

Evolving role of women in hospitality

Women are increasingly occupying managerial positions in the industry along with taking firm steps towards successful careers and making their mark prominent with their hospitality instincts.

Sonica Malhotra Kandhari • March 08, 2021, 11:38 IST



Hospitality industry is considered as one of the forerunners in driving growth among the service sector in India and as the bedrock of all travel and tourism-related activities, generate huge employment opportunities both directly and indirectly. With more and more women stepping into the industry, their contribution to the sector has increased in recent years. Although the hospitality sector has been considered as an attractive industry that sees women workforce across levels, their participation had been underrepresented in management and leadership roles.

However, this scenario is changing now as women in the hospitality industry are shattering all stereotypes and taking up major roles in the hospitality industry. Women are increasingly occupying managerial positions in the industry along with taking firm steps towards successful careers and making their mark prominent with their hospitality instincts. They are seen in mid as well as senior management including having board positions and are also creating an encouraging environment for other women to match their footsteps.

I'm glad that more and more women are breaking the glass ceiling by putting themselves forward for leadership roles in the hospitality industry. Women in leadership roles are bringing positive changes in the hospitality landscape i.e. encouraging a more inclusive and diverse working culture, maintaining work-life balance etc. They come with a naturally high emotional intelligence and anticipate guest's needs in a better way and their feminine touch indeed lends grace and elegance to the hospitality industry. Moreover, it's proven that female leadership stimulates team bonding, connectivity and focuses more on the well-being of the team.

The hospitality sector is witnessing a remarkable change where women are leading with their natural instincts and business acumen. With such positive changes, the future of women in the hospitality industry looks brighter, but there is still a long way to go. There are several challenges that a woman still faces in the hospitality domain such as odd working hours to stereotyping and resistance towards working under the supervision of a female boss by male colleagues and subordinates.

The hospitality industry is considered to be one of the safest industries to work in and most hotels are taking initiatives like dropping after working hours, flexible timings and maternity benefits etc. to keep their women employee safe and motivated. However, the retention of female employees in the hospitality sector has always been a challenge due to altered and long hour shifts. The industry should be more proactive in dealing with the problem of female attrition and should frame realistic policies to curb the same. The hotels should devise a more employee centric approach while designing their employment policies with an aim towards holistic development of the female employees. Additionally, apart from the industry initiatives, an overall sense of security at the country level is also important to attract women working at odd hours.

In order to overcome these challenges, there is a need to exercise mindset change at the grassroots level and organizations should also encourage and execute strategies to encourage women to actively participate and take up leadership positions. There is a need to create more opportunities and an encouraging ecosystem for women not to just join the workforce but also achieve a successful career path. These initiatives are already underway and a lot of organizations are offering a healthy, flexible and safe work environment to women.

I strongly believe that being a woman neither carries any advantage or disadvantage in any business. Achieving success in any field or vertical requires hard work and creating a culture of self-development and wellbeing. In all these years, I have realized that at the end of the day, it's about the survival of the fittest not about man or woman. Likewise, dedication and perseverance are what will take a long way not just in the hospitality industry but in any career that a woman chooses to pursue, however initially your perseverance levels have to a notch stronger than your male peersand then there is no looking back ...

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