

***Servant-Leadership in a Digitized World***  
**Symposium**

Monday, 14 May 2018, 09.00-12.00 a.m.  
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

The Internet is here to stay. Now, more than ever, a leader's capacity to both direct the company and its people, while at the same time work in their service, is required. This servant-leadership capacity is being recognized as a vital capacity for making your online workplace culture proof. Though highly relevant today, servant-leadership is not new. Its principle is embedded in a way of life, which has been recognized and expounded upon in all parts of the world throughout history, and across all cultures.

This symposium *Servant-Leadership in a Digitized World* is the 17<sup>th</sup> in an annual symposium series embedded in the Master course Cross-Cultural Management. The symposium is a meeting place for students and professionals to strengthen the link between theory and business practice. The corporate world is changing rapidly under the pressures of new technologies. Social media are part of everyday life at work. Cross-cultural (mis)understanding is influenced by diverse perceptions of e.g. time, trust, privacy, and language clues. Virtual teams lose some face-to-face clues such as body language, and informal social gatherings. In cross-cultural online communication language barriers often cause a lack of connectivity. These conditions may hinder remote workers in building trusted long-term working communities in which they feel a sense of belonging. This 24/7 workplace calls for a compassionate leader, a leader who is a community builder, able to reconcile high-tech versus high-touch. How to be a guardian, motivator, agile coach for your online workers across cultures? At this symposium dilemmas in two platform organizations Booking.com and Uber will be highlighted; how to deal with the anonymity and disruption in the culturally diverse global workplace. In one of the Workshops you will experience reconciliation of cross-cultural dilemmas through online tools. In particular the Mergers & Acquisition App and the Culture for Business App demonstrate the online stewardship potential in cross-cultural collaboration. In a parallel Workshop digital nomadism will be addressed, as an emerging and novel independent working culture.

We are delighted this symposium brings together cutting-edge thinkers and practitioners across disciplines. This symposium will include case studies, keynote presentations and a plenary dialogue to shed light on the gentle art of serving and leading, and how leaders can bridge the gap between the high-tech versus high-touch dilemma in the 21C corporation. The cross-cultural interplay between technology and people is highly relevant in today's business world, responding to the engagement of online workers in search of their culturally unique sensemaking.

We look forward to meeting you at this special event.

On behalf of the organising team,

prof. dr. Fons Trompenaars & dr. Sylvia van de Bunt  
Chairpersons of symposium and SERVUS co-directors

**Programme**

- 09.00 Welcome and Opening
- Contextualizing the symposium theme by **Sylvia van de Bunt***
- 09.15 Keynote: *Empathy-driven servant leadership* by **Melanie Wessels**, Agile Coach Booking.com
- 09.30 Q&A
- 09.45 *Servant-Leadership in a Digitized World*, by **Fons Trompenaars**
- 10.00 Q&A
- 10.15 Keynote: *Beyond Uber and Airbnb - Reimagining the Sharing Economy* by **Jovana Karanovic**, PhD Candidate KIN Group and Founder Reshaping Work and Platform Economy, SBE
- 10.30 Q&A
- 10.50 Transfer to Workshop rooms
- 11.00 Workshop: *THT Culture for Business and MandA App*, by **Fons Trompenaars**
- 11.00 Workshop: *Digital Nomads and the Future of Work*, by **Julia Schlegelmilch**, PhD Candidate Knowledge, Information & Innovation (KIN) Center for Digital Innovation, SBE
- 12.00 Closure