to a lack of structure and wrong facilitators, combined with unrealistic goals led to insufficient outcomes in the past. (Gaukler B)

The workshops are always characterised by a lot of time pressure, sometimes related to Bodo's ideas that he wants to implement on a short notice. The development and achievement of target

objectives can be very challenging under these circumstances. Furthermore, the targets have to be communicated before or during the workshop, so the outcomes can be measured. Without communicating the wanted outcomes, it is impossible to hold people responsible. (Gaukler B) This reflects the constant struggle between just enough and too much structure in a workshop (Duffy and O'Rourke 2015).

The fishbowl is a commonly used tool at Upstalsboom during workshops. Without question, it is a good method to achieve a quick exchange of opinions over a rather limited amount of time. But people are different and have different characteristics, such as being rather introvert or extrovert. The issue is to manage these people, because you could silence the introverts or straightforward and clear critique may shock other people. During the workshop I observed how the fishbowl was rather uncritical and more celebratory, because a rather extrovert manager criticised an attempt to discuss problems which he didn't consider to be evident. (observation 2) I think this was not done intentionally to silence someone else, but to motivate the manager's own perception. Nevertheless, this is an example how silencing can occur in this context. Another issue that Bernd brought up, is that the effect of being one of many in the audience. Because there are so many other people around, one may not feel the need to speak up and rather stay in the comfort zone (Gaukler B). Even though the workshop encourages people to contribute and provides an atmosphere of trust, some people may be unwilling to contribute.

Bernd reflected critically about the structure of the workshop during the first day. He assumed that the emotional start in the first day with the school and Kilimanjaro project was a wrong basis for the meeting and a lack of team feeling occurred, because the fishbowl was kicking off the second day. (observation 1) Later on, he concluded that it still may have worked, because everyone was so engaged and highly motivated to contribute on the second day (Gaukler A).

The participation at the workshop helps people to understand the mission, see role models to look up to and comprehend their individual contribution, as described by Longenecker and Fink (2013). Committed and contribution in Ulrich and Dulebohn's (2015) formula for talent in a successful HR strategy are developed during this event. Nevertheless, the outcomes remain vastly in the dark in reality, as addressed by Duffy and O'Rourke also in a theoretical perspective (2015).

4.3.4. Interactions and Cultural Aspects

The corporate culture at Upstalsboom was developed together with employees in the strategy workshops across all levels as hierarchy. Therefore, it does not only reflect the values and beliefs of the management. It should have a higher chance to reflect the reality and values of the people of the organisations, than in a top-down approach (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2016).

During a workshop in a strategy-as-practice perspective, the organisational culture is suspended to some extent, workshops are used to create culture and give meaning to actions (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008, Duffy and O'Rourke 2015). In contrary to the rather top-down and authoritarian German way of managing hotels, the first name was commonly used during interactions at Upstalsboom. This is unusual in a German context, because business is usually based on surname basis. The usage of the first name indicates an atmosphere of intimacy and familiarity.

This sense is further fostered by Bodo's storytelling about certain members in the organisation, where he depicts anecdotes of previous encounters. The culture at Upstalsboom is very much understanding the members a group of family members and not colleagues, also more informal than I encountered it in the past. (observation 1, observation 2) The relationship with the apprentices is not as strict during the meetings. They do not perceive Bodo or Bernd as supervisors and the encounters are critically but characterised by mutual respect (Gaukler B). This is contradictory to the power-distance the German business culture has (Brodbeck, Frese et al. 2002) and top-down hospitality industry.

The use of words and language is important for Upstalsboom (Janssen 2016) and was evident during the workshop as well. Bernd explained me later that they are concisely changing terminology, such as abandoning 'department manager'⁷⁴. The German term indicates the division and limitedness of this position and is replaced by 'area manager'⁷⁵, which emphasises a more shared comprehension. (Gaukler B) During the workshop, Bodo did not only use first names and usually spoke in a manner of 'we' and 'us' instead of 'you' and 'them', but the words used to describe the members were different than in a traditional business context. The usage of terms such as 'colleagues/employees/workers in *the* company' was mostly substituted with the terms like 'the humans/people in *our* company'⁷⁶. (observation 1 observation 2) Herby, a sense of community and belonging is fostered, as described by Spears (2010).

An external participant at the workshop, who has been knowing Upstalsboom and the culture for a while, mentioned that it can look like a cult, when encountered for the first time. Bernd overheard that comment and laughed about it. He then commented: 'The difference is that it is based on voluntariness here'⁷⁷. (observation 1) As discussed Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016), understanding the culture of a group can be difficult from outside. They also stress that it can be perceived as hyperculture, which does not reflect reality. Bernd stated in both interviews (Gaukler A, Gaukler B), that due to the attention they received from the media, the perceived impact of the change is bigger than the reality. During the workshops, I did not perceive the event as a ritual that intensifies a hyperculture. Alfred Gettmann on the other hand, who only knows the positivistic media coverage (which he stressed) and hadn't been able to observe the culture for himself stated: 'in my mind, it sounds a bit too much *put on*, a bit too esoteric ... I am not sure if the people will find themselves in that.'⁷⁸ He thinks that the culture should be clear and straightforward in his view, but also considered Upstalsboom to be very successful in engaging employees through their culture, based on his knowledge by hearsay. (Gettmann)

Upstalsboom's culture also claims to be characterised by openness, which I encountered during the workshop. The participants were not shy to speak to intruders like me, they were rather curious and willing to share their opinions. Another surprise to me was that Bodo invited an open critic to address and confute the critique she stated on social media. I believe that he wanted to showcase the trust that company values promote also by inviting me and granting me full access. In contrast to the hospitality industry as I know it where most things are kept behind

⁷⁴ 'Abteilungsleiter' (Gaukler B)

⁷⁵ 'Bereichsleiter' (Gaukler B)

⁷⁶ 'Menschen in unserem Unternehmen' (observation 1, observation 2)

⁷⁷ 'Der Unterschied ist, dass es bei uns hier auf Freiwilligkeit basiert.' (observation 1)

⁷⁸ 'Das klingt für mich ein bisschen zu aufgesetzt, ein bisschen zu esoterisch ... Ich bin mir nicht sicher, ob sich da die Leute wiederfinden' (Gettmann)

closed doors, this openness and sense of trust astonished me. On the other hand, the 'have courage' attitude may have been silenced for some during the fishbowl, as discussed before.

An Upstalsboomer Z, who I exchanged ideas with during lunch, stated that the culture or tone in the company hadn't changed that much in her department over time. Before the Upstalsboom Weg was implemented, they treated another also with respect and therefore it was not difficult to implement the Wertebaum. She considers it to be important for many employees, as a guideline for dealing with conflicts. The workshops and the CSR projects that Upstalsboom undertakes give her the feeling to be part of something larger than her hotel and make her work meaningful. She feels that she can contribute to these processes if she wants and considers the innovation processes at Upstalsboom very employee-driven. (observation 1)

Another Upstalsboomer Z stated during the timeline that the growth of the values and culture was organic. This change took a significant amount of time, but this investment helped to internalise the values among the workforce. The feeling to be able to contribute to the development empowered the employees, because they could make an impact on the future of their company. In regard to the employees that do not follow the same mode of thought, acceptance is important. According to her, these employees should be allowed to keep their own mindset, because 'brain washing' won't make an impact on their heart and emotions, therefore it would be useless. (observation 1)

4.3.5. Developing People and Potential

The idea that everyone holds potential that needs to be developed to contribute the individual and the organisation is rooted in both HP (Vogt 2005) and servant leadership (Spears 2010). As mentioned before, language plays an important role at Upstalsboom, which is also evident in Bernd's official title as head of HR: 'Director of Human Potential', which stresses the previously discussed mindset of the inner values of the people in the organisation.

The notion that talent has to be trained and assigned to projects according to their skill set, as discussed by Vogt (2005), Longenecker and Fink (2013) in an HRM perspective, but is also important within servant leadership, as follower development is core (Prosser 2010). The allocation of the right people to the right trainings is important, but difficult. At Upstalsboom, the hotels decided who is sent to the seminars, workshops and training sessions. This holds several problems: People may be sent simply because they are available, but not hold an interest in the topic and thus a waste of time and money can occur. The amount of money that is invested in the people is high and some managers seem to be unaware of that. As he concluded: 'There is no point in sending humans to a training, if they lack the 'get up and go' or have no idea what their purpose is there. One can propose the offer, if it is not utilised then that's the way it is. One has to accept that.'⁷⁹ (Gaukler B)

Upstalsboom invests around 500.000 Euro into the development of employees annually, both for professional trainings and personal development. The investment is not only large in monetary terms, but also in time. Over the last years, the training hours have increased from 928

⁷⁹ 'Es bringt nichts Menschen zu einem Training zu schicken, wenn die darauf keinen Bock haben oder nicht wissen was sie da sollen. Man kann das Angebot machen, wenn es nicht genutzt wird ist das eben so. Man muss das auch hinnehmen können.' (Gaukler B)

to over 11.000 every year. Within the line of trainings, the workshop poses an opportunity for the people to actively participate and involve themselves, as suggested by Lashley (1995) while being emotionally engaged by storytelling and the setup. The suspended reality of the organisation encourages creative and innovative thinking during the workshop in a strategy-as-practice view (Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2008), which in turn helps people to discover or develop their talents.

The importance of human potential is also linked to the storytelling of the organisation. In several interviews, Bodo shares stories about the development of people at Upstalsboom that found their potential and are now working in totally different fields. Examples include a former head chef, who was very good at calculations but mediocre in cooking - he currently works as an auditor and uses his potential. (Janssen 2015) The individual is now utilising his potential, as it was encouraged in a servant leadership mindset (Prosser 2010).

In regards to the high sickness rates in the industry, Alfred Gettmann stated that this topic is one of the most challenging ones for him to tackle, because it differs for every company (Gettmann). At Upstalsboom, health-related issues are incorporated in the training calendar. One example is a four-day seminar dealing with health issues to raise awareness among the employees. (Gaukler forthcoming) To me, this does not explain the low sickness rate among employees completely, but may be contributing to healthier staff. The awareness that this is important can also be found in servant leadership, as reflected in Spears' (2010) characteristic of healing.

The personal growth and development of some people was astonishing to observe during the workshop. In the last years I have met quite a large number of apprentices, but never came across so mature and confident people in their late teens or early twenties. (observation 1) Bernd was also surprised to observe that during the workshop, when he reflected about them in particular: 'If I take a look at the development of the apprentices - that is unbelievable. ... He goes up on stage, he didn't speak a word two years ago, is in the Management Club with the general managers and say 'I take care of our presentation'. This is awesome!⁸⁰

'It is important for the position of a leader that I possess the theoretical knowhow, from a hotel school or from studies. But the other thing is (real) experience. Experiences with people that one retains and different leadership styles that one encounters - not on paper, but in practice.'⁸¹ (Gaukler B)

Hereby, Bernd indicates that it is vital for a leader to not only learn about what it means to be a leader, but to also take time to develop the skills and adapt them. This process is very time intensive and cannot be accomplished on short notice. This in turn is reflecting Sendjaya's (2010) statement that the development of social skills and character is important for a leader, not only knowledge.

⁸⁰ 'Wenn ich mir die Entwicklung unserer Azubis anschau - das ist unglaublich. ... Er stellt sich oben auf die Bühne, vor zwei Jahren hat der kein Wort gesprochen, der ist im Management Club mit den Direktoren und sagt 'ich übernehme dann mal die Präsentation'. Das ist schon super.' (Gaukler A)

⁸¹ 'Für eine Führungskraft ist es wichtig, dass ich das theoretische Knowhow habe, aus einer Hotelfachschule oder einem Studium. Aber das andere ist die Praxis. Die Menschenerfahrung die man macht, verschiedene Führungsstile kennen lernt - nicht auf dem Papier, sondern in der Praxis.' (Gaukler B)

The Landhotel Friesland is according to Bernd one of the best examples of good leadership and its effect on employee development and unfolding of potential (Gaukler B). The development of ideas and creation of innovation is very much employee-driven, which was evident in three examples that I came across. In the past, the tip of the reception was shared among front office staff, as it is custom in many companies. At some point the front office employees argued that this was an unfair practice towards their colleague in housekeeping. The cleaning staff in housekeeping did not receive a share of the front office tip, but that was the point where guests left money when they were satisfied with the tidiness of the room. Now, after that initiative, the tip is shared among departments. Another example is connecting monetary savings with an environmental aspect. Guests that stay longer than one night can now choose if they want their laundry to be changed every day and are made aware of the possibility by a sign in the room. The calculated savings are 4 Euro per room and the guests receive a voucher for the bar as an incentive. Interestingly, only 10% of the guests used the voucher at the bar. The savings are now used for employee-driven ideas to make a change. One idea that is about to be implemented is a charging point for electric vehicles in the garage to make the hotel more attractive for guests with electric cars. The guests are also informed about the idea to use the savings to do a change outside the normal budget and give very positive feedback. (observation 1) These are two other examples told that showcase the importance of including the ‘wisdom of many’ in the company, employees becoming servant role models themselves and creativity that can be set free through an empowering culture (van Dierendonck and Rook 2010). Furthermore, spreading the narrative during the workshop may encourage others to follow the lead and the storytellers become pioneering role models who execute their vision, in the sense of Russell and Stone (2002).

4.3.6. Sharing and Creating Stories

As Bernd stated, the media coverage has a significant impact on the perception of Upstalsboom outside the company. They are perceived as some kind of ideal and have been in the spotlight for three years, even though the story told does not always hold true inside, because they have not reached every employee yet. He also stated that it is impossible to reach 100% in any way because people are so diverse. (observation 1) Upstalsboomer Z further said that this is no problem, because everyone in the organisation contributes, even though some may not be on the Upstalsboom Weg with the rest, they are still valuable members and shall be respected. (observation 2)

The name Upstalsboom reflects a story itself. Upstalsboom is a physical place near Aurich in northern Germany, that has a mythical meaning for the Frisian⁸² people. Between 9th and 14th century, the Frisians were given the ‘Fryske frijheid’, the Frisian freedom. They were free from any lord above them and the legend says the chiefs met, discussed and celebrated together. They travelled to the meetings with horses who needed to be ‘parked’ somehow. The word Upstalsboom is describing in Frisian the process: The horses were bridled ‘upstaal’ at a tree ‘boom’ during these meetings. (Janssen 2016) The tree reflects a symbol of life and is utilised to display the values of the company (appendix 6), which are discussed later on.

⁸² a Germanic ethnic group from the coastal area of the Netherlands and Germany

During the workshop, Bodo reflected upon his ‘old self’ that he also described in many interviews as an ‘arrogant prick’ who was very self-centred and only focussed on money. He tells the story about how his view in the mirror was taking longer than needed, not because the hair needed a fix, but because he liked what he saw - a successful manager. He seems humble during the presentations for the change that has happened to him and is very passionate about the change. His speeches contain many metaphors, he is enthusiastic and engages with the audience through directly addressing people through anecdotes. (observation 1, observation 2) As evident from above, he morally upright and self-critical servant leader, who is keen to learn.

The timeline enabled the participants of the workshop to develop a story of themselves together. By reflecting on the past, they considered both high and low points to create a common understanding of their individual strengths and characteristics that enabled them to reach the highs and overcome the lows. These characteristics were then shared among the other participants and similarities increased the sense of belonging. Thereby, a shared story was created that can in turn be used in the future and told in the respective destinations. This team-building helps the employees to develop a meaningful understanding of themselves and the company, making it easier for them to identify with it. Bodo’s comments during the process were very personal and gave the impression that he knows the destinations, its employees and their stories very well. (observation 1) This bonding encouraged them to reflect, but at the same time was critiqued by Bernd later. He felt that this constant interruption was contrary to the idea of an employee-driven process and counterproductive. He felt that there was a risk that Bodo unconsciously implemented his ideas top-down hereby. (Gaukler B) This represents a critical point about the level of guidance and direction a servant leader shall provide without interfering the free development of the follower’s potential, which I did not encounter thoroughly discussed in the theory.

4.3.7. Serving a Higher Purpose

As introduced before, two major projects were undertaken in early 2016 and presented at the workshop. These projects are the ascent of the Kilimanjaro and the opening of a school in Ruanda. The projects, their presentation during the workshop and potential effects are discussed in the following.

In January 2016, a group of apprentices scaled the Kilimanjaro together with Bodo and another manager of Upstalsboom. The initial plan included eleven people, in the end over 60 people took part in the ascent. The cost are estimated to be around 400.000 Euro, which is a huge investment. On the other hand, this is a great story to tell - both inside and outside the company. The TV channel ARD accompanies Upstalsboom ‘Weg’ and will broadcast a one-hour documentary. In regard to the coverage and its publicity: ‘What are these costs in relation? We could never afford that.’⁸³ (Gaukler B) During the workshop, a movie by Kristian Gründling, who participated with his team in the experience, was shown for the first time. The reactions were very emotional, the apprentices had not seen the movie upfront and were moved as well. The audience gave standing ovations to the young employees, before they started to present a slideshow about their journey. Several apprentices explained and shared their memories with the

⁸³ ‘Was sind da die Kosten (in Relation)? Das könnten wir uns niemals leisten.’ (Gaukler A)

audience in an informal and humorous manner. Bodo introduced his reasoning behind this project: Kids and teenagers are always told what they cannot do, which manifests a negative self-perception. Neuroscience argues that this can be overcome by a ground-breaking experience, in which people need to grow bigger than the own self (Purps-Paridigol 2015). The mountain also represents a metaphor for the life of everyone and can be hard to tackle at some times. (observation 1)

The journey was told emotionally by both Bodo and the apprentices, they shared memorable anecdotes about their year of preparations and the trip itself. Bodo's conclusion was that doing things like this is his goal in life: Collecting stories and memorable events, not accumulating profits. Thus, events like this will be a part of the training agenda for apprentices at Upstalsboom in the coming years. (observation 1) Without question, this event has a big marketing effect outside the company. But even within the organisation, the image of Bodo serving as a leader who facilitates trips like this one strengthens the culture and enables the individuals to identify themselves with Upstalsboom. Ultimately, it is an extreme example of how the potential of an individual can be maximised and showcased to others as a role model. The simple message is: Everyone can achieve everything!

Bernd said that for him this project was a big learning process and some things were clearly approached in a wrong way. The apprentices started to work again, just after they travelled back to Germany. He called this decision stupid and irresponsible, because they were all exhausted. The ascent was physically very demanding and the participants lost between ten to fifteen kilos each, which they had expected. What they did not take into consideration was the mental fatigue of everyone, Bernd assumes that the apprentices have not had time to process the impressions. In his view, this proves counter productive to the original idea to help them grow. (Gaukler B)

In February 2016, another project was undertaken in Africa. Thirteen employees travelled to Rwanda to open a school that was funded by Upstalsboom, their guests and employees. After the movie, Bodo guided through the visit by interviewing the participants about their impressions, memorable events and change in mind. He promised the opening of a school to the employees in a previous workshop, if they manage to change the company together and become certified by TopJob⁸⁴ as a good employer. Initially, the certification was supposed to take up to five years, but was completed after only eight months. After a year of planning, together with the Fly & Help foundation⁸⁵ the school in Murambi, Rwanda was funded. Bodo's reasoning was to not be charitable because they could do that, he understands it more as a moral obligation for Upstalsboom to partly solve the consequences of their business (e.g. the exploitation of water in Africa by Nestlé). The funding for the school was accomplished partly by Bodo's salaries for presentations about Upstalsboom, as well as guests direct or indirect donations. Indirect donations include certain products, e.g. cocktails where it is explicitly stated in the menu that 1 Euro is donated for the school project. As of March 2016, another 40.000 Euros had been collected and the opening of a second school is currently assessed. Bodo stated that he is thankful and moved by the thought, that they enabled children in Africa to learn and that it would

⁸⁴ TopJob: an independent auditor that certifies employers, the cost of the audit needs to be paid for by the audited company. For further information see <http://www.topjob.de>

⁸⁵ Fly & Help foundation: a foundation dedicated to give children in developing countries education, building schools around the globe. For further information see <http://www.fly-and-help.de>

not have been possible without the contribution of the people at Upstalsboom to fulfil his dream. (observation 1)

Apart from the aspect that CSR is something that nearly every company does mostly for marketing purposes these days, these projects fulfil other goals as well. They give a higher purpose to the employees and make the vision of Bodo more tangible, thus motivating the employees to give 100%. In regard to the workshop, the staging of the events for everyone creates stories. Because Bodo did not present the episodes of organisational life himself, he encouraged and stimulated the employees to become narrators themselves, sharing the leadership and encouraging others to become servant leaders.

4.3.8. Leaders Becoming Servants?

In one workshop in the past, shortlisted candidates for vacant general manager positions were invited. These candidates were assigned work groups with employees to get to know Upstalsboom better. What they didn't know, was that the employees had been briefed to get a first impression on them and question them. This led to employee-chosen general managers, which is very unusual and has proven to be a successful combination, revenues have improved, turnover has decreased and everyone seems to be better off. (Gaukler A) This is an example of empowerment in an extreme case, which was tested several times at Upstalsboom now. The pyramid of leader-employee-relations is completely turned around, because the lower hierarchy has the power to put the leader into the leading position and empowers him.

The ways the hotels are led today differs significantly from the past. They all reflect the values in a slightly different way, because they are understood as individual 'organisms'. They are made up of the people in the respective outlets and thus, highly individual and different. Some hotels are 'better' in the sense that they follow the philosophy more strict, but that also depends on the context they are situated in. (Gaukler A, observation 1) This reflects the characteristic of acceptance in the mind of servant leadership (van Dierendonck 2011).

During the workshop, Bodo dropped the idea about becoming more responsible as a company through producing their own food. The idea to create a company-owned farm to be able to control the origin the ingredients better was introduced enthusiastically by Bodo. Later on, during the second day this idea was brought up again and taken on the agenda for one hotel as an objective to develop further. (observation 1, observation 2) Bernd stated that Bodo sometimes implements his ideas during meetings by repetition or by governing the discussion into a certain direction. He considers that there is a chance that people will loose their independent thoughts during this process, which he considers dangerous. The steering, he believes, is not done on purpose or in bad faith at all by Bodo, but something they have to be aware of. The risk for that to occur is minimised if the meetings are consisting of a small group of people (20 to 30) who are critical and speak up. Within this context, Bernd thinks that even unconsciously steering the group into a certain mode of thought won't be possible. (Gaukler B) Again, within these examples the question about how much leading is adequate in servant leadership should be critically questioned.

‘When I am talking about Bodo, one could think that I do not appreciate him. But the contrary is the case. We need exactly these visionaries, these weirdos of the world. Otherwise we would not have electricity, no phone and no televisions. ... You have to do the splits between the weirdo, but also the manager.’⁸⁶ (Gaukler B)

Without Bodo’s willingness to change himself and criticise his own world view, the whole change at Upstalsboom would have been impossible. Bernd recognises a potential problem, when people start to perceive Bodo as some kind of saviour. This can lead to serious issues, because the wisdom of many is gone when they start to be uncritical. (Gaukler B) In this notion, one can disclose the problematic aspect of spiritual characteristics that servant leadership has: Hereby, the leadership in a Weberian sense could shift from the leader as a prophetic leader (following a personal mission) to a magician who leads through virtue and miracles (Bekker 2010). Bodo himself stated in an interview with the Swiss newspaper *Tagesanzeiger* that he does not consider himself to be free of narcissism, but thinks that he encourages people to speak up way more than previously (Morgenthaler 2016).

Retaining the right people is vital to develop the organisation in the future is vital for the industry and Upstalsboom as well. The issue is to not only have these talents in the company, but also to give them time to plan ahead and develop concepts. As he stated in about the development of solutions for the challenges of the future: ‘You need time for that. Which we don’t have. I could work nine days a week.’⁸⁷ Furthermore, he said that it would be helpful if strategies are planned more carefully and Bodo would listen more closely to some of the people and not implement his own ideas based on his gut feeling. Transferring the power to make decisions is hard for Bodo, because he has so many ideas and things on his mind that he wants to implement. Bernd described him as a visionary, which makes it sometimes hard to work together. (Gaukler B) What Bernd pointed out here is contrary to the idea of a listening leader (Spears 2010) described in servant leadership.

The concept of monitoring does not seem to be executed very much at Upstalsboom. Bernd does think that this is a problem, because it is misunderstood: ‘If it is only control, the word that no one in our company likes. Control can also mean, everything works outstandingly well.’⁸⁸ Bernd concluded: ‘But these are weak points. Control, consistency, time management, decision making, focussing on things - bringing things really to an end - we have difficulty doing that. But we are good to take people onboard, to enthuse them, if they want that.’⁸⁹ One of the biggest problems in regard to that is time. Neither Bernd nor Bodo have unlimited time to do all the tasks they should or would like to do. (Gaukler B) As evident from the interviews with all experts, the problem of a lack of time to actually lead is a big one in the industry (informant C,

⁸⁶ ‘Wenn ich über Bodo rede könnte man ja denken, ich hätte keine Wertschätzung für ihn. Aber das ganze Gegenteil ist der Fall. Wir brauchen ja gerade diese Visionäre, diese Spinner dieser Welt. Sonst hätten wir keinen Strom, kein Telefon und keinen Fernseher. Da muss man eben den Spagat machen, zwischen dem Spinner, aber eben auch dem Manager.’ (Gaukler B)

⁸⁷ ‘Da braucht man Zeit für. Die haben wir nicht. Ich könnte neun Tage die Woche arbeiten.’ (Gaukler B)

⁸⁸ ‘Und wenn es nur Kontrolle ist, das Wort was niemand mag bei uns im Unternehmen. Kontrolle kann ja auch heißen, es läuft alles hervorragend.’ (Gaukler B)

⁸⁹ ‘Aber das sind eben so Schwachpunkte. Kontrolle, Konsequenz, Zeitmanagement, Entscheidungen treffen, uns auf Dinge konzentrieren - ein Ding mal richtig zu Ende machen - das fällt uns echt schwer. Aber wir sind gut in Menschen mitnehmen, sie zu begeistern, wenn sie das wollen.’ (Gaukler B)

informant D, Gettmann). Upstalsboom does not make an exception here and does not have a solution for this problem.

Throughout the workshop Bodo showed a high amount of care for the people, sometimes simply showcased by addressing them by name. During his speeches he picked some from the audience and mentioned shared small anecdotes about the past, which is related to both storytelling and the characteristics of a caring, servant leader.

5. Potential and Limitations of Servant Leadership

The following section discusses the findings and summarises them in seven core potentialities and limitations. This provides the foundation for the conclusions in the last chapter.

5.1. A Focus on People, not Profit

Upstalsboom reflects the core of servant leadership: A focus on people first (Russell and Stone 2002), not profitability of the organisation or selfish goals of the leader were evident during the workshop. As the head of HP put it: 'Bodo (CEO) does not care about money... he accepts that he has less money in his account. That is his attitude.'⁹⁰ in regard to high expenses on people's development (Gaukler B) Compared to the information from industry experts and my own experience in the field, Upstalsboom's investments into the development of people is substantial and very uncommon. The focus is in line with the mindset of servant leadership on the personal growth (Spears 2010) and does not understand them as a resource or means to an end (Van Dierendonck 2011).

All characteristics of a human-focussed servant leadership (based on Laub 1999) were evident during the workshop: The high value of every individual in the company and the commitment to develop them are reflected in the HR practices, such as the investments into training and several workshops. During the workshop, telling stories together and the gathering itself build a sense of belonging and community. The CEO showed authenticity by accepting critique openly on stage, hereby being accountable, displaying humility and representing a role model for others. Through charismatic and shared storytelling, he provided leadership and vision and in turn shared these, as it became evident e.g. during the presentation of the ascent of the Kilimanjaro. The sense-making of the past, combined with the employee-driven innovations to spread the vision to customers was done by the participants of the workshop, again reflecting sharing of leadership and including people. They are also shown in figure 7 below.

⁹⁰ 'Bodo ist Geld egal...er akzeptiert das er dann weniger Geld auf dem Konto hat. Das ist seine Einstellung.' (Gaukler B)

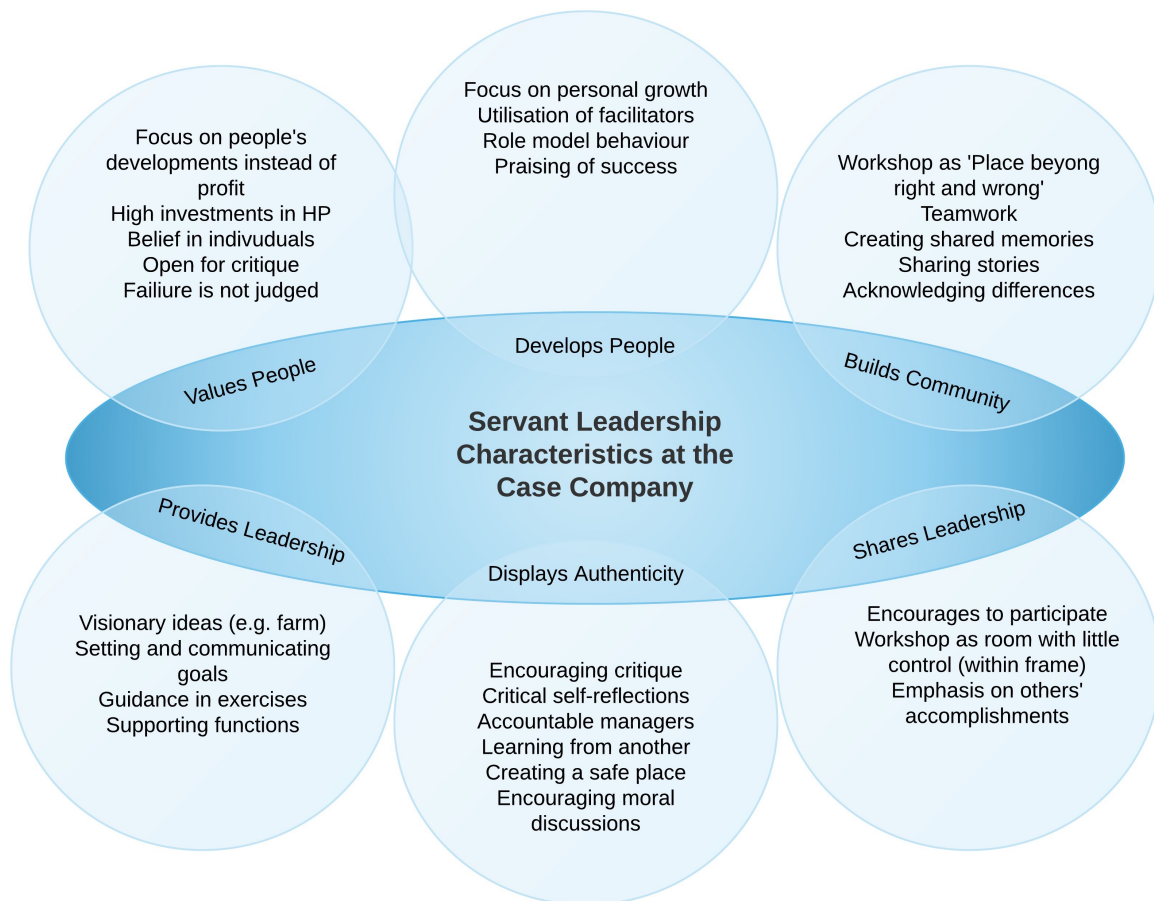


Figure 7: Servant leadership at the case company, linked to Laub (1999)

The focus on people seems to pay off financially for the company, but will it for others? The servant leadership-like focus on 'unconditional' follower development is without question costly. This dedication is made possible by the family-owned company structure and stable financial situation before the initiation of the transformation. The company does rely on the 'wisdom of many' and tries to include people throughout the hierarchy by engaging them on an emotional level.

5.2. Sharing Power and Developing People

During the observations, the employees were empowered to contribute, speak their mind and be in control - but only within the pre-defined setting of the workshop. The people are encouraged to take charge, but their attempts are pre-defined and controlled by the structure of the workshop (Duffy and O'Rourke 2015). Due to the structure, some may have been silenced based on group dynamics in the fishbowl set up or their diffident personality. Furthermore, it became evident that the CEO sometimes steered the thoughts of the participants in a certain way, maybe subconsciously and as I believe in good faith. Within this context, there is a risk that the intended idea (empowering people to contribute) becomes manipulated and the employees become 'brainwashed', beginning to take the on leaderships' ideas as their own. On the other hand, the 'wisdom of many' seems to be taken into consideration in several projects in the

respective hotels and across the organisation. The theory argues for guidance, direction and support of the servant leader (Van Dierendonck 2011), but it does not indicate how much influence is good or bad. In line with this lack in theory, findings about the real power employees possess in the organisational reality to influence the organisation remain inconclusive.

The dedication to the development of people was evident during the workshop. The costly utilisation of facilitators to support the learning outcomes of the workshop, e.g. through guided meditation and the creation of artefacts. Another interesting aspect is the large investment into the development of young apprentices. In my experiences, they are mostly understood as cheap ‘workhorses’ in the industry, reflected in the German saying ‘Lehrjahre sind keine Herrenjahre’⁹¹ that I personally was told many times. The positive effects of these investments into apprentices became evident in their self-confidence and maturity that I encountered during the observations and conversations. This huge development of people comes with substantial investments and is unusual for a sector that is mostly relying on low-skilled, hard-working employees. Nevertheless, I do think that it will pay off in the long-run and is a very good investment.

But one has to consider that even within servant leadership, empowerment is something that is ‘given’ to people and not something they possess automatically. The leader shares power and control (Laub 1999), but within the frame of the workshop and only to a certain extent, that does not challenge the provided frame. To put it bluntly: People are encouraged to criticise the leader and the actions of the leadership, but do not possess power to the extent where they can question the leadership’s legal force.

5.3. An Atypical German Mindset

The mindset or culture of Upstalsboom reflects in many ways servant leadership. Some aspects like the courage to challenge the paradigm and interpersonal acceptance can be found in the description of servant leadership and are at the same time contrary to traditional ‘German’ business culture.

Upstalsboom’s top management takes on risks, challenges themselves and traditions and reduced hierarchies, while introducing cross-hierarchical teams at the same time. One hotel even got the managing director assigned after he was assessed in detail by its employees, which turns the hierarchical pyramid upside down. In line with these thoughts, one has to consider the careful use of language in the company that is also trained for. The awareness that social skills are needed for leadership, like the power of words, does not seem to be evident in the industry in general. All these aspects make the company significantly different from a ‘typical’ German hotel chain and are potentially the underlying reason for the success of the transition.

Even though servant leadership characteristics seem to clash with German culture, nothing seems impossible, if implemented inclusive and carefully. As it has been discussed, culture is hard to assess and fluid in its nature. Therefore, servant leadership with its characteristic of convincing people, instead of ‘control and command’ can impact a change of mind towards servant leadership thinking.

⁹¹ ‘An apprentice is not his own master’ or ‘Life’s not easy at the bottom’

5.4. The Dangers of Hyperculture

As discussed in chapter 4.3.1., until the transition started, two companies existed parallel to another: one perceived by the CEO and the reality perceived by the employees. This shows the problem of a hyperculture, where managerial invented structures and values are implemented top-down, as discussed by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2016). Now, from my observations and discussions with the director of HP, I fear that the company faces the risk to build a new hyperculture. This time between the reality in the company (about half the employees reached by the Upstalsboom Weg) and the perception of the company from outside as shown in the media (reflecting that everyone is onboard and everything is perfect). Metaphorical speaking, the result could be that the shared Upstalsboom Weg takes a turn and becomes 'Bodos Weg' that the CEO follows with the top management, but is not accessible to the people who should be coming along. If Upstalsboom does not counteract the development to be perceived as an 'ideal way' from outside, which does not reflect the reality in the company, all the positive fruits of transition are at risk.

The servant leadership theory is very positive, describes an utopia and could be described as a hyperculture phenomenon in itself. Some aspects of it may be perceived as spiritual or religious and could create the impression of a cult. This can exclude people that would be vital to the organisation's survival in the long run.

5.5. Solving Industry Problems

The biggest problems of the hospitality industry in regard to retaining, recruiting and developing employees seem to be solved at Upstalsboom for now. The focus on serving employees first, combined with the significant investments into people made it an attractive employer with a committed and satisfied workforce. I do believe that their transition could be used as a source of inspiration for other companies in the industry to change their culture. But, taking it as a blueprint will not be successful in my eyes, because of the core: Its people, including the CEO who make up the company.

The company's transition proved that, if people feel valued and empowered, they will most likely work better. In my eyes, there is no need for a company to go to such extreme measures as Upstalsboom and go 'all in'. This may even avoid the risk to create a hyperculture that will not be perceived as authentic by the people inside the organisation and backfire. A slow and organic development should provide better outcomes. As stated, many managers were dismissed during the transition process and substituted with people that identify with the servant leadership characteristics of the Upstalsboom Weg. Knowing this could further hinder critical people to address valid points and pose a strong barrier to the utilisation of knowledge, contrary to the idea of utilising the full potential of people in servant leadership.

The servant leadership concept of providing a vision and a higher purpose to the tasks. This holds especially true in regard to the CSR project in Rwanda that seems to be a powerful tool to motivate and create a purpose at the company. Nevertheless, the lack of time that came up during all the expert interviews is also a problem at Upstalsboom and seems to be hard to solve.

5.6. Servant Leadership is not for Everyone

As discussed also in the previous paragraphs, it appears that servant leadership is not for everyone. Traditional top-down managers will find it hard to adapt the new 'way'. Some managers may refuse to share power and give up their control, while continuing their established 'way of doing things'. Therefore, as seen in the case company, people may be dismissed and substituted. The remaining people could become uncritical and start to become followers who lost their self in the company. This creates a risk, because the dismissed and uncritical people may possess skills that are indeed vital for the company to succeed, but not utilised. The reality of being exclusive, contrary to the intended inclusiveness, could lead to the development of an elitist group that does not accept other values, contrary to the notion of acceptance in servant leadership.

The strong culture can almost feel to people outside the organisation like a cult, reflecting in turn the religious or spiritual aspects of servant leadership (Bekker 2010). This may exclude people that are not religious, who strongly object to any spiritual aspects due to their personal values and culture. Personal values can also include a reluctance to change from an employees' side, e.g. based on the national culture that is encouraging keeping existing rules and practices. This can include for example people that refuse the idea to become empowered in the mindset of servant leadership. Reasons can be plentiful and include a refusal of responsibility and taking charge. This refusal then can result in a rulebook slowdown and damage the intended positive effects of servant leadership. The theory does not address these threats yet in detail, mostly due to its overly positive utopian character.

5.7. The Servant Leadership Paradox

Servant leadership forms a paradox, both in the theory and observed reality. Despite the fact that the theory is focussing on followers as the core of it, they get a very limited say in academia. The problem to fully assess servant leadership that Laub (2010) brought up hints to this interesting paradox in my view: Only the members of an organisation can fully determine if the concept of serving is brought to life by the management, but no study has addressed this on a larger scale yet.

Even though the whole servant leadership theory is discussing how followers shall be served, it does not focus on the followers and does not give the voice to them, truly asking them for their needs but assumes them. If one follows the written logic of 'putting people first', followers' needs should be the core of the theory and given a voice. In the theoretical writings the focus is constantly on the leader as the wise, but humble 'hero' that guides the followers. In addition to that, the theory does not indicate a 'right' level of guidance, support, direction or assistance that determines an ideal servant leader. Thereby, the leader himself determines what is the right level, contrary to the preaching of the theory, where followers should grow based on their intrinsic values. Thereby, the right level could indeed be too much or not enough influence and counteract the servant leadership ideal. These aspects shape, what I could call, the servant leadership paradox.

The paradox held also true in the observations at the case company, because the CEO stayed in the centre of the action, facilitated and steered the process. The development of people, e.g. in the case of the ascent of the Kilimanjaro was core, but the leader was facilitating and participating in these projects, as well as influencing the reflections and decision making processes during the workshop.

6. Conclusions

The next sections forms the conclusions of the thesis, starting with a quick recap, followed by the conclusion of the findings in regard to servant leadership. Thereafter, theoretical as well as practical contributions are presented. Then, practical implications and suggestions for future research are outlined.

6.1. Recap

This thesis addressed several problems the hospitality industry faces in Germany, which are linked to a lack in human resources and leadership in the industry. In a theoretical informed methodology with observations in a strategy-as-practice qualitative data collection, insights on servant leadership were retrieved at a business workshop at the case company Upstalsboom. The analysis followed a narrative-based approach and disclosed seven key findings on potential and limitations of servant leadership were presented in chapter 5.

6.2. Conclusion

As Susan Finley described it: ‘When explaining servant leadership in public, many people expect a quick and easy answer. But this is a more difficult task than one may think.’ (2012, p.143) The servant leadership theory is anecdotal and seems to be an utopian, idealistic concept. The theory has clearly flaws in regard to its mostly ideologic and philosophical description and unclear definitions. Also, theory is not sufficiently empirically funded and under-researched in the service industry.

The writings assume a homogeneous group of people with shared beliefs and mindsets, which is unrealistic because humans are diverse by nature. Some potential leaders or followers may object to the concept based on their values and believes, which the theory ignores. The theory itself is not practicing what it preaches, because it keeps the leader as the Great Man in focus and does not put the intended goal first: The followers. The theory implies that the leader has to provide direction and guide the followers, but does not state to what extend the influence is beneficial to not interfere with the free development of followers. This makes up what I call the servant leadership paradox.

The critique above does not mean that servant leadership has to stay an utopia. Some aspects of it can be utilised in the reality of the hospitality industry to make an impact and improve the sector’s bad habit of utilising people as a resource (compare table 6 in chapter 4.1.4.). A change towards a human-orientation will undoubtedly benefit any organisation in the industry. A radical

and completely implementation of the concept seems not possible, but it can be seen as an important source for inspiration to tackle the problems. This is in line with Greenleaf's understanding of his writings as an impulse for reflections. Organisations in the industry can critically assess their 'way of doing things' and compare it so servant leadership. Thereby, they will be able to disclose the specific problems that hinder them. Then they can start to implement changes to value people more, recognise their potential and values to shape a share organisational culture the employees can identify with. The leadership shall be serving as role models, encourage criticism to foster the development of a culture characterised by trust. Then, empowered employees are able to develop their talents, take on the challenges in the organisation with the best of their talents used. Changes do not have to be radial and ground-breaking, small steps like using words more careful or showing appreciating for people will make a big impact for the employees. Actions taken shall be inclusive, slowly and careful implemented to assure changes that include as many members of an organisation as possible. It has to be acknowledged that servant leadership is not for everyone. Therefore, including, careful listening to and encouraging critics is vital to avoid excluding people, because elitist top-down attempts to implement servant characteristics are contrary to the inclusive notion of servant leadership.

6.3. Contributions

In regard to the servant leadership theory, this thesis provides insights into servant leadership in a real life context. Servant leadership was studied within a case company that clearly is inspired by it, by observing what was done, as suggested by Winston (2010) to understand the theory in practice. The thesis contributes to an understanding of the characteristics of servant leadership through a narrative-based analysis in a real-life context. Even though the observations occurred within the spatio-temporal limited frame of a business workshop, servant leadership characteristics could be observed. The introduction of the servant leadership paradox should also be addressed in the future by scholars within the field to improve the theory. Furthermore, the thesis has proven that servant leadership characteristics can be assessed in the strategy-as-practice workshop as an episode of organisational life, due to the large impact of its characteristics in the case company. This has, to my best knowledge, not been studied within this context and is another point of departure for future research.

In the practical sense, this thesis showcases current problems in the hospitality industry and offers inspiration for potential solutions to them. The demographic change in Germany's ageing society has already shown that employees will be able to chose their employer in the future. Companies have to reconsider their 'way of doing business' in order to attract workforce and survive in a competitive environment. This holds especially true for the challenging environment and high level of competition the hospitality industry operates in, party du to its high labour-intensity. Therefore, this thesis provides some impulses for companies in the industry to challenge their thinking-pattern and encourages them to follow new paths. These impulses can be taken to question existing business models and revise them accordingly.

6.4. Practical Implications

From my point of view, Upstalsboom is still on their way of transformation to a 'better' hotel organisation. They changed many things and have a bold-enough mindset to experiment and accept failures that undoubtedly lay ahead. But, they have to keep their willingness to learn and endurance to continue on this path. The inclusion of people and especially the facilitation of critical voices within the company and the workshops is difficult and should be addressed. I would suggest the implementation of an ombudsman, who could enable introvert people to want to speak up confidential to contribute with their knowledge and insights. My suggestion is to train an open-minded apprentice for this task, because they are low in the hierarchy, accessible and knowledgeable of the daily routines in the business. Furthermore, apprentices are keen to learn by trade and could grow as persons in this position, becoming servants for their peers.

The concept to implement meaningful CSR projects that enable employees to get a feeling about their importance seems a very good and powerful tool. Nevertheless, one has to question if these projects necessarily have to be on another continent. Travelling with a big entourage to Rwanda has without doubt a huge environmental impact and should be reconsidered. The funding of schools there is noble, but I would suggest to take at least CO2 compensation schemes into consideration, if not shifting the focus to a closer destination.

Within the process of change the company is still in, the notion of listening to followers has to be emphasised in the future. If the leadership implements ideas unintentionally in a traditional top-down approach, the idea of leadership as a service to them is cancelled out. The Upstalsboom Weg could then become a lonely path that only a few people follow. In line with this is the danger to create a hyperculture outside the company the employees will not be able to identify with. Therefore, I would suggest to address problems and struggles, in order to stay authentic and confirm that not all that glitters is gold. The invitation to the workshop and privileged access proves that Upstalsboom is capable of doing that, following their value: "Trau Dich!"⁹²

6.5. Suggestions for Future Research

The servant leadership theory needs to be backed up with empirical research. I would call for an in-depth analysis of organisations that claim to be serving their employees as a start. As suggested by Laub (1999), the final decision if a company is indeed a servant leadership organisation has to be made by the people within. In regard to this, the case company performs a survey among employees to assess the perceived leadership in May 2016. The insights from this survey will hold further indications if the conclusions from the observation of the episodic workshop hold true in organisational life.

The impact of strategy-as-practice workshops is debated in research and reality. I would like to suggest research within this field to determine an 'ideal' size and suggest to study the word of mouth within the organisation about the workshop after. This could hold valuable insights for

⁹² 'Have courage!': Upstalsboom description for the value 'openness' (compare appendix 6)

any organisation and scholar that works within the field. The tools used during a workshop, such as storytelling, visual aids and the use of facilitators are under-researched and need the attention of academia to develop them further. Another 'ideal' size that has to be determined is the influence that the leader shall impose on the followers to avoid the risk of losing potential by limiting the follower's own contribution.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Excerpt Observation Protocol

Protocol Upstalsboom Workshop

Varel, 07. - 08. March 2016

Title: Pre-Meeting
 Date: 07. March 2016
 Time: 0945-1045
 Participants: BJ Bodo Janssen
 SPP Sebastian Purps-Pardigol (Coach, Facilitator, Moderator)
 BG Bernd Gaukler (Director of Human Potential)
 Barbara Schneider (Visualising artist)

summary of the pre-meeting, very loosely conversations people enter and leave all the time, just before the conference starts off

Who	What	Reflection
Arriva 1	2 conference rooms at the Landhotel Friesland (LF) 1 room set up as symposium with a small stage 1 room with a fishbowl in the middle and 10 working stations around for 10 different outlets (9 hotels and headquarters)	from check in to the operating staff, everyone is really friendly and smiling, seems way more natural than in most hotels I know after I found BJ, I got a name tag with their logo, thus was identified as a participant of the conference - nothing really changed, the people stayed the same way atmosphere is very hearty, welcoming
BJ	Workshop (WS) heißt 'Leitbild- und Strategieworkshop' 86 Teilnehmer von Ups (circa 50% Mitarbeiter die an diesem Workshop noch nie teilgenommen haben) 6 externe Gäste (2 Schweizer die ein Altenpflegehaus umbauen zu einer neuen Kultur, 1 Unternehmensberater der Produkte zu Werten entwickelt, 1 Unternehmerin aus dem Einzelhandel die ihre Firma umstrukturiert, 1 Frau die Gast war und sich negativ über Ups geäußert hat, ich)	very interesting idea that BJ invited a critic, she complained on social media that the perception of the company is wrong based on people she has talked to in one hotel who were not satisfied - BJ wants to give her the chance to see how they interact and what they do, so she may get a more positive picture

Pre-Meeting

Page 1 of 3

Appendix 3: Interview Guide, Sample Questions

I. General Questions

1. The subject of this thesis is dealing with leadership in the hospitality industry, especially with the theory of Servant Leadership. I aim to understand the possibilities, challenges and limitations of this theory in reality. Therefore I would like to know your experiences, ideas and wishes about leadership in your personal opinion. First and foremost, I have some general information: Are you okay with me recording this interview? At all times you will be able to withdraw the consent or go back and delete a statement. Please let me know if you do not want to answer to a question or skip a topic. The record will only be for my personal use and not be made accessible to anyone else. After our conversation, I will transcribe the interview. That transcript will only be read by myself and my tutor Hervé Corvellec. Before, during or even after the interview you have the possibility to state if you would like to be an anonymous informant or not.

Das Thema dieser Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Führung in der Hotellerie, speziell mit dem Thema Servant Leadership. Ich möchte herausfinden welche Herausforderungen, Potentiale und Einschränkungen es für diese Theorie in der Realität gibt. Dazu möchte ich herausfinden, wie Deine Erfahrungen, Ideen und Wünsche für Führung aussehen und was Deine persönliche Meinung ist. Zu Anfang habe ich einige Informationen für Dich: Ist es für Dich in Ordnung, wenn ich dieses Interview aufnehme? Du kannst zu jeder Zeit die Zustimmung dazu entziehen oder eine Aussage löschen. Bitte lasse es mich wissen, wenn Du Fragen, nicht beantworten oder ein Thema überspringen möchtest. Die Aufnahme dient als Grundlage für meine persönliche Forschung und wird niemand anderem zugänglich gemacht. Nach unserem Gespräch werde ich ein Transkript anfertigen, was lediglich von mir und meinem Tutor Hervé Corvellec gelesen werden wird. Du kannst vor, während oder nach dem Interview entscheiden, ob Du Deine Aussage lieber anonym machen möchtest.

2. How would you describe your personal, academic and professional background?

Wie würdest Du deinen persönlichen, akademischen und beruflichen Hintergrund beschreiben?

II. Work-Related Questions

In your position as a manager, what is important for you and why?

Als Manager, was ist Dir wichtig und warum?

What is challenging or difficult in your position?

Was fordert Dich oder ist schwierig in Deiner Position?

What would make your life as a manager easier?

Was würde Deine Position einfacher für Dich machen?

III. Leadership-Related Questions

1. How do you describe the difference between management and leadership?

Wie würdest Du den Unterschied zwischen Management und Führung beschreiben?

How would you describe the leadership in your company?

Wie würdest Du die Führung in Deiner Firma beschreiben?

How do you perceive and assess the leadership?

Wie empfindest und bewertest Du die Führung?

What do you wish could be improved?

Was würdest Du gerne verbessert sehen?

How would you describe your own way of leading people?

Wie würdest Du deinen persönlichen Weg Mitarbeiter zu führen beschreiben?

Are there differences for context, people and tasks?

Gibt es Unterschiede für den Kontext, die Mitarbeiter und Aufgaben?

How would you describe the ideal leadership in your field?

Wie würdest du einen idealen Führungsstil in deinem Bereich beschreiben?

2. Are you familiar with the theory of Servant Leadership?

Kennst du die Servant Leadership Theorie?

What do you associate with the word 'servant'?

Was verbindest du mit dem Wort 'servant' / 'Diener'?

.....

Appendix 4: The GLOBE Dimensions (adapted from House, Hanges et al. 2004)

.....

GLOBE Dimension	Definition
Power Distance	The degree to which individuals in organisations or societies accept power distance.
Institutional Collectivism	The degree to which individuals in organisational or institutional practices encourage collective actions.
In-Group Collectivism	The degree to which individuals in organisations or societies reflect collectivistic behaviour.
Assertiveness	The degree to which individuals in organisations or societies are assertive in social relationships.
Performance Orientation	The degree to which upper management in organisations and leaders in societies reward group members for performance excellence.
Humane Orientation	The degree to which individuals in organisations or societies reward individuals for positive behaviour.
Gender Egalitarianism	The degree to which organisations or societies promote gender equality.
Uncertainty Avoidance	The degree to which individuals in organisations or societies avoid uncertainty by relying on practices and procedures.
Future Orientation	The degree to which individuals in organisations or societies plan for the future.

Appendix 5: Der Upstalsboom Wertebaum



Upstalsboom's 'Value Tree' (retrieved from <http://www.upstalsboom.de/unser-wertebaum.html>, 09 May 2016)

Appendix 6: Upstalsboom's values (adapted from Von Freyberg and Zeugfang 2014)

Value*	Definition*	Value (translation)**	Definition (translation)**
Vorbild	Wir leben unsere Werte	Role model	We live our values
Loyalität	Mit Menschen sprechen, anstatt über sie zu reden	Loyalty	Talk with another instead of about another
Achtsamkeit	Wir leben den Moment und gestalten die Zukunft	Mindfulness Attentiveness	We live in the moment and shape the future
Offenheit	'Trau' Dich	Openness	Have courage
Vertrauen	Wir glauben an Dich, glaube Du an uns	Trust	We believe in you, believe in us
Verantwortung	Entscheide Du und steh' dazu	Responsibility	Decide and stand by it
Zuverlässigkeit	Ein Upstalsboomer, ein Wort	Reliability	One Upstalsboomer, one word
Herzlichkeit	Jedes Lächeln kehrt zu Dir zurück	Cordiality Heartiness	Every smile travels back to you
Lebensfreude	Wir überraschen den Alltag	Joie de vivre	We surprise everyday life
Wertschätzung	Erkenne Gutes und sprich darüber	Appreciation	Recognise the Good and talk about it
Qualität	... ist unser Anspruch, Menschen zu begeistern	Quality	... is our aspiration to delight people
Fairness	Gleiche Regeln für Alle	Fairness	Equal rules for everyone
<p>*Values and definitions taken from Von Freyberg and Zeugfang (2014, p.102) **Own translation</p>			

Bibliography

- Adler, N. and A. Gundersen (2008). "International Dimensions of Organisational Behaviour, (Mason, Ohio: Thomson South Western)."
- AHGZ (2007). Upstalsboom-Mitbegründer Janssen tödlich verunglückt. AHGZ Allgemeine Hotel- und Gastronomie Zeitung, dfv Matthaes Verlag.
- Alvesson, M. and S. Sveningsson (2016). Changing organizational culture. [Elektronisk resurs] : cultural change work in progress, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2016. 2. ed.
- Auvinen, T., I. Aaltio and K. Blomqvist (2013). "Constructing leadership by storytelling-the meaning of trust and narratives." Leadership & Organization Development Journal **34**(6): 496-514.
- Avolio, B. J. and W. L. Gardner (2005). "Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership." The leadership quarterly **16**(3): 315-338.
- Avolio, B. J., F. O. Walumbwa and T. J. Weber (2009). "Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions." Annual review of psychology **60**: 421-449.
- Barbuto, J. E. and R. W. Hayden (2011). "Testing relationships between servant leadership dimensions and leader member exchange (LMX)." Journal of Leadership Education **10**(2): 22-37.
- Barry, D. and M. Elmes (1997). "Strategy retold: Toward a narrative view of strategic discourse." Academy of management review **22**(2): 429-452.
- Baxter, P. and S. Jack (2008). "Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers." The qualitative report **13**(4): 544-559.
- Bekker, C. J. (2010). A modest history of the concept of service as leadership in four religious traditions. Servant Leadership, Springer: 55-66.
- Berger, T. A. (2014). "Servant Leadership 2.0: A Call for Strong Theory." Sociological Viewpoints **30**(1): 146.
- Birtsch, G. (1987). "Der Idealtyp des aufgeklärten Herrschers. Friedrich der Große, Karl Friedrich von Baden und Joseph II. im Vergleich." Aufklärung: 9-47.
- Blanchard, K. (1998). "Servant-leadership revisited." Insights on leadership: Service, stewardship, spirit, and servant-leadership: 21-28.
- Boxall, P. and J. Purcell (2000). "Strategic human resource management: where have we come from and where should we be going?" International Journal of Management Reviews **2**(2): 183-203.
- Brady, W. H. and S. Haley (2013). "Storytelling defines your organizational culture." Physician executive **39**(1): 40.

- Brodbeck, F. C., M. Frese, J. Chhokar, F. Brodbeck and R. House (2007). "Societal culture and leadership in Germany." Culture and leadership across the world: The GLOBE book of in-depth studies of **25**: 147-214.
- Brodbeck, F. C., M. Frese and M. Javidan (2002). "Leadership made in Germany: Low on compassion, high on performance." The Academy of Management Executive **16**(1): 16-29.
- Brownell, J. (2010). "Leadership in the Service of Hospitality." Cornell Hospitality Quarterly **51**(3): 363-378.
- Bruhn, M., B. Brunow and D. Specht (2002). Kundenorientierung durch Mitarbeiterorientierung im Schindlerhof. Exzellenz im Dienstleistungsmarketing, Springer: 125-176.
- Bryman, A. (2015). Social research methods, Oxford university press.
- Bryman, A. and E. Bell (2011). Business research methods, Oxford : Oxford University Press, cop. 2011 3. ed.
- Burke, R. J., M. Koyuncu, M. Ashtakova, D. Eren and H. Cetin (2014). "Hotel Star Ratings And Perceptions Of Servant Leadership And Service Quality Provided By Front-Line Service Workers In Four- And Five-Star Hotels In Turkey. An Exploratory Study." ISGUC The Journal of Industrial Relations and Human Resources **16**(3): 3-9.
- Chan, K.-Y. and F. Drasgow (2001). "Toward a theory of individual differences and leadership: understanding the motivation to lead." Journal of Applied Psychology **86**(3): 481.
- Clarke, R. H. (2012). "Developing Human Resources through Actualizing Human Potential." Online Submission.
- Creutz, H. (2005). "Humankapital: Unwort des Jahres 2004." Initiative für natürliche Wirtschaftsordnung, Düsseldorf.
- Czarniawska, B. (1997). Narrating the organization: Dramas of institutional identity, University of Chicago Press.
- Czarniawska, B. (2004). Narratives in social science research. [Elektronisk resurs], London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage Publications, 2004.
- Czarniawska, B. (2014). Social science research: from field to desk, Sage.
- Deci, E. L. and R. M. Ryan (1985). "The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in personality." Journal of research in personality **19**(2): 109-134.
- DEHOGA (2015). DEHOGA-Konjunkturumfrage Herbst 2015. M. Meier. Berlin, Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband (DEHOGA Bundesverband).
- Dierendonck, D. v. and K. Patterson (2010). Servant leadership. [Elektronisk resurs] : developments in theory and research, Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Duffy, M. and B. K. O'Rourke (2015). "Dialogue in Strategy Practice A Discourse Analysis of a Strategy Workshop." International Journal of Business Communication **52**(4): 404-426.

- FAZ (2005). Das "Unwort des Jahres": "Humankapital". Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt.
- Fenton, C. and A. Langley (2011). "Strategy as practice and the narrative turn." Organization studies **32**(9): 1171-1196.
- Finley, S. (2012). "SERVANT LEADERSHIP: A LITERATURE REVIEW." Review of Management Innovation & Creativity **5**(14).
- Fournier, C. v. (2013). Exzellente Unternehmen - Die verborgenen Stars des Mittelstands. Band 1: Dienstleistung. Neudrossenfeld, SchmidtColleg Verlag.
- Gaukler, B. (forthcoming). Der Upstalsboom Weg, Springer.
- Gill, A., S. Fitzgerald, S. Bhutani, H. Mand and S. Sharma (2010). "The relationship between transformational leadership and employee desire for empowerment." International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management **22**(2): 263-273.
- Golsorkhi, D., L. Rouleau, D. Seidl and E. Vaara (2010). "What is strategy-as-practice?".
- Golsorkhi, D., L. Rouleau, D. Seidl and E. Vaara (2015). Cambridge handbook of strategy as practice, second edition, Cambridge University Press.
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). Servant leadership, New York: Paulist Press.
- Greenleaf, R. K. and L. C. Spears (1998). The power of servant-leadership: Essays, Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Gregory Stone, A., R. F. Russell and K. Patterson (2004). "Transformational versus servant leadership: a difference in leader focus." Leadership & Organization Development Journal **25**(4): 349-361.
- Gründling, C. (2013). Der Upstalsboom Weg, Gründling Wertekommunikation: 10:53.
- Gutierrez-Wirsching, S., J. Mayfield, M. Mayfield and W. Wang (2015). "Motivating language as a mediator between servant leadership and employee outcomes." Management Research Review **38**(12): 1234-1250.
- Hodgkinson, G. P., R. Whittington, G. Johnson and M. Schwarz (2006). "The role of strategy workshops in strategy development processes: Formality, communication, co-ordination and inclusion." Long Range Planning **39**(5): 479-496.
- Hörl, M. (2013). Deutsche Sprache muss sich vom Marxismus befallen. Welt. Berlin.
- Hotel, T. (2016). Geschäftsjahr 2015: Upstalsboom vermeldet positives Ergebnis. Top Hotel. Landsberg am Lech, Freizeit-Verlag Landsberg GmbH: 2.
- House, R. J., P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman and V. Gupta (2004). Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies, Sage publications.
- Hsiao, C., Y.-H. Lee and W.-J. Chen (2015). "The effect of servant leadership on customer value co-creation: A cross-level analysis of key mediating roles." Tourism Management **49**: 45-57.

- Hughes, J. C. and E. Rog (2008). "Talent management: A strategy for improving employee recruitment, retention and engagement within hospitality organizations." International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management **20**(7): 743-757.
- Hunter, E. M., M. J. Neubert, S. J. Perry, L. A. Witt, L. M. Penney and E. Weinberger (2013). "Servant leaders inspire servant followers: Antecedents and outcomes for employees and the organization." The Leadership Quarterly **24**(2): 316-331.
- Izmir, M. (2014). The Upstalsboom Story - Bernd Gaukler, Director of Human Potential - Das Neue Arbeiten DNA Smart Afternoon 2014. Das Neue Arbeiten. Vimeo.com.
- Janssen, B. (2015). Bayreuther Dialoge. M. Kriefall.
- Janssen, B. (2016). Die Stille Revolution. München, Ariston Verlag in der Verlagsgruppe Random House GmbH.
- Jarzabkowski, P., J. Balogun and D. Seidl (2007). "Strategizing: The challenges of a practice perspective." Human relations **60**(1): 5-27.
- Jarzabkowski, P. and D. Seidl (2008). "The role of meetings in the social practice of strategy." Organization Studies **29**(11): 1391-1426.
- Jung, T., T. Scott, H. T. Davies, P. Bower, D. Whalley, R. McNally and R. Mannion (2009). "Instruments for exploring organizational culture: A review of the literature." Public administration review **69**(6): 1087-1096.
- Kaduk, S., D. Osmetz, H. A. Wüthrich and D. Hammer (2015). Musterbrecher Die Kunst, das Spiel zu drehen. Hamburg, Murmann Publisher GmbH.
- Kalra, S. K. (1997). "Human potential management: time to move beyond the concept of human resource management?" Journal of European Industrial Training **21**(5): 176-180.
- Koyuncu, M., R. J. Burke, M. Astakhova, D. Eren and H. Cetin (2014). "Servant leadership and perceptions of service quality provided by front-line service workers in hotels in Turkey." International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management **26**(7): 1083-1099.
- Küpers, W., S. Mantere and M. Statler (2013). "Strategy as Storytelling A Phenomenological Collaboration." Journal of Management Inquiry **22**(1): 83-100.
- Kusluvan, S., Z. Kusluvan, I. Ilhan and L. Buyruk (2010). "The human dimension a review of human resources management issues in the tourism and hospitality industry." Cornell Hospitality Quarterly **51**(2): 171-214.
- Kwak, W. J. and H.-K. Kim (2015). "Servant Leadership and Customer Service Quality at Korean Hotels: Multilevel Organizational Citizenship Behavior as a Mediator." Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal **43**(8): 1287-1298.
- Lashley, C. (1995). "Towards an understanding of employee empowerment in hospitality services." International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management **7**(1): 27-32.
- Laub, J. (2010). The servant organization. Servant Leadership, Springer: 105-117.

- Laub, J. A. (1999). Assessing the servant organization, Florida Atlantic University.
- Laudenbach, P. (2014). Wir haben keine Angst mehr. brand eins. Hamburg, brand eins Verlag GmbH & Co. oHG. **05/2014**: 5.
- Leonard-Barton, D. (1995). "Wellsprings of knowledge: Building and sustaining the sources of innovation." University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership Historical Research Reference in Entrepreneurship.
- Liden, R. C., S. J. Wayne, C. Liao and J. D. Meuser (2013). "Servant Leadership and Serving Culture: Influence on Individual and Unit Performance." Academy of Management Journal **57**(5): 1434-1452.
- Liden, R. C., S. J. Wayne, H. Zhao and D. Henderson (2008). "Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment." The Leadership Quarterly **19**(2): 161-177.
- Lincoln, Y. S. and E. G. Guba (1985). Naturalistic inquiry, Sage.
- Ling, Q., M. Lin and X. Wu (2016). "The trickle-down effect of servant leadership on frontline employee service behaviors and performance: A multilevel study of Chinese hotels." Tourism Management **52**: 341-368.
- Longenecker, C. O. and L. S. Fink (2013). "Creating human-resource management value in the twenty-first century: Seven steps to strategic HR." Human Resource Management International Digest **21**(2): 29-32.
- Maack, K., J. Haves, B. Homann and K. Schmidt (2013). <Böckler 2013.pdf>. Düsseldorf, Hans-Böckler-Stiftung. **Personalarbeit im Betrieb**: 154.
- Marshall, J. and M. Adamic (2010). "The story is the message: shaping corporate culture." Journal of Business Strategy **31**(2): 18-23.
- Martins, E. and F. Terblanche (2003). "Building organisational culture that stimulates creativity and innovation." European journal of innovation management **6**(1): 64-74.
- Mayer, D. M. (2010). Servant leadership and follower need satisfaction. Servant Leadership, Springer: 147-154.
- McGee-Cooper, A. and G. Looper (2001). The essentials of servant-leadership: Principles in practice, Pegasus Communications.
- Miles, M. B. and A. M. Huberman (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook, Sage.
- Mittal, R. and P. W. Dorfman (2012). "Servant leadership across cultures." Journal of World Business **47**(4): 555-570.
- Morgenthaler, M. (2016). Wir brauchen einen anderen Chef als Bodo Janssen. Tagesanzeiger. Zürich.

- Nebel, E. C. and G. K. Stearns (1977). "Leadership in the Hospitality Industry." Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly **18**(3): 69-76.
- Ng, K.-Y., C. Koh and H.-C. Goh (2008). "The Heart of the Servant Leader: Leader's Motivation-to-Serve and Its Impact on LMX and Subordinates' Extra-Role Behavior." Knowledge-driven corporation-complex creative destruction: 125-144.
- Ogbonna, E. and B. Wilkinson (2003). "The False Promise of Organizational Culture Change: A Case Study of Middle Managers in Grocery Retailing*." Journal of Management Studies **40**(5): 1151-1178.
- Paroutis, S., L. A. Franco and T. Papadopoulos (2015). "Visual interactions with strategy tools: producing strategic knowledge in workshops." British Journal of Management **26**(S1): S48-S66.
- Parris, D. L. and J. W. Peachey (2013). "A systematic literature review of servant leadership theory in organizational contexts." Journal of business ethics **113**(3): 377-393.
- Patterson, K. (2010). Servant leadership and love. Servant Leadership, Springer: 67-76.
- Peck, E., P. Gulliver and D. Towell (2004). "Why do we keep on meeting like this? The board as ritual in health and social care." Health Services Management Research **17**(2): 100-109.
- Prosser, S. (2010). Opportunities and tensions of servant leadership. Servant Leadership, Springer: 25-38.
- Purps-Paridigol, S. (2015). Führen mit Hirn - Mitarbeiter begeistern und Unternehmenserfolg steigern. Frankfurt/Main, Campus Verlag GmbH.
- Rennaker, M. A. and D. A. Novak (2007). "Servant-leadership context: A multi-case pilot study." The International Journal of Servant-Leadership **3**(1): 303-330.
- Ro, H. and P.-J. Chen (2011). "Empowerment in hospitality organizations: Customer orientation and organizational support." International Journal of Hospitality Management **30**(2): 422-428.
- Rothfelder, K., M. C. Ottenbacher and R. J. Harrington (2012). "The impact of transformational, transactional and non-leadership styles on employee job satisfaction in the German hospitality industry." Tourism and Hospitality Research **12**(4): 201-214.
- Russell, R. F. and A. Gregory Stone (2002). "A review of servant leadership attributes: developing a practical model." Leadership & Organization Development Journal **23**(3): 145-157.
- Russell, R. F. and G. A. Stone (2002). "A review of servant leadership attributes: developing a practical model." Leadership & Organization Development Journal **23**(3): 145-157.
- Sarayrah, Y. K. (2004). "Servant leadership in the Bedouin-Arab culture." Global Virtue Ethics Review **5**(3): 58.
- Sendjaya, S. (2010). Demystifying servant leadership. Servant Leadership, Springer: 39-51.
- Sendjaya, S. and J. C. Sarros (2002). "Servant leadership: Its origin, development, and application in organizations." Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies **9**(2): 57-64.

- Senge, P. M. (2006). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*, Broadway Business.
- Silverman, D. (2013). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*, SAGE Publications Limited.
- Smith, B. N., R. V. Montagno and T. N. Kuzmenko (2004). "Transformational and Servant Leadership: Content and Contextual Comparisons." *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* **10**(4): 80-91.
- Sparrowe, R. T. (1994). "Empowerment in the hospitality industry: An exploration of antecedents and outcomes." *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* **17**(3): 51-73.
- Spears, L. (1996). "Reflections on Robert K. Greenleaf and servant-leadership." *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* **17**(7): 33-35.
- Spears, L. C. (2010). "Character and servant leadership: Ten characteristics of effective, caring leaders." *The Journal of Virtues & Leadership* **1**(1): 25-30.
- Stone, D. L. and D. L. Deadrick (2015). "Challenges and opportunities affecting the future of human resource management." *Human Resource Management Review* **25**(2): 139-145.
- Stone, G. A., R. F. Russell and K. Patterson (2004). "Transformational versus servant leadership: a difference in leader focus." *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* **25**(4): 349-361.
- Sucher, S. J. and S. E. McManus (2001). *The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company*, Harvard Business School.
- Sun, P. Y. T. (2013). "The servant identity: Influences on the cognition and behavior of servant leaders." *The Leadership Quarterly* **24**(4): 544-557.
- Tracey, J. B. and T. R. Hinkin (1994). "Transformational leaders in the hospitality industry." *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* **35**(2): 18-24.
- Ulrich, D. and J. H. Dulebohn (2015). "Are we there yet? What's next for HR?" *Human Resource Management Review* **25**(2): 188-204.
- Unrast, C. (2014). *Weckruf durch die Mitarbeiter*. *Human Resources Manager*. Berlin, Quadriga Media Berlin GmbH. **August / September 2014**.
- Upstalsboom (2014). *Upstalsboom gewinnt Querdenker-Award*. Emden, Upstalsboom Hotel + Freizeit GmbH & Co. KG.
- Upstalsboom (n.d.). *Der Upstalsboomer Weg*. Emden, Upstalsboom Hotel + Freizeit GmbH & Co. KG.
- Van Dierendonck, D. (2011). "Servant leadership: A review and synthesis." *Journal of Management* **37**(4): 1228-1261.
- van Dierendonck, D. and L. Rook (2010). *Enhancing innovation and creativity through servant leadership*. *Servant Leadership*, Springer: 155-165.

Verlemann, I., I. Kipker, A. Westermann, C. Chang and A. Gruner (2013). GVO-Studie HR-Trends in Hotellerie & Gastronomie: Impulse für zukünftiges Personalmanagement. Osnabrück, GVO HR Consulting: 72.

Verluyten, P. S. (2010). Intercultural Skills for International Business and International Relations. Den Haag, Acco Nederlands.

Vogt, C. P. (2005). "Maximizing Human Potential: Capabilities Theory and the Professional Work Environment." Journal of Business Ethics **58**(1): 111-123.

Von Freyberg, B. and S. Zeugfang (2014). Strategisches Hotelmanagement, Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.

Washington, R. R., C. D. Sutton and W. I. Sauser Jr (2014). "How Distinct is Servant Leadership Theory? Empirical Comparisons with Competing Theories." Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics **11**(1): 11.

Whetstone, J. T. (2002). "Personalism and moral leadership: The servant leader with a transforming vision." Business Ethics: A European Review **11**(4): 385-392.

Winston, B. E. (2010). The place for qualitative research methods in the study of servant leadership. Servant Leadership, Springer: 180-191.

Worsfold, P. (1989). "Leadership and managerial effectiveness in the hospitality industry." International Journal of Hospitality Management **8**(2): 145-155.

Wu, L. Z., E. C. Y. Tse, P. Fu, H. K. Kwan and J. Liu (2013). "The Impact of Servant Leadership on Hotel Employees' "Servant Behavior"." Cornell Hospitality Quarterly **54**(4): 383-395.

Yukl, G. (1999). "An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories." The Leadership Quarterly **10**(2): 285-305.

Zou, W.-C., Q. Tian and J. Liu (2015). "Servant leadership, social exchange relationships, and follower's helping behavior: Positive reciprocity belief matters." International Journal of Hospitality Management **51**: 147-156.