

# Women better suited to leadership in almost all areas, says research

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Women are better suited to leadership than their male counterparts in most areas, but definitely not all, according to Professor Øyvind L. Martinsen, head of Leadership and Organisational Behaviour at the BI Norwegian Business School (<https://www.bi.edu/>).

Martinsen and colleague, Professor Lars Glasø, surveyed the personality traits of more than 2,900 managers – more than 900 women, more than 900 in senior management and nearly 900 from the public sector – and found that female leaders score higher than men in four of the five categories measured.

Women rank higher in initiative and clear communication, openness and ability to innovate, sociability and supportiveness as well as methodical management and goal setting.

Martinsen says: “Businesses must always seek to attract customers and clients and to increase productivity and profits. Our results indicate that women naturally rank higher, in general, than men in their abilities to innovate and lead with clarity and impact. These findings pose a legitimate question about the construction of management hierarchy and the current dispensation of women in these roles.”

However, the research did indicate that women fell behind men in emotional stability and ability to withstand job-related pressure and stress.

Glasø says: “The survey suggests that female leaders may falter through their stronger tendency to worry – or lower emotional stability. However, this does not negate the fact that they are decidedly more suited to management positions than their male counterparts. If decision-makers ignore this truth, they could effectively be employing less qualified leaders and impairing productivity.”

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