



## Visitpaper

Master of Management & Organization  
International Business Systems

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## Preface

With pleasure we present you this report in which we've described the outcomes of a research performed on hospitality in Concept Hotels. We aim to provide you with new insights on the required measures for Concept Hotel's staff, enabling them to be able to adapt to the changing customer demands of today and in the coming decennia. We are convinced that the research provides valuable insights for Essentia, Hospitality Education, Tourism Portugal and hotel management.

The four authors of this paper are all participants of the Master of Management and Organization at TIAS, School for business and society. A brief introduction of the four authors can be found in the appendix. This research was performed in order for the authors to acquire knowledge and experience of international business, as part of the module International Business Systems.

We hope you will be inspired by reading this paper, to the same extent that we were inspired and enjoyed the research itself. We gained knowledge on the hospitality industry, hospitality intelligence and soft skills, including the learning organization and international differences.

We are truly grateful for the cooperation with all stakeholders, including Essentia, Tourism Portugal, Hospitality educations and Hotel management. We want to thank all stakeholders for the energy, enthusiasm and provided input during the workshop and survey. Special thanks to Lucília Cruz Pinto for her friendly approach, enthusiasm, the time she has put into the preparation of the research and the constructive responses to our e-mails. Additional thanks to Catarina Lopez for her support in achieving a high score of participation to the survey. Furthermore, we like to thank all stakeholders who participated in the workshop, Marjon van Dinther from the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in Portugal, Woody van Olffen and Dianne Neefs from TIAS, and the students of our cohort for their involvement in the visit.

We wish you pleasure and inspiration whilst reading this paper.

Patricia van Oosterhout, Kim van Limbergen, Ron Stegers and Eric Tielemans

## Management summary

Essentia is a consulting firm for areas such as Urban rehabilitation, Niche Real Estate, Sustainable Hospitality, Tourism, Culture, and Leisure Territory Networks. Founded in 1996, Essentia brings their investors a one-stop-shopping concept from idea generation to operationalization. Tourism is one of the main driving forces behind building the economy and employment opportunities in Lisbon. Over the past years the hospitality industry (globally) has become increasingly commoditized, with consumers seeing little difference between the offerings and services of one major hotel versus another. To break through this perceived sameness, hotel providers must implement solutions that respond to individual customer preferences and apply this to deliver increasingly differentiated and delightful services.

The perception the customer has of high personalized and exclusive service offered, is an essential part of this research. Essentia compares this service with a concept they call 'a Friend in Lisbon' and describes this friend as a host who takes initiative, anticipates the needs of the guest and acts from an "everything is possible" perspective. Essentia expects that the concept of 'a Friend in Lisbon' can contribute to this goal. To be able to deliver this concept to a guest, future employees need a different set of skills from what is currently taught at hospitality educational programs, and the sustainable development of those skills provided by Concept Hotels as employer.

The research is mainly focused on soft skills that, according to the literature, can contribute to be distinctive in highly personalized and exclusive service. Extra attention will be given to the skills gap dilemma that describes the dependence and vicious circle in which employers, education programs and new employees can be trapped. In addition, we investigated how a learning organization can be designed to ensure that people are involved in all developments that give the customer an unforgettable experience.

A World Café was organized for the practical day to which relevant stakeholders were invited. We sent a survey to these stakeholders prior to this practical day. The purpose of this was to get a picture of how they would rate the most important soft skills in the literature. Various

dialogues have been conducted in the World Café to get a clear picture of what the essence is in the distinctive soft skills, and which behaviour people like to see. In addition, it was discussed which action is needed for concept hotels to create an environment that stimulates continuous learning.

Based on the literature reviewed and the world Café session, the following recommendations are made:

- From the World Café several descriptions of service activities are made. Equally important to present unforgettable experiences is to investigate digital possibilities. Blending of digital and physical service activities can create a unique and personal experience. It is therefore important to determine what digital platform provides the most distinctive facilities for the Concept Hotels to create an unforgettable personal experience.
- The outcomes of the World Café showed that employers pointed out some essential skills, like empathy, that an employee must possess before they are hired by the hotels. Therefore, it is important that all stakeholders together make a list of these essential skills so that the educational programs can train these skills to a satisfying level during the educational period.
- To close the skills gap between employers, employees and educational programs we recommend getting a continuous flow of information started between the stakeholders to identify, define and develop the desired skills for exclusive and personalized service. This can be done by having regular personal meetings, but also digital solutions are available that identify critical skills that drive performance gaps and build customized solutions to make those skills stick across the workforce. An example of a digital solution is Strayer@Work (see footnote for more information)
- Top management is in the position to create a learning organization by presenting the right behavior. Though the transition might be slow, if management is consistent in demonstrating the necessary skills, the learning organization will continue to grow.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Discussion and visit paper

This paper is written based on our study trip to Lisbon, in particular in relation to the company Essentia. It includes an overall introduction to Essentia and the challenges Essentia is facing in the continuously changing customer demands and related employee skills by Concept Hotel owners. There is a growing focus on an experience-based customer approach which Essentia states in their vision as “a Friend in Lisbon”. The literature research and the results of the practical research, in the form of a digital survey and a World Café, is included in this paper. The World Cafe workshop and its outcomes, which incorporates the literature and survey results of the second part of the practical research, as well as the conclusions and recommendations, are provided after the visit and added to the visit paper.

## 1.2 Background Essentia

Essentia was founded in 1996 and is a consulting firm for areas such as Urban rehabilitation, Niche Real Estate, Sustainable Hospitality, Tourism, Culture and Leisure Territory Networks. Their client portfolio consists of public authorities, national- international- and institutional investors, private law foundations, charities and business organizations. For these clients Essentia advises and manages Real Estate projects based on the knowledge that every property is singular and by promoting /encouraging the preservation of historical, architectural and cultural heritage.

Essentia is focusing on two areas. Firstly, they have developed a long-term common vision with the public authorities and the national tourism office on how to promote Lisbon as a tourist destination in a way that adds financial value, while simultaneously preserving local heritage and the local environment. This is a long term and challenging process that consists of a strategic plan for the region to attract investors, and to ultimately attract tourists to bring sustainability to Lisbon as a tourist destination. Secondly, Essentia has a corporate approach that mainly builds new concepts and products for the hospitality industry, varying from restaurants to resorts and hotels.

Essentia is a project developer, servicing investors who are looking at making an investment in Portugal connected to real estate, tourism, and niche real estate like student or senior housing. Essentia brings their investors a one-stop-shopping concept from idea generation to



operationalization. This includes; strategic consulting, project development, project management, construction management and operational opening. These services are executed by a team of 22 experts with a wide variety of skills like; financial advisors to create business plans, architects and engineers to design and construct the projects, business innovators to design the brand and search for partners to operate the real estate once it is opened. Essentia takes care of everything, except investing. It can be stated that Essentia supports their clients through every stage of their investment project, whether in conception, design, management, partnerships development and occupation.

### 1.3 Motivation for the study

As stated above, Essentia is focusing, together with their strategic partners, on developing Lisbon as a tourist destination. Tourism is one of the main driving forces behind building the economy and employment opportunities in Lisbon. Lisbon has significantly emerged as a tourist destination over the past three years and is expected to continue growing at this pace over the coming years. As a consequence, investors have identified Lisbon as an attractive place to invest in real estate. Over the past years the hospitality industry (globally) has become increasingly commoditized, with consumers seeing little difference between the offerings and services of one major hotel versus another. To break through this perceived sameness, hotel providers must implement solutions that respond to individual customer preferences and apply this to deliver increasingly differentiated and delightful services (Peterson, 2011). The emerging Concept Hotels have a predominant position within Essentia's vision on how to promote Lisbon as an attractive tourist destination for the exclusive tourist. Currently there are 43 Concept Hotels in Lisbon and this number is expanding (Esteves & Gil Duarte, 2018). Concept Hotels provides customers with a more personalized service based on the belief that the provided service will outperform competition and attract customers that are willing to financially reward superior service. This concept responds to the need of a more demanding customer and extends its focus from the overnight stay of the customer in an exclusive designed building, to a total experience. For potential customers this experience begins the moment they start looking into a trip to Lisbon, and carries them through their visit, up until their arrival back home.

The concept of hotels supporting customers in all aspects of their visit, comes with great challenges. One of these challenges is the need for skilled employees who are focused on delivering high personalized and exclusive service with attention to the smallest detail. In 2017, Lisbon counted 303 official hotels of which 89% are traditional hotels that require employees skilled for typical hotel activities, like working behind the reception desk. These skills are reflected in the hospitality education programs. With the emerging focus on experience instead of commoditized service, the hospitality education programs should prepare students for skills required to provide exclusive, personalized and high-end services, which are common for Concept Hotels. In Concept Hotels the customer no longer wants a traditional reception desk, but a customized welcome. An example of this could be an exclusive local cocktail in the hotel bar, followed by a tailor-made program based on their personal wishes. The host becomes more than a receptionist and is fully equipped to represent the Portuguese culture and its heritage within the city of Lisbon. These brand and hotel specific skills, as well as future adaptation to changing markets, requires a culture within concept hotels that stimulates life-time learning of all staff-members.

### 1.3.1 “A Friend in Lisbon”

The perception the customer has of high personalized and exclusive service offered, is an essential part of this research. Essentia compares this service with a concept they call ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ and describes this friend as a host who takes initiative, anticipates the needs of the guest and acts from an "everything is possible" perspective. The host has the ability to identify with the guest and identify with his emotional state. The guest experiences a friend who surprises him in terms of many things, such as culture, food and entertainment. From Essentia’s perspective, it’s the friendly host meeting you with a personalized service upon arrival at the airport, giving you the local experience of a lifetime, and finally drives you back to the airport at the end of your stay. Educational programs must prepare their students for these needs, in order for them to meet the needs of the customers of Concept Hotels. The challenge is to fill the gap between the current educational curriculum and the need for specific skills of future personnel. Essentia is participating to find a solution for this gap, otherwise the Concept Hotels they build cannot be operated with skilled staff that can meet the demand of the Concept Hotel customer.



## 1.4 Problem definition

Together with the public authorities and the national tourism office, Essentia wants to develop Lisbon as a sustainable tourist destination. They believe the way to do this, is by shifting from traditional hospitality service to a personalized service experience. This experience will cover the total customer journey of the visit to Lisbon in Concept Hotels, in accordance with preservation of local heritage and environment. Essentia expects that the concept of ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ can contribute to this goal. To be able to deliver this concept to a guest, future employees need a different set of skills than currently taught at hospitality educational programs and the sustainable development of those skills provided by Concept Hotels as employer. This is undesirable and leads to the following main research question:

*Which soft skills does an employee of a Concept Hotel need in order to be perceived by a tourist as ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ and what does this imply for the learning environment provided by the Concept Hotels?*

### *Theoretical sub-questions:*

- What are the service activities of a hospitality employee in the future?
- How can the gap of desired skills between employers, employees and educational programs be explained?
- Which soft skills do front-line hospitality employees require in an experience-based economy?
- How can the learning environment of a hotel be formed to guarantee continuous learning and development of employees in order to ensure continuous adaptation to changing customer demands?

### *Practical sub-questions:*

- Which service activities of the entire customer journey belong to ‘a Friend in Lisbon’, within the next 5 till 10 years?
- Which soft skills are critical for the front-line Concept Hotels’ staff in order for them to be perceived as ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ (outcomes of the survey)
- Why are specifically these skills most important?

- What behavior of the employee does the customer experience when performing these soft skills in an excellent way (based on the theoretical definition)
- How can Concept Hotels create an environment that stimulates continuous learning?

### 1.5 Aim of the study

This study aims to provide Essentia with an overview of the soft skills front-line hospitality employees need to be able to succeed in positively shaping customer experiences, as defined as ‘a Friend in Lisbon’. In addition, the study aims to provide insight in how Concept Hotels can become a learning organization, in order to adapt to the future changing customer demands.

### 1.6 Relevance and scope

To succeed in the growing focus on delivering personalized service experiences in Concept Hotels in Lisbon, the gap between the current educational curriculum and the need of employee skills to be perceived as ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ need to be closed by the Concept Hotels. The scope of this research centralizes around the required soft skills of front-line employees and the capabilities of Hotel Management within Concept Hotels in Lisbon to facilitate a learning environment. The vantage point of this paper is strategic human resource management. Concept Hotels are creating an answer to the changing market requirements related to the shift from product-based and service driven hospitality to an experience and customer demand driven. Due to this focus, physical-assets and digital services are kept out of scope as well as regular hotels and other hospitality services.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides answers to the theoretical sub-questions mentioned in paragraph 1.4.

### 2.1 Service activities of hospitality employees in the future

The hospitality industry is transforming fast from focusing on products and physical assets to an industry with focus on providing customer experiences (Knutson et al., 2006). As also noted in the introduction in chapter 1, goods and services increasingly become commoditized. In addition to this, customers are no longer only satisfied with excellent goods and services but are seeking for an unforgettable experience on top of that. The focus of the customer is therefore shifting from physical goods and service to experience, where experience is the connecting element between production of a good or service and the consumption of it. The difficulty of the customer focus on experience, is that the expected value of a certain experience differs from one customer to another (Andersson, 2007). Not every customer is thrilled about the same experience. Demands differ from customer to customer, from time to time, or from day to day. That is why, in this emerging experience-based economy, hospitality businesses are focusing on providing individually customized experiences to their guests to make sure the experience fits the unique personal tastes and requirements of the customer (Bharwani & Juahari, 2013). Essentia is aligning their strategy for Concept Hotels with this shift to an experience-based economy by providing customers with the experience of having ‘a Friend in Lisbon’, which is described in the introduction. The difficulty in executing this strategy, is that the customers perception defines the value of this ‘Friend in Lisbon’. This perception is shaped solely in the mind of the customer (Andersson, 2007). To succeed in influencing this process of shaping the customer experience, Concept Hotels must provide input for experiences that address and fit the needs of the customer at that particular time. The largest effect of influencing customer experiences derives from the input of the human resources of an organization (Ottenbacher & Gnoth, 2005). Employees with customer contact (front-line employees) are important resources to co-create customer experiences. To be able to create an experience, these front-line employees need certain skills. When looking at the ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ experience, Essentia describes a current gap between the desired skills of hospitality employees as seen by employers, educators and job seekers. This gap is also known as the skills gap dilemma (Oliver Wyman, 2016). The next paragraph will address this dilemma.

## 2.2 The skills gap dilemma

The future service activities of the hospitality industry focus on customer experience, as described in paragraph 2.1. These activities ask for a different set of employee skills. Skills can be divided into three categories, as shown in Figure 1.

<b>Technical Skills</b>	Requiring specific knowledge of a program or task, such as computer skills and quantitative numeracy skills
<b>Job-Specific Skills</b>	Trained and learned over time with experience, such as communication skills, leadership skills, and problem solving
<b>Soft Skills</b>	Behavioral traits or attributes that are difficult to train, and usually intrinsic to individuals, such as motivation/drive and cultural fit

Figure 1: Skill types based on Oliver Wyman (2016)

This study focusses on the soft skills front-line hospitality employees need to positively shape customer experiences. The main participants in developing the required skills are employers, educators and job seekers (including students). If these participants do not collaborate in developing the required soft skills, a skills gap appears. As Oliver Wyman (2016) states: “this skills gap represents the disconnect between employer expectations regarding job seekers’ readiness for a specific role and the experience and training applicants possess for that role” (p. 3). This disconnection is also shown in Figure 2.

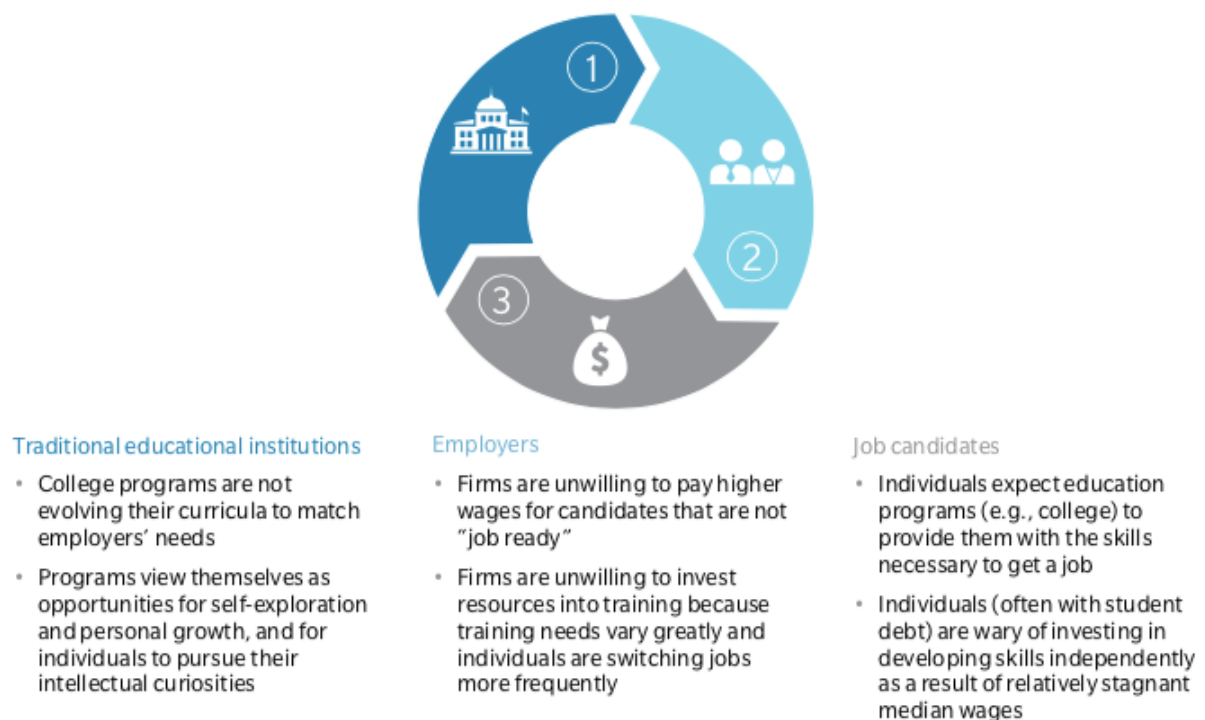


Figure 2: Educator, employer and job candidate disconnect based on Oliver Wyman (2016)

The path to close the current skills gap between Concept Hotels, hospitality educational programs and job seekers in Lisbon, calls for a better information flow among these key stakeholders. An approach to get this information flow going is for employers to work directly with educators on building required soft skills into new curricula or adjusting existing curricula. This approach is not new, but traditionally educators have been slow in adopting their curricula to match employer's needs. Their focus needs to shift from promoting their students intellectual and personal growth to providing their students with knowledge and training for the working world (Oliver Wyman, 2016). Educators themselves can also be proactive to solve this skills gap by reaching out to the hospitality employers to set up programs that develop the required soft skills. The key to success lies in making the necessary connections for creating knowledge and information flow between the key participants. Therefore, an important element of the practical research of this study is to contribute to this knowledge and information flow. The next paragraph will focus on the theoretical knowledge of required soft skills that front-line hospitality employees need to succeed in co-creating experiences with customers. This will be the starting point to get the information flow going between the key stakeholders.

### 2.3 Required Soft skills in an experience-based economy

In the past, the importance of soft skills was sometimes underestimated in the hospitality sector. This was partly due to the fact that these skills were not directly measurable (Burns as cited in Kim, Erdem, Byun, & Jeong, 2011). Now, several studies show the importance of soft skills in the service industry (Bharwan& Jauhari, 2013; Burns, 1997; Daniel, Costa, Pita & Costa, 2017; Kim, et al., 2011; Robles, 2012). The creation of added value is essential in the service industry and therefore also in the tourism industry. This added value can be provided through various well-developed soft skills (Burns, 1997). According to research conducted by Kim et al. (2011) among hotel staff, the following soft skills are perceived as the most important for being successful at the hotel workplace: serving customers properly, working with diverse groups, self-management, problem solving, participating as a team member, self-esteem, exercising leadership, integrity and honesty, negotiation skills, communicative competency, optimism and politeness. Empathy, meaning being able to relate to the quality of the hotel experienced by guests, is another vital soft skill for hotel staff (Hemp, 2002). Another study conducted among

CEO's resulted in a top ten soft skills which, according to them, are the most important in the current and future workplace (Robles, 2012). Communication, integrity and courtesy are perceived as the most vital soft skills. Flexibility, interpersonal skills, positive attitude, professionalism, teamwork and work ethics are also important (Robles, 2012). These skills, also named as competencies, are acknowledged, in an extensive research that Bharwani and Jauhari (2013) conducted according to the required competencies to co-create memorable customer experiences in the hospitality industry. However, they go one step further and have developed the 'Hospitality Intelligence' construct in their research, including an accompanying framework consisting of competencies. Also, they make the connection in this framework with other aspects that color the customer experience. This framework is shown in Figure 3. As the framework shows, the interaction between hospitality employees and customers is and remains essential to create an unforgettable customer experience (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013).

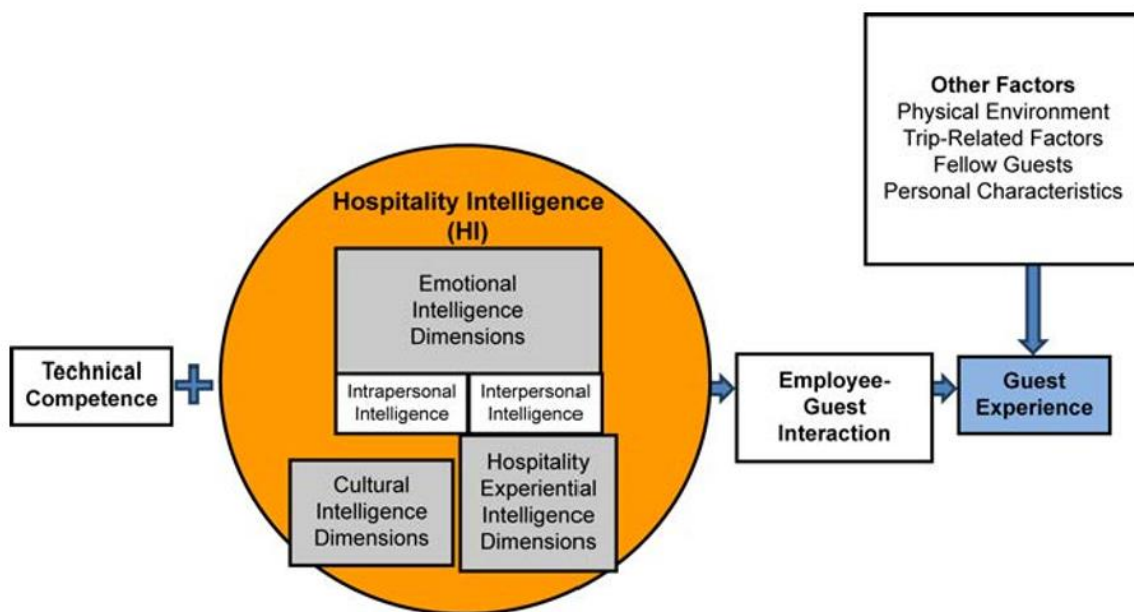


Figure 3; Conceptual framework of Hospitality Intelligence (HI). Reprinted from "An exploratory study of competencies required to co-create memorable customer experiences in the hospitality industry," by S. Bharwani and V. Jauhari, 2013, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25, p. 833. Copyright 2013, by Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

As shown in Figure 3, Hospitality Intelligence (further called: HI) consists of three dimensions, namely: Cultural Intelligence, Hospitality Experiential Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence. This last dimension is made up of two underlying dimensions: Intrapersonal Intelligence and Interpersonal Intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence consists of constructs: emotional resilience, optimism commitment, self-awareness and self-management. The constructs

empathy, effective communication, influencing and conflict resolution skills, seeking and assimilating guest feedback anticipating guest needs, responsiveness, and team playing are part of the dimension Interpersonal intelligence. Cognitive, motivational, behavioral cultural intelligence and cultural sensitivity and mindfulness are four constructs that make up the Cultural Intelligence dimension. The dimension Hospitality experiential intelligence consists of the concept's generosity, professional behavior, creativity, innovation and centrality of guest experience (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). Appendix 1 of this paper contains the dimensions with underlying competences/skills with detailed explanations. The use of this extensive HI-construct in practice for recruiting and training frontline staff will contribute to a memorable customer experience (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). Therefore, this is the ideal construct for the purpose of this paper and based on the competence and skills literature discussed, the HI-construct of Bharwani and Jauhari was selected as the basis for answering the practical sub-questions in this paper. The next paragraph discusses how Concept Hotels can give substance to the constantly changing customer and market conditions through a learning organization.

#### 2.4 Learning environment to ensure continuous adaptation

In today's globalization and rapidly changing customer demands, it is critical for a company to be able to adapt accordingly. As described in paragraph 2.1, the same applies to the hospitality industry, where customer demands are changing in a fast pace. For a hotel willing to adapt to these changes the consequence is that the entire organization needs to act as a learning organization where staff needs to be equipped and enabled to adapt processes, services and perceptions. This results in a learning organization that is tailored to indicate, start and implement changes based on every day's experiences and developments (Garvin, Edmondson, & Gino, 2008; Hall, 2009; Popescu, Chivu, Ciocarlan-Chitucea, & Popescu, 2011; Rodríguez-Antón, Rubio-Andrada, Alonso-Almeida, & Celemín-Pedroche, 2016).

Ritz Carlton and Marriott International, as well as Spanish hotel chains, have been mentioned in previous studies as organizations that have considerable experience with the course of organizational learning (Alonso-Almeida, et al., 2016). One of their key-reasons for establishing a learning organization is based on the school of thought that a specific establishment in combination with the Hotel brand is best expressed by employees that are affiliated with the



establishment and brand. One interesting concept is 'emotional labor', which expresses the inner emotional awakening an employee experiences during interaction with customers (Isayeva, Yurcu & Kasalak, 2018). In customer interactions the body-language and tone of voice can be observed. The right observation of the non-verbal communication, the drawn conclusion and demonstrated reaction of hotel staff contributes to customer satisfaction. Affiliated employees are emotionally connected with customers which causes them to love their job, improve their self-esteem, performance and make the establishment and brand unique, valuable and inimitable (Isayeva et. al, 2018; Oktavio, Kaihatu, & Kartika, 2019). It is therefore important to educate existing staff as new employees are unfamiliar to the establishments and brand culture. Reilly (2018) draws a similar conclusion based on several case studies, indicating that most hospitality organizations have a resource building model instead of a skill buying model. The research indicates the difficulty of convincing new-hired experienced employees on adapting to the culture, it's attitudes and beliefs. In this school of thought, a learning organization is one of the success factors for organizations to adapt to new customer requirements while maintaining their unique brand (Oktavio et. al, 2019, Reilly, 2018).

It might be assumed that leaders only need to articulate and communicate a clear vision and provide enablers to become a learning organization, but research indicates this is an incomplete perception. To become a learning organization it is needed to accelerate in three areas (Garvin et al., 2008). *Firstly*, a learning environment is needed. Where employees feel safe to speak-up and are respected for their opinion. *Secondly*, there is a need for straightforward processes and practices that support information gathering, creation, sharing and interpretation. *Thirdly*, an organizational leadership is needed that emphasizes the need for employee and organizational learning.

Schein (2010) articulates the importance of leaders to establish the learning culture by demonstrating the right role-model and use talent management to create an inclusive learning culture. Leaders can establish a learning environment where employees perceive a psychological safety and appreciation of others, an environment open for new ideas and with attention for reflection. In such an environment, employees feel safe to share ideas, exchange different thoughts, owning up to mistakes, value opposing ideas and explore the unknown. To arise as a learning organization, leaders can provide formal processes regarding collecting and

sharing intelligence on technological direction, customers and competitors. Another aspect included is the ability to experiment, and encouragement to solve problems and invest in employee's skill developments. Additionally, organizational leaders need to demonstrate their willingness to appreciate different viewpoints, invest time in problem solving and transfer knowledge. People feel encouraged to learn when leaders stimulate dialogues by actively listening and positively questioning the proposed, in order to achieve the best outcome. A leader advocating and demonstrating the importance of reflection, problem identification and knowledge transfer, will receive the same behavior by employees (Garvin et al., 2008).

When a company's strategy makes a clear connection between the provided services, the physical-asset, employee skills and leadership, it connects the critical components to provide the complete customer experience (Reilly, 2018). To achieve a positive customer experience, the right combination and settings of each component is critical. The quality of staff behavior has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry (Nam, Ekinci & Whyatt, 2008). This indicates the importance of high-level interpersonal skills and customer empathy as expected from front line employees in hospitality. The framework of Hospitality Intelligence (HI) has implications for the hotels as well as the academic institutes. Intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence are key factors in developing personal effectiveness and memorable engagement by employees (emotional intelligence). Kim et. al (2011) indicate a positive relation between correct training methods and ensuring hospitalities key-value. Training initiated by the hospitality firms should focus on building interpersonal competencies. The training of graduates with academic curriculum programs should focus on intrapersonal competencies which contribute in building self-confidence, self-awareness and self-control. The hospitality firms could assess frontline recruits by using evaluation instruments to determine the level of preparedness to engage memorable experiences for tourists (Bharwani & Juahari, 2013).

## 3 Research Design

### 3.1 Type of research

The type of research in this paper is explorative, descriptive and applied. The starting point is a concrete management case. Two sources are used for this research; primary and secondary. Primary data is obtained by conducting surveys, interviews and a workshop. Secondary data is information from existing sources that provide relevant information for this paper. With this data, the research can be based on existing literature and frameworks. Triangulation was used in this study; multiple data sources were used.

### 3.2 Research approach

This study takes the form of a case study as it is based on Essentia's strategy on Concept Hotels in Lisbon. The concept of a case study is to collect qualitative and/or quantitative input that is relevant for the researchers (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Yin, 2011). The research starts with a desk research to answer the theoretical research questions based on the studied literature. To be able to answer the practical research questions, quantitative and qualitative data need to be collected. The researchers expect to get the most relevant data when its retrieved from a reference group of stakeholders. By conducting a survey, soft-skills will be identified that are considered indispensable for a frontline employee to be perceived as 'a Friend of Lisbon'. The outcome of the questionnaire in combination with the theoretical framework are input to the World Café and contribute to a constructive dialogue.

## 4 Practical research

Practical research is performed to answer the practical sub-questions and consists of an online questionnaire and a world-café session in Lisbon.

### 4.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire's purpose is to identify the importance of the different soft skills required by frontline hospitality employees in order to be perceived by tourists as 'a Friend in Lisbon'. It uses a 5 points Likert-scale, ranging from 1 ("not important") to 5 ("very important"). The theory of Hospitality Intelligence (Bharwani & Juahari, 2013) is used as described in paragraph 2.3 as the basis for this questionnaire.

#### 4.1.1 Results questionnaire

Appendix 4 of this paper contains the integral results of the questionnaire.

The overall average results of the questionnaire show that all stakeholders consider the relevance of all selected soft skills, based on the theory of Bharwani and Juahari (2013), with a score of 4.64 out of 5, to be above average. Figure 2 shows that with an average score of 4.94, respondents from the hospitality education consider all mentioned soft skills as important. The respondents of the Concept Hotels, owners and staff members, present a score of resp. 4.57 and 4.52. A difference in rating of the soft skills seems to arise between workers in hospitality education (theory) and the owners/staff members of the Concept Hotels (practitioners).

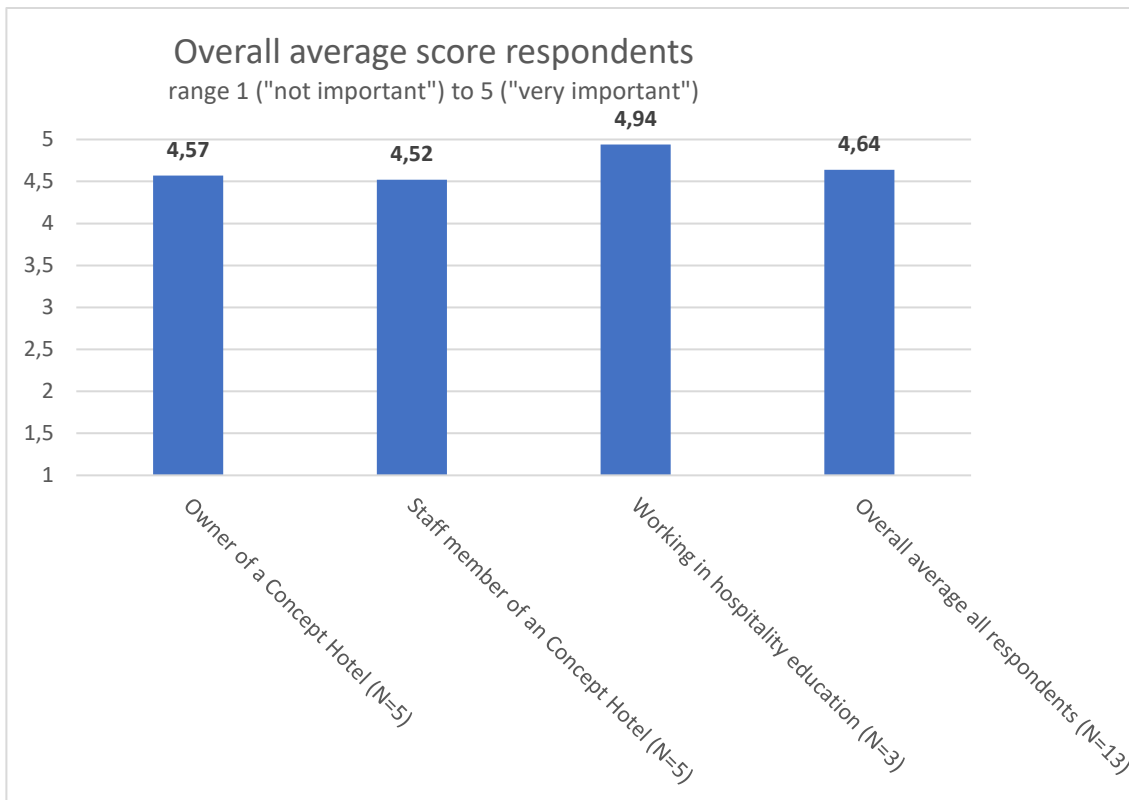


Figure 4; overall average score soft skills given by three different respondent groups and overall average score soft skills all respondents

In figure 5 the results of the questionnaire present the importance of the various Hospitality Intelligence dimensions over all respondents. The range between the dimensions is relatively small. This suggests that the importance of all dimensions is assumed to be almost the same.

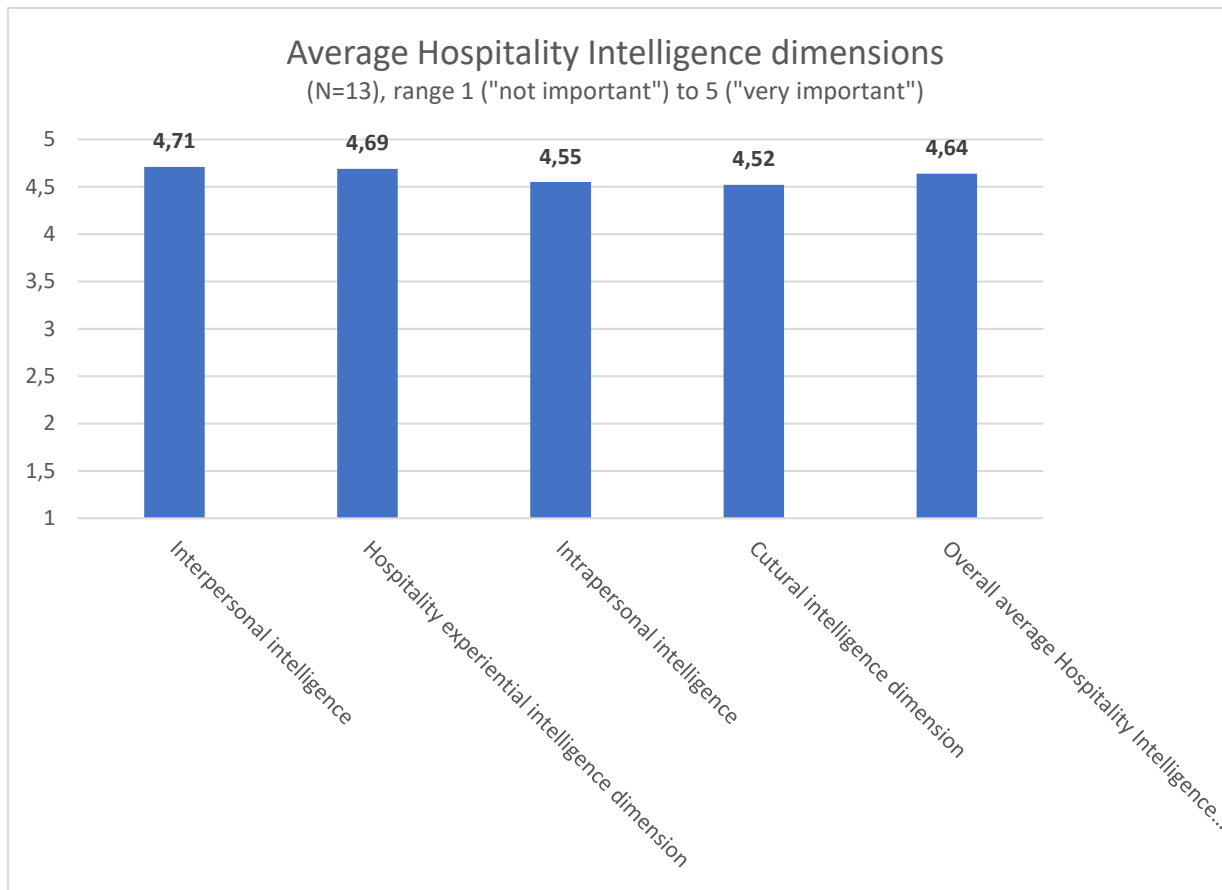


Figure 5; average score soft skills by Hospitality Intelligence dimensions and overall average all Hospitality Intelligence dimensions

However, if we look at the results of the rating of each dimension per stakeholder group, the differences increase. In figure 6 these differences are presented. Stakeholders working in hospitality education value each of the dimensions as very important, whereas owners and staff members of Concept Hotels vary more in their valuation per dimension. It seems that owners of Concept Hotels value the importance of the Intrapersonal Intelligence as relatively least important while the staff members of Concept Hotels value Cultural Intelligence as relatively least important. All stakeholders value the dimensions, Interpersonal Intelligence and Hospitality Experience Intelligence, as the most important for a frontline employee of Concept Hotels to be perceived as 'a Friend in Lisbon'.

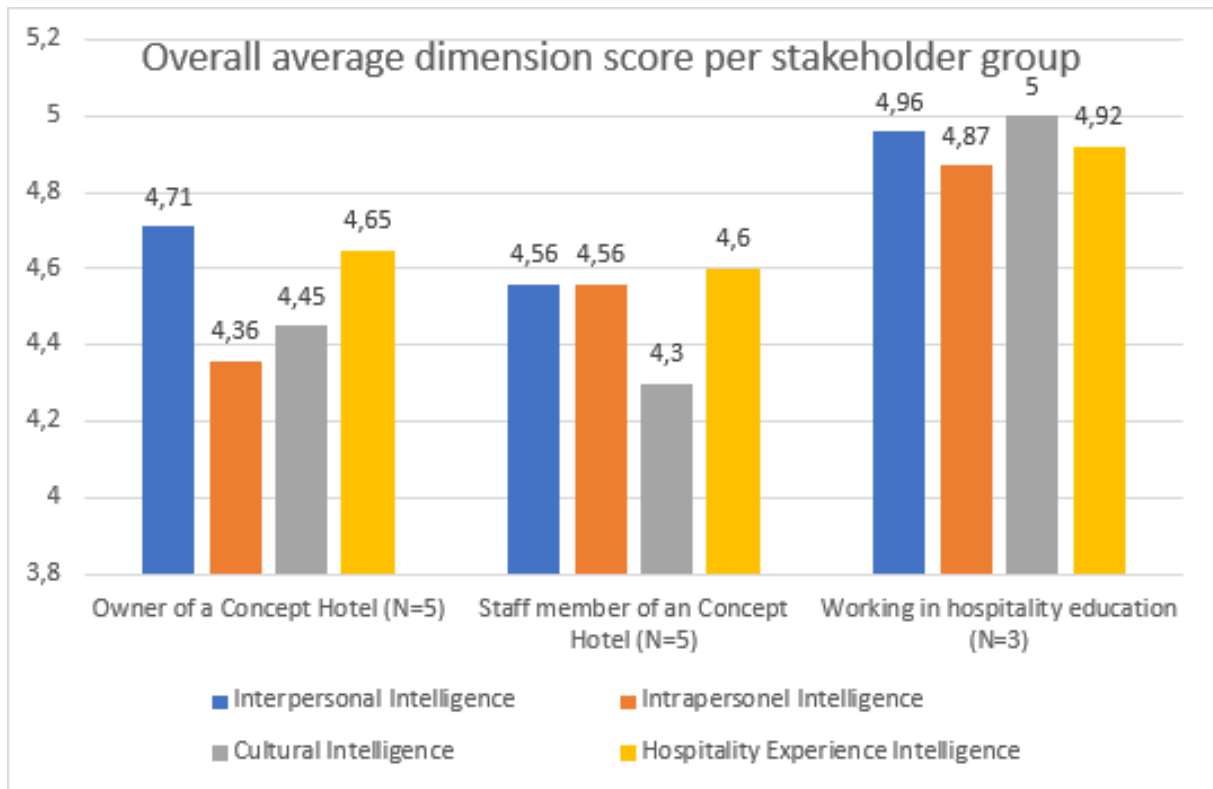


Figure 6; overall average dimension score soft skills by Hospitality Intelligence dimensions per stakeholder group.

All results of the questionnaire per soft skill are presented in figure 7. It can be concluded that all underlying constructs of the Hospitality Intelligence dimensions are considered more than important by respondents to be perceived by tourists as 'a Friend in Lisbon'. With a score of 4,92 'Empathy' is considered as the most important. Influencing skills are, with a score of 4,15, identified as the least important.



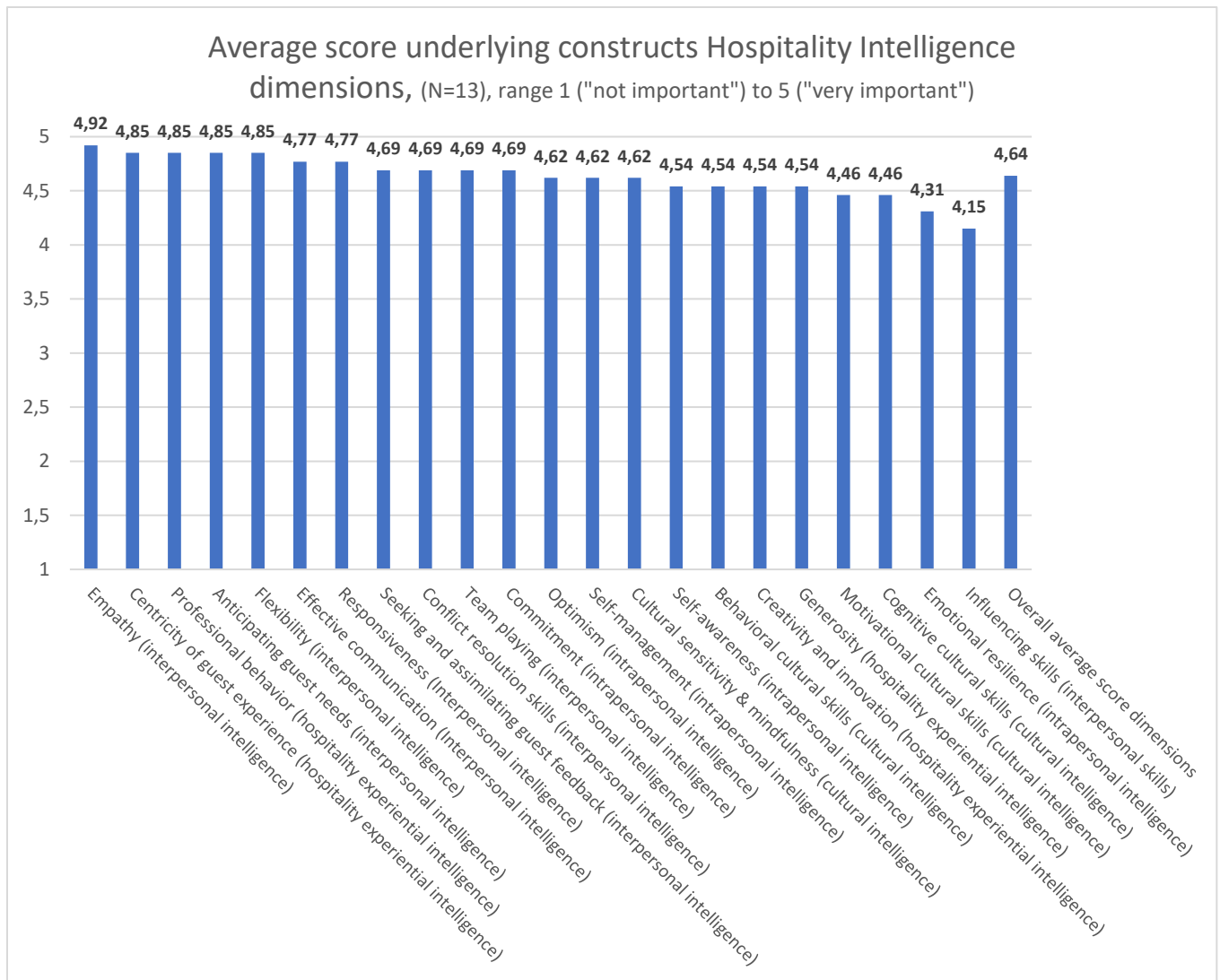


Figure 7; average score underlying constructs Hospitality Intelligence dimensions and overall average score

The insights from the questionnaires are used as input for the visit to Lisbon. The following section explains how we want to conduct an interactive discussion with the stakeholders of Concept Hotels.

## 4.2 World Café

By using the World Café method in this research, the creativity and problem-solving capabilities of all participants are stimulated. Representatives of the stakeholders mentioned in the skills gap dilemma in paragraph 2.2 are invited to the World Café. The World Café was introduced in 1995 by Brown and Isaacs and distinguishes 7 principles (Figure 8).



Figure 8; seven principles of the World Café method (Brown & Isaacs, 1995)

During the World Café the participants are divided in four groups (round tables). Each group has 7 participants, including one dialogue counselor and one observer who takes notes of the discussion outcomes. Each round table discusses one practical sub-question (as stated in paragraph Problem definition). Two subsequent sessions of dialogue will take place. In the first session the participants are distributed equally among the groups. During the second round, the group members will join a different round table, containing a different question. The dialogue counselor and observer will remain with the same round table. The dialogue facilitator will shortly summarize the outcome of the previous session and invite the newly formed group to elaborate further in detail on the question. At the end of the second dialogue round, every (table) observer gives a plenary summary of the dialogue. A conclusion is compiled based on the combination of the theoretical framework and the outcome of the survey. This conclusion leads to answering the main research question. The next paragraph will describe the outcome of the presentation and World Café in Lisbon.

#### 4.2.1 Schedule visit Essentia

On Wednesday the 26<sup>th</sup> of June Essentia, several stakeholders from hospitality education and hotels and the group of TIAS students came together for an introduction to the problem and the World Café. An overview of the program can be found below in figure 9.

Schedule overview	
Welcome by Essentia and TIAS	5 minutes
Introduction to Essentia	30 minutes
Introduction to subject, assignment and expectations of the workshop	10 minutes
'Action mode': meet you in the World Café	
Opening World Café	5 minutes
World Café sessions round 1	25 minutes
Break	10 minutes
World Café sessions round 2	25 minutes
Summarize outcome	10 minutes
Present conclusions	15 minutes
Wrap-up	15 minutes
Total time	150 minutes

Figure 9; overview program visit Essentia

#### 4.2.2 Presentation and goals visit Essentia

The workshop started with a presentation of Essentia. They explained Essentia's history and showed some great examples of executed projects. Followed by the introduction to the management question they foresee with the need for skilled front-line employees for Concept Hotels. After that, the TIAS-Essentia students introduced the research question and the concept of the World Café, including the table setting. The table setting was defined upfront to achieve the maximum diversity of stakeholders per table round.

The aim of the workshop was to achieve;

- A learning experience for all stakeholders
- Recognition of the importance of soft skills for hospitality in the future
- Exploring differences and understanding each other's insights
- Agreement on the starting points
- Use these starting points as a point of departure for continuous dialogue between stakeholders

### 4.2.3 List of participants World Café

Next to the participation of all TIAS MMO-40 students (12), the stakeholders that were present to participate in the workshops are presented below in figure 10;

	Name	Organization
1	Miquel Metello	Area General Manager Pestana Hotels
2	Eduardo Consiglieri Pedroso	Hotel Manager CR7 Pestana Hotels
3	Ana Moreira	Director of the Hotel School of Lisbon
4	Rosário Santos	Teacher at the Hotel School of Lisbon
5	Paula Claro	Teacher at the Hotel School of Lisbon
6	João Corrêa Nunes	Owner of Memmo Hotels
7	José Gil Duarte	CEO Essentia
8	Lucilia Cruz Pinto	Business & Innovation Manager Essentia

Figure 10; stakeholders who participated in the workshops

### 4.2.4 Findings World Café

This section provides an overview of the results of the World Café rounds separated by table and gives an impression of the discussions that have taken place during the workshop rounds.

Table 1: Which service activities of the entire customer journey belong to ‘a Friend in Lisbon’ within the next 5 to 10 years?

When stakeholders look at the future developments of the activities that a frontline employee should master in order to be perceived as ‘a friend in Lisbon’, the image of Über arises. Performing activities in a disruptive way, which are not yet associated with a hotel employee, so that the tourist is completely relieved during his vacation. A combination between a digital and physical world will arise in the interaction between tourist and frontline employee. This creates the possibility for the tourist to take full control of interaction with his ‘friend in Lisbon’ or to delegate control to certain activities.

The identified service activities of the customer journey that belong to ‘a Friend in Lisbon are;

- The customer can express a personal preference for the friend who will accompany him in Lisbon

- The customer can have contact with his personal friend in Lisbon before the trip and share his personal wishes. This friend will stay in contact with the tourist from that moment on to build a personal relation
- All transport organized according to the wishes of the customer (from / to hotel airport, in Lisbon city, in the region), preferably accompanied by the personal friend
- Guidance and service in the hotel (from the wake-up call, breakfast location, room service until the evening, reception to back to the hotel)
- The friend sharing his (the hotel) network (just like with Über, you can indicate your preferences and make reservations where time, price and service level can be chosen) whereby the customer makes choices himself or accompanied by his friend in Lisbon
- The frontline employee knows the city and is available as a personal assistant to guide the tourist to the places that suit his wishes

Amongst other things, the stakeholders identify the interaction between local residents and tourists as a distinctive aspect in the creation of an unforgettable personalized customer experience. One of the stakeholders summarized the ‘friend in Lisbon’s distinctive character as follows; “Identifying the tourist’s focus to differentiate in personalized experience. Living your holiday in Lisbon!”. In the following section, the required soft skills are discussed in more detail.

*Table 2: Which soft skills are most important for front-line hospitality employees and why specifically these?*

The results of the questionnaire showed that all skills of the Hospitality Intelligence construct were selected as important, but differences appeared in rating amongst the stakeholder groups. Therefore, the goal of this workshop was to make a unified choice on the one or two most important skills per construct that can be used as a starting point to bring education and employers needs together and to have a discussion on different views that might appear between stakeholders. All present stakeholders picked their one or two most important skills per construct from the competency menu (appendix 6) and explained to each other why this choice was made. The workshop was divided in two groups; one group for the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills (group 1) and another group for the cultural and hospitality skills (group 2). Below an overview of the skills that were picked is presented (figure 11):

Most important soft skills from the Hospitality Intelligence construct divided in categories			
<b>Interpersonal</b>	<b>Intrapersonal</b>	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Hospitality</b>
Empathy	Commitment	Motivational	Centricity of guest experience
Yes, we can!	Self-management	Behavioral	

Figure 11; overview of picked skills

In group 1, it was tough for the stakeholders to make decisions on the skills that were most important. They agreed that all skills of the constructs were important. However, choices needed to be made that could provide a starting point to bring stakeholders together. Eventually, the stakeholders from the hotels and education seemed to agree to the choices that were made. In explaining why a certain skill was picked, they spoke the same language and seemed to understand each other. It was concluded that some essential skills need to be trained in school. If an employee does not possess these skills, an employer will not hire the employee during application. An example of this was empathy. Therefore, it is important that the stakeholders make a list of these essential skills together so that the educational programs can train these skills to a satisfying level.

In contrast to group 1, group 2 was immediately in line regarding the most important soft skills. In order to really put the guest experience at the center it is essential that the employee is intrinsically motivated to do more than the job requires. When that is the case, it is easier for the employee to really know what the customers want by looking for verbal and non-verbal clues. By doing this he or she can anticipate meeting the customers' expectations.

*Table 3: What kind of employee behavior does the customer experience when an employee performs the selected soft skills in an excellent way?*

After selecting the most important soft skills in the previous workshop round, the focus of the next round was placed on the type of behavior a front-line employee needs to display when using these skills. A summary of the findings can be found in the figure below (figure 12). These definitions are meant as a starting point to close the skills gap between educational programs and the needs of hotel owners for skilled staff. Further elaboration between the stakeholders is needed to discuss how this can be implemented / managed.

Employee behavior when performing soft skills	
Soft skill	Corresponding behavior
Empathy	Anticipate to guest needs; reliable; able to make an emotional connection with the guest; see emotions and act on it; build on trust
Yes, we can!	Seek for creative solutions to guest problems; help actively to solve problems; actively search for alternatives; make it happen
Commitment	Proud of the hotel and Lisbon; create new services or products; doing what you promise
Self-management	Employee is well organized and able to manage own work; get all things done; responsible for own actions; able to motivate team members
Motivational	Sincerely enthusiastic to really help guests; do everything to satisfy guests (friendly, helpfull, etc); (willing to) learn about other cultures.
Behavioral	Listen and ask questions to guests; politeness; smile and anticipation to the needs of guests.
Centricity of guest experience	Deliver personalized service.

Figure 12; overview of employee behavior when performing soft skills

Table 4: ‘How can Concept Hotels create an environment that stimulates continuous learning?’. The outcome of the conversations at table 4, compiled an overview of perceived important characteristics to become a learning organization. The most critical ones are a safe place and trust. Both are needed for employees to feel safe to make mistakes while learning new skills and competencies. It was concluded that additionally employees need to be challenged by giving them the right responsibilities and empowerment to execute expected services.

Once agreed, the stakeholders continued by explaining that employees should be rewarded for good performance by compliments from colleagues and management. Additionally, coaching sessions could be beneficial, like a session to share experiences between employees or a bilateral session with experienced colleagues or manager. The stakeholders agreed that middle management also needs to feel safe. In the stakeholders’ opinion, most middle managers in Portugal feel insecure about their job position and, consequentially, are hampered in shaping a learning environment. The stakeholders concluded that the learning environment should be driven top-down, with top-management providing a safe learning environment for middle management. Top-management that gives trust and demonstrates the required behavior to middle management, enables middle management to establish a learning environment towards frontline employees.



The stakeholders then discussed that it is perceived to be normal in the Portuguese culture to correct employees in public. They felt this was not the correct method for providing feedback and agreed that rewarding has to be done in public, while correcting and advising should be done in a safe and private situation. The stakeholders concluded that the customer was also an important factor as direct customer's feedback would have most impact on the employee.

The stakeholders concluded that behavior of (top) management is the key factor in becoming a learning organization. By shaping a safe environment where all employees are coached in a positive manner, followed by direct customers feedback, a learning spiral will develop, leading to a positive learning organization. Once the spiral has started, and employees feel safe, are challenged, empowered and receive positive feedback, the learning will continue and employees will improve every day.

#### Feedback Essentia / stakeholders and plenary discussion

After the discussions each table shortly presented the outcome of the World Café's discussions. The received feedback of the stakeholders was positive, they felt the outcome was inspiring and provided new insights.

## 5 Conclusions & recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

In this research the soft skills necessary for a Concept Hotel's front-line employee to be perceived as 'a Friend in Lisbon' have been identified. The implications this has for the learning environment of the concept Hotels has also been looked at. In this chapter the answer to the main research question will be given as well as recommendations to Essentia and their stakeholders to help them with the addressed management issue. The main research question is:

*Which soft skills does an employee of a Concept Hotel need in order to be perceived by a tourist as 'a Friend in Lisbon', and what does this imply for the learning environment provided by the Concept Hotels?*

The hospitality industry is transforming fast from focusing on products and physical assets to an industry with focus on providing customer experiences (Knutson et al., 2006). Essentia is aligning their strategy for Concept Hotels with this shift to customer experiences by providing customers with the experience of having 'a Friend in Lisbon'. For concept hotels and its frontline employees, this research implies that the digital transition will take the customer experience to the next level. The blending of digital and physical service activities that are made available allow the customer to perceive a personal and unique experience (Bharwani & Juahari, 2013). The challenge will be responding to the service activities which are uniquely evaluated by each individual customer (Andersson, 2007). The connection with unique networks for local interaction and active participation by the frontline employees is expected to make a significant contribution to the perceived experiences, by the stakeholders.

From the responses of the survey the conclusion can be drawn that all underlying constructs of the Hospitality Intelligence dimensions (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013) are considered more than important by respondents to be perceived by tourists as 'a Friend in Lisbon'. Using the overall dimension scores the differences between each stakeholder group were made visible. The differences were small but significant, indicating that each group of stakeholders had a different perspective on the subject. This, in our opinion, provided good input for the World Café.

The largest effect on influencing customer experiences derives from the input of the human resources of an organization, the employees (Ottenbacher & Gnoth, 2005). To be able to deliver experiences, employees need certain skills. Currently, Essentia describes a gap between the employee skills desired by hotels, and the skills that are taught at hospitality educational programs. This study focusses on the gap that is faced in soft skills of employees. Soft skills are behavioral traits or attributes that are difficult to train, and usually intrinsic to individuals (Wyman, 2016). To close the gap between the needs of the hotels for skilled employees and the educational programs in hospitality education, a better information flow among these stakeholders needs to be started. An approach to get this information flow going is for hotels and educators to work together on building the desired soft skills into new curricula or adjusting

existing curricula (Wyman, 2016). This research will be the starting point to get this information flow going.

As stated earlier, the creation of added value is essential in the tourism industry. This can be provided through various well-developed soft skills (Burns, 1997). These skills, also named as competencies, are acknowledged in an extensive research that Bharwani and Juahari (2013) conducted in the hospitality industry. However, they went one step further and have developed the 'Hospitality Intelligence' construct in their research, including an accompanying framework consisting of competencies. Hospitality Intelligence consists of three dimensions, namely: Cultural Intelligence, Hospitality Experiential Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence. This last dimension is made up of two underlying dimensions: Intrapersonal Intelligence and Interpersonal Intelligence. The competences empathy, yes we can, commitment, self-management, motivational, behavioral and centrality of guest experience were flagged up by the stakeholders as being the most important ones, during the World Café. Stakeholders appointed corresponding essential behavior from the front line employees as the ability to deliver personalized service by anticipating guests needs. This anticipation can be achieved by really making an emotional connection with them, being reliable and getting all things done.

To ensure employees will continue adapting to future customer demands, employees need to be willing and able to continue learning while executing their profession. Particularly for concept hotels it is important for employees to continue developing themselves, as they need to be affiliated with the establishment and brand, which takes time. Consequently, concept hotels need to invest in employees to continuously learn and stay identified with the brand and establishment. Therefore, it is important to stimulate this lifetime learning and become a learning organization. Leaders need to create a psychological safe environment for employees (Schein, 2010). This line of thought was clearly agreed upon during the discussions held. It clearly demonstrates that, once discussed, they all understood the importance of behavior at all levels. The difficulty lies within the organizational and regional culture, that can be changed most effectively from top-down. The majority of top management confirms the importance and claim to apply almost all its elements in their organizations. The discussions also indicated that some elements have been misinterpreted and others are not used as thoroughly as they

should. Top management, within concept hotels, need to be aware of the important role they fulfill in this process to become and remain a learning organization. The right way up, is top-down.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations emerge from the study carried out:

- From the World Café several descriptions of service activities are made. Equally important to present unforgettable experiences is to investigate digital possibilities. Blending of digital and physical service activities can create a unique and personal experience. It is therefore important to determine what digital platform provides the most distinctive facilities for the Concept Hotels to create an unforgettable personal experience.
- The outcomes of the World Café showed that employers pointed out some essential skills an employee must possess before they are hired by the hotels, such as empathy, motivational and centrality of guest experience. Therefore, it is important that all stakeholders together make a list of these essential skills so that the educational programs can focus on training these skills to a satisfying level.
- To close the skills gap between employers, employees and educational programs we recommend getting a continuous flow of information started between the stakeholders to identify, define and develop the desired skills for exclusive and personalized service. This can be done by having regular personal meetings, but there are also digital solutions available. These identify critical skills that drive performance gaps and build customized solutions to make those skills stick across the workforce. An example of a digital solution is Strayer@Work (see footnote for more information)<sup>1</sup>.
- Top management is in the position to create a learning organization by presenting the right behavior. Though the transition might be slow, if management is consistent in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20150504005242/en/Strayer-Education-Launches-StrayerWork-Offer-%E2%80%98No-Cost>

demonstrating the necessary skills, the learning organization will continue to grow and develop.

## 6 Reflection & lessons learned

We started preparing the IBS module with great enthusiasm. At the start we determined our ambitions and success criteria against which we wanted to test how we, as a group and individuals, wanted to fulfil this module. The meetings with Essentia were with Lucília who, like us, was very enthusiastic about the assignment and the potential it could offer. We immediately noticed that the scope of the investigation would become challenging, but we did not want to disappoint Essentia in what we would deliver. In retrospect we can conclude that we could not have wished for a better conversation partner than Lucília.

Although the contacts with Lucília went well, some cultural differences became apparent. Our Dutch impatience and eagerness to receive quick replies was making us anxious about making enough progress within the given timespan. We needed to search for the right balance and attention between both parties, Essentia and TIAS students. After the first two skype contacts, Eric appeared to be primarily responsible for direct contact, and communication became more settled. From that moment on, a cooperative collaboration was established that greatly benefited us. An exciting and defining moment was the commissioning of the survey prior to the practical day. Lucília took on a large role here and ensured that not only all stakeholders completed the survey, but also that all stakeholders were present during the workshop. The collaboration with Essentia was energetic and positive.

On the morning of the workshop we were present 45 minutes prior to the start, to ensure that all was properly arranged. This was a good choice, as there was still some work to be done. This caused stress with some members of the group, but it all worked out, and taught us a valuable lesson in staying relaxed and letting things take their course in Portuguese style. Things continued to go well from that moment on. The interaction between the various stakeholders and TIAS students was excellent, and there was good discussion based on respect for each other's differences. The choice to provide each table with a chairman and secretary proved to

be a good one for guiding constructive dialogue. Our conclusion was that a very nice day had generated wonderful insights based on co-creation.

It was a wonderful gaining more experience and knowledge throughout this module, while doing business in a different country. With Lucília we experienced a true partnership. The involvement and enthusiasm of the stakeholders present during the World Café session was also an excellent experience for us. In particular, we noticed how proud the Portuguese are of their company, as was demonstrated by, among other things, the presentation by the director of Essentia.

Looking back on our own learning experiences, expressed ambitions and success criteria, we can state that it has been a very educational experience for everyone in our group. We wanted to deliver a quality product that we could be proud of. We wanted to feel balance and respect towards each other in the mutual cooperation and division of work. Our experience is that the research took much more time than we had anticipated. A lot of dynamics appeared, through different insights and our struggle over the content to get every word right for a product that would add value to Essentia. We have had many discussions as a consequence, but each time we reached a shared decision with respect for each other's position.

In conclusion, we, as a group, are very satisfied with the research results and we believe we have provided Essentia with a quality product in which everyone has taken an equal and fair share. We look back with pride on the group process and feel that we have invested our time in this module with great pleasure and fun.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Explanation Hospitality Intelligence competencies

#### *Dimensions of the Hospitality Intelligence construct with underlying competences / skills with detailed explanation*

Emotional intelligence dimension Construct	Meaning	Author(s)
<i>Interpersonal intelligence</i>		
Empathy	Ability to actively listen, understand and relate to feelings of the guest, interpret the unspoken and appreciate and acknowledge diverse viewpoints	Parsuraman <i>et al.</i> (1988); Tas (1988); Brunner-Sperdin and Peters (2009); Walls <i>et al.</i> (2011b)
Effective communication	Clarity in expressing oneself in order to get the message across succinctly and effectively and keeping dyadic channels open to facilitate two-way flow of information	Tas (1988); Kay and Russette (2000); Walls <i>et al.</i> (2011b)
Influencing skills	Assertively persuading guests by connecting with them, unearthing their needs and reducing their resistance to new ideas through well-reasoned lines of argument	Lenehan (2000)
Seeking and assimilating guest feedback	Ability to gather information about guest reactions and utilize this for improved future interactions and performance	Lenehan (2000)
Anticipating guest needs	Ability to predict and respond to guest requirements and wants before they are overtly vocalized	Carbone and Haeckel (1994); Erdly and Kesterson-Townes (2003); Walls <i>et al.</i> (2011b)
Responsiveness – “Yes, we can” attitude	Attentiveness, willingness and promptness in dealing with guest requests, complaints and problems	Parsuraman <i>et al.</i> (1988); Brunner-Sperdin and Peters(2009); Walls <i>et al.</i> (2011b)
Flexibility	Ability to accommodate, adapt to or respond to uncertainties arising due to the variability in guest needs and service situations	Kay and Russette (2000)
Conflict resolution skills	Ability to negotiate differences in a calm, non-defensive manner and resolve matters by devising creative resolutions to problems	Kay and Russette (2000); Raybould and Wilkins (2006); Stanton-Reynolds <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Team playing	Ability to co-ordinate the efforts of team members and work effectively to advance the collective goal of the team through collaboration and co-operation for superior guest experience	Tas (1988); Chung-Herrera <i>et al.</i> (2003); Jauhari (2006)
<i>Intrapersonal intelligence</i>		
Emotional resilience	Ability to remain calm and confident in face of provocation and adversity	Baum (2006); Lashley (2008)

(continued)

*Table 1; Constructs and dimensions of Hospitality Intelligence (HI). Reprinted from “An exploratory study of competencies required to co-create memorable customer experiences in the hospitality industry,” by S. Bharwani and V. Jauhari, 2013, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 25, p. 834. Copyright 2013, by Emerald Group Publishing Limited.*

Emotional intelligence dimension Construct	Meaning	Author(s)
Optimism	Positive outlook and the ability to engender a feeling of bonhomie	Lashley (2008); Langhorn (2004)
Commitment	Passion for work which is driven by motivations other than money or status such as genuine hospitality towards guests	Hemmington (2007); Lashley (2008)
Self-awareness	Propensity for reflection and thoughtfulness and ability to detect, trace and label one's emotions	Goleman (1998); Langhorn (2004)
Self-management	Ability to regulate the rational and emotional operations of the mind in a balanced way and think before acting	Goleman (1998); Chung-Herrera <i>et al.</i> (2003)
<i>Cultural intelligence dimension</i>		
Cognitive cultural intelligence	Knowledge about diverse cultures and cultural practices and intercultural interaction principles and ability to transfer experience from one kind of cultural encounter to another	Ang <i>et al.</i> (2007)
Motivational cultural intelligence	Intrinsic desire to successfully engage in cross-cultural encounters despite cultural unfamiliarity and ambiguity	Earley and Ang (2003)
Behavioral cultural intelligence	Ability to exhibit the appropriate verbal-and non-verbal behaviours while engaging with guests from diverse cultural backgrounds	Ang <i>et al.</i> (2007); Mkono (2010)
Cultural sensitivity and mindfulness	Ability to draw on one's cultural knowledge to understand different cultural contexts and the needs of guests in an intercultural milieu	Ang <i>et al.</i> (2007); Ng <i>et al.</i> (2009); Van Dyne <i>et al.</i> (2010)
<i>Hospitality experiential intelligence dimension</i>		
Centricity of guest experience	Ability to personalize and enhance guest experience by making it central to the consumption activity	Erdly and Kesterson-Townes (2003); Berry and Carbone (2007); Lashley (2008)
Creativity and innovation	Ability to interpret the needs of guests in unusual and exciting ways that create "lots of little surprises", leading to memorable experiences	Morgan (2004); Hemmington (2007); Walls <i>et al.</i> (2011b)
Generosity	Genuinely welcoming attitude and benevolence	Lashley (2000); Hemmington (2007); Lashley (2008)
Professional behavior	Warm, courteous behaviour, respect for guest privacy and understanding of nuances of host-guest relationship	Tas (1988); Lashley (2008); Walls <i>et al.</i> (2011b)

*Table 1; Constructs and dimensions of Hospitality Intelligence (HI). Reprinted from "An exploratory study of competencies required to co-create memorable customer experiences in the hospitality industry," by S. Bharwani and V. Jauhari, 2013, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 25, p. 835. Copyright 2013, by Emerald Group Publishing Limited.*

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire “a Friend in Lisbon”

Introduction;

Survey required employee skills of "a Friend in Lisbon"

The purpose of this survey is to identify the soft skills required by frontline hospitality employees to be perceived by tourists as "a Friend in Lisbon" in the emerging experience economy. Please answer the questions underneath by ticking the box that suits your answer best and click on "verzenden" to finish the survey. Thank you for your cooperation!

Select a category

- I am an owner of a Concept Hotel
- I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel
- I work in hospitality education

To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a Friend in Lisbon"?

	Not important	Less important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Empathy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effective communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Influencing skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seeking and assimilating guest feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anticipating guest needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflict resolution skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team playing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Less important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neutral	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Empathy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effective communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Influencing skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seeking and assimilating guest feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anticipating guest needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflict resolution skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team playing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To which degree does an employee need the following intrapersonal skills to be perceived as "a Friend in Lisbon"?

	Not important	Less important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Emotional resilience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Optimism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Commitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Less important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neutral	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional resilience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Optimism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To which degree does an employee need the following cultural skills to be perceived as "a Friend in Lisbon"

	Not important	Less important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Cognitive cultural skills; Knowledge about the culture of Lisbon/Portugal and the ability to transfer this knowledge to a tourist from another culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivational cultural skills; Intrinsic desire to successfully engage in cross-cultural encounters with tourists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Behavioral cultural skills; Ability to exhibit the appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviors while engaging with tourists from diverse cultural backgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural sensitivity & mindfulness; Ability to draw on one's cultural knowledge to understand different cultural contexts and the needs of tourists in an intercultural milieu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To which degree does an employee need the following hospitality experiential skills to be perceived as "a Friend in Lisbon"

	Not important	Less important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Centricity of guest experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creativity and innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generosity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Appendix 3: Reference groups Questionnaire

The reference group of the questionnaire consists out of stakeholders from the hotel management, education and tourism Portugal. In total 14 people were asked to complete the questionnaire, 10 represented the concept hotels, 2 represented education and 2 represented tourism Portugal.

Participants;

- Representatives Hotels, 2 persons
- Representatives Tourism Portugal, 2 persons
- Representatives Education program, 2 persons
- Representatives Essentia, 2 persons
- Professor and academic director of MMO at TIAS, 1 person
- Program manager of MMO at TIAS, 1 Person
- Representative of Dutch-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce, 1 person
- Students TIAS, 16 persons, including the researchers of this study

## Appendix 4: Integral results questionnaire

Dimension: Interpersonal intelligence (average of underlying statements: 4,71)									
Select a category	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Empathy]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Effective communication]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Influencing skills]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Seeking and assimilating guest feedback]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Anticipating guest needs]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Responsiveness]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Flexibility]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Conflict resolution skills]	To which degree does an employee need the following interpersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon"? [Team playing]
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	3	4	3	4	5	4	4
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	4	3	5	5	4	4	5	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Average (N=13)</b>	<b>4,92</b>	<b>4,77</b>	<b>4,15</b>	<b>4,69</b>	<b>4,85</b>	<b>4,77</b>	<b>4,85</b>	<b>4,69</b>	<b>4,69</b>
<b>Average owner of a Concept Hotel (N=5)</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,00</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>4,80</b>
<b>Average staff member (N=5)</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>4,00</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>4,20</b>	<b>4,40</b>
<b>Average hospitality education (n=3)</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>4,67</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>

	<b>Intrapersonal intelligence (average of underlying statements: 4,55)</b>				
Select a category	To which degree does an employee need the following intrapersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Emotional resilience]	To which degree does an employee need the following intrapersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Optimism]	To which degree does an employee need the following intrapersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Commitment]	To which degree does an employee need the following intrapersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Self-awareness]	To which degree does an employee need the following intrapersonal skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Self-management]
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	5	4	4	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	5	5	4	4
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	4
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	5	5	4	4
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	4
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	5	4
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	4	5	5	4	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	3	4	5	5	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	4	5	5	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Average (N=13)</b>	<b>4,31</b>	<b>4,62</b>	<b>4,69</b>	<b>4,54</b>	<b>4,62</b>
<b>Average owner of a Concept Hotel (N=5)</b>	<b>4,00</b>	<b>4,20</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,40</b>
<b>Average staff member (N=5)</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,60</b>
<b>Average hospitality education (n=3)</b>	<b>4,67</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>4,67</b>	<b>5,00</b>



<b>Cultural intelligence dimension (average of underlying statements: 4,52)</b>					
Select a category	To which degree does an employee need the following cultural skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Cognitive cultural skills; Knowledge about the culture of Lisbon/Portugal and the ability to transfer this knowledge to a tourist from another culture]	To which degree does an employee need the following cultural skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Motivational cultural skills; Intrinsic desire to successfully engage in cross-cultural encounters with tourists]	To which degree does an employee need the following cultural skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Behavioral cultural skills; Ability to exhibit the appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviors while engaging with tourists from diverse cultural backgrounds]	To which degree does an employee need the following cultural skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Cultural sensitivity & mindfulness; Ability to draw on one's cultural knowledge to understand different cultural contexts and the needs of tourists in an intercultural milieu]	
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	4	
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5	
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	4	5	5	
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	4	4	4	
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5	
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	5	
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	4	4	5	5	
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	4	5	5	
<b>Average (N=13)</b>	<b>4,46</b>	<b>4,46</b>	<b>4,54</b>	<b>4,62</b>	
<b>Average owner of a Concept Hotel (N=5)</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,60</b>	
<b>Average staff member (N=5)</b>	<b>4,20</b>	<b>4,20</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,40</b>	
<b>Average hospitality education (n=3)</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	

	<b>Hospitality experiential intelligence dimension (average of underlying statements: 4,69)</b>			
Select a category	To which degree does an employee need the following hospitality experiential skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Centricity of guest experience]	To which degree does an employee need the following hospitality experiential skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Creativity and innovation]	To which degree does an employee need the following hospitality experiential skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Generosity]	To which degree does an employee need the following hospitality experiential skills to be perceived as "a friend in Lisbon" [Professional behavior]
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	4	3	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	4	4	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	4	5	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	4	4	5	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	4	4
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	5	5	5	5
I work in hospitality education	4	5	5	5
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	4	4	4
I am an owner of a Concept Hotel	5	5	5	5
I am a staff member of a Concept Hotel	5	4	5	5
<b>Average (N=13)</b>	<b>4,85</b>	<b>4,54</b>	<b>4,54</b>	<b>4,85</b>
<b>Average owner of a Concept Hotel (N=5)</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>4,60</b>
<b>Average staff member (N=5)</b>	<b>4,80</b>	<b>4,20</b>	<b>4,40</b>	<b>5,00</b>
<b>Average hospitality education (n=3)</b>	<b>4,67</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>	<b>5,00</b>

Appendix 5: Results workshops World Café

Table 1:

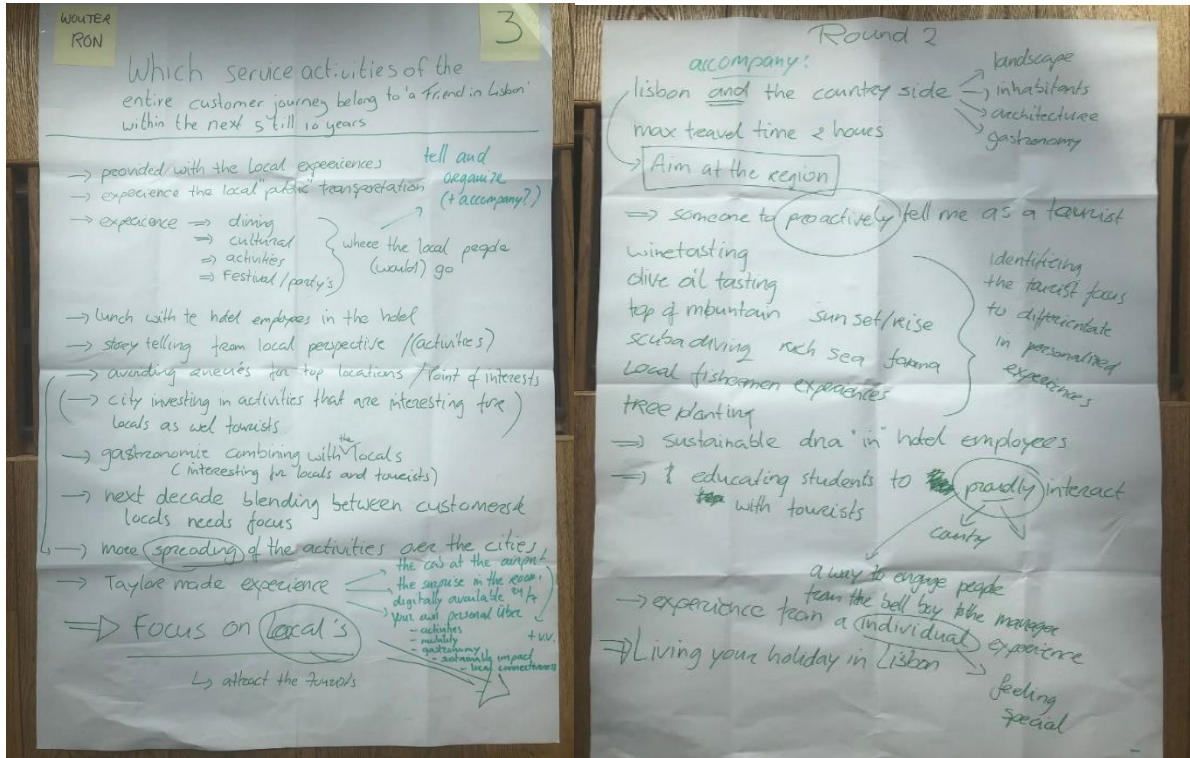


Table 2:

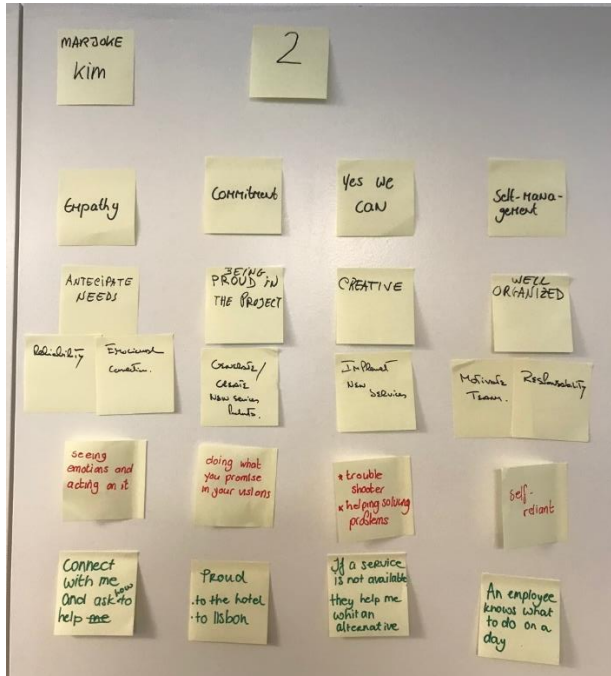


Figure 5 Image results discussion board table 2

Table 3:



Figure 6 Image results discussion board table 3

Table 4:

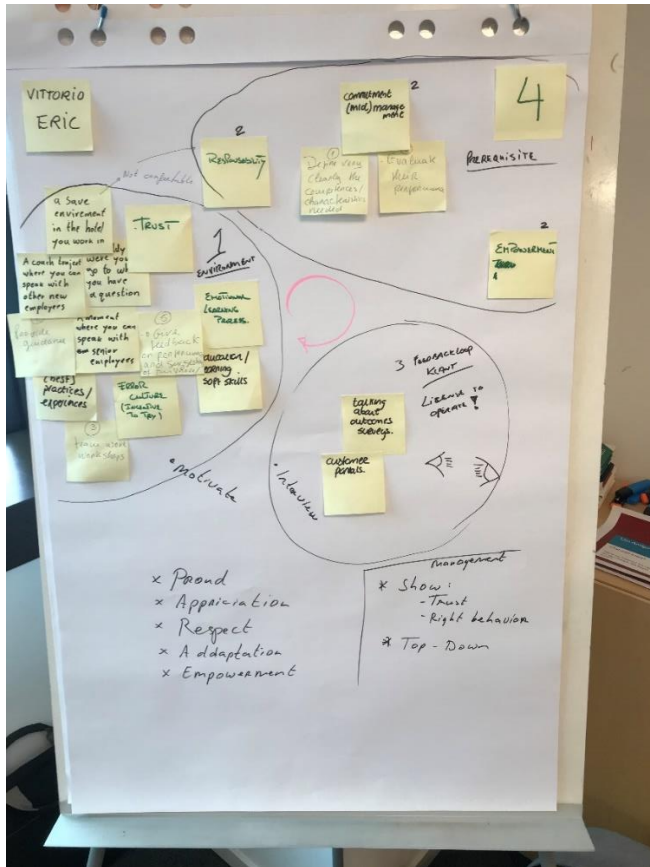


Figure 7; Image of discussion board at table 4



## COMPETENCY MENU

(SEE THE BACKSIDE OF THIS MENU FOR A COMPETENCY OVERVIEW FOR EACH DIMENSION)

**GOAL OF THE WORKSHOP**

**TO IDENTIFY THE MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS PER DIMENSION, DEFINE THEM, AND DISCUSS DIFFERENT VIEWS**

**SURVEY RESULTS BY DIMENSION, STAKEHOLDER**



Dimension	Owner of a Concept Hotel (N=5)	Staff member of an Concept Hotel (N=5)
Interpersonal Intelligence	4.71	4.56
Cultural Intelligence	4.37	4.56
Hospitality Experience	4.45	4.3
Overall average dimension score per stakeholder group	4.96	4.92

**HOW IT WORKS**

1. PICK 2 OR 3 COMPETENCIES FOR EACH DIMENSION THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO BE A FRIEND IN LISBON
2. DEFINE THAT COMPETENCIES
3. DISCUSS DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE STAKEHOLDERS



## COMPETENCY MENU

**INTERPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES**

EMPATHY | EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION  
 TEAM PLAYING | INFLUENCING SKILLS  
 YES, WE CAN! | SEEKING GUEST FEEDBACK  
 FLEXIBILITY | CONFLICT HANDLING  
 ANTICIPATING TO GUEST NEEDS

**INTRAPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES**

OPTIMISM | KEEP CALM WHEN PROVOCATED  
 COMMITMENT | SELF-AWARENESS  
 | SELF-MANAGEMENT

**CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES**

COGNITIVE knowledge about different cultures and intercultural interaction principles

**MOTIVATIONAL** intrinsic desire to engage in cross-cultural encounters despite cultural unfamiliarity and ambiguity.

**BEHAVIORAL** exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviors while engaging with guests from different backgrounds



**HOSPITALITY INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES**

CREATIVITY | INNOVATION  
 GENEROSITY | PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR  
 CENTRICITY OF GUEST EXPERIENCE

2

## Appendix 7: The TIAS-Team

### MASTER OF MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION – STUDYTRIP LISBON

PERSONAL INFORMATION	PARTICIPANT	PERSONAL INFORMATION	PARTICIPANT
NAME	Kim van Limbergen	NAME	Patricia van Oosterhout
DATE OF BIRTH	05-10-1985	DATE OF BIRTH	03-04-1979
EMAIL	Kim_van_limbergen@hotmail.com	EMAIL	patriciavanoosterhout@gmail.com
PHOTOGRAPH		PHOTOGRAPH	
WORKING EXPERIENCE	Job placement of benefit recipients Accountmanagement employment agencies Setting up collaborations between education, government & businesses for development and/or job programs	WORKING EXPERIENCE	Business process improvement, continuous quality improvement for customers (CX- management). Improving cooperation between business units. Leading business units
EDUCATION/ BUSINESS COURSES	BBA Hotel Management Human Resources Management	EDUCATION/ BUSINESS COURSES	BBA Business Administration Degrees in nursing (MBO-Nursing/HBO-Nursing)
PRESENT WORK	Head of departement employment & labour market of a governmental organization in the social sector	PRESENT WORK	Business manager and Quality manager at CZ (Health insurance company in the Netherlands)



PERSONAL INFORMATION	PARTICIPANT	PERSONAL INFORMATION	PARTICIPANT
NAME	Ron Stegers	NAME	Eric Tielemans
DATE OF BIRTH	9-12-1970	DATE OF BIRTH	31-05-1972
EMAIL	<a href="mailto:Ronson@quicknet.nl">Ronson@quicknet.nl</a>	EMAIL	<a href="mailto:Eric.tielemans@gmail.com">Eric.tielemans@gmail.com</a>
PHOTOGRAPH		PHOTOGRAPH	
WORKING EXPERIENCE	Manager private finance and asset management Rabobank Meppel. Manager private banking Rabobank Amsterdam. Partner in a private held finance company Alkmaar. Team lead Insurance Reaal Alkmaar.	WORKING EXPERIENCE	Started as entrepreneur in light and sound equipment rental, I developed my first business acumen. After selling the company I gained experiences on strategic project management at Nedcar and later ASML, reporting to the COO. I'm co-founder of Eleaf and joined Eleaf as COO.
EDUCATION/ BUSINESS COURSES	Bachelor of economics Business administration Personal leadership Executive leadership Private Financial Planning Lean Greenbelt	EDUCATION/ BUSINESS COURSES	Leadership Product management Product life cycle management Configuration management Operational excellence Project management Teacher / trainer Car-engineering
PRESENT WORK	Rabobank: team lead private finance and asset management.	PRESENT WORK	Global Manager Product Development & Engineering within Schunk XYcarb Technology.