

Leading a New Era Podcast Episode 3: Mohamed Mahmoud

David: Welcome to Leading a New Era, the podcast from IHG that takes you behind the doors of the world's most prestigious hotels to uncover real stories of growth, belonging and success. I'm your host, David Littlewood, from the Talent Acquisition Team here at IHG.

Eunice: And I'm Eunice Clements-Tweedie, VP Global Talent Acquisition and some parts of our business partnering organisation. Hello David, nice to see you again.

David: Hello, Eunice. You've been away?

Eunice: I have. I'm just back from a business trip to Berlin. I stayed at the very beautiful and very busy InterContinental Hotel at IHG.

David: And how was it?

Eunice: It was extraordinary, yeah. We had a big senior leaders meeting, I saw some old colleagues, some new colleagues, and had an incredible experience there. It's a really, really beautiful hotel in a really well-positioned location in Germany.

David: I went to Dubai recently as you know to do a colleague shoot, and we stayed at the Voco on the Palm and such an incredible hotel location. The West Coast of the Palm was just...

Eunice: Stunning?

David: Yeah.

Eunice: Any sunset cocktails?

David: One or two.

Eunice: One or two?

David: Two.

Eunice: Good to know, yeah. Perfect.

David: In every episode, we sit down with a General Manager from IHG's luxury and lifestyle portfolio to hear what it really takes to lead in this high-stakes world of luxury hospitality, from bold career moves to small human moments that matter most. Our guest GMs reflect on the journeys that have shaped them, both personally and professionally. Our guest today is Mohamed Mahmoud, Cluster General Manager at InterContinental Residences Dubai Business Bay and Kimpton Dubai, a top performing leader, Mohamed brings 25 years experience to IHG until recently all

InterContinental Hotels and has a remarkable track record of delivering results in luxury hospitality. His journey has taken him from launching flagship resorts to spearheading some of the most ambitious projects in the region, including pre-opening of InterContinental Ras Al Khaimah and most recently overseeing the pre-opening of Kimpton Dubai. Resilient, driven and goal-orientated, Mohamed has played a key role in IHG's portfolio expansion in the Middle East, always staying ahead of global hospitality trends, whether that's wellness heritage travel or defining what luxury means in today's world. But beyond numbers and accolades, he's a passionate team builder who leads by example and sets the highest standards of excellence in everything he oversees. Let's dive into his story. Mohamed, it's great to have you on the show with us today. How are things in Dubai?

Mohamed: All great, David. Thank you so much for your nice introductions. Great to meet you, great to meet Eunice on the show, and lovely to connect.

David: And you guys know each, right, already, you've...?

Eunice: We do. We met each other about two and a half years ago when I was super lucky to go out to Ras Al Khaimah which is one of the Emirates in the UAE. And Mohamed looked after me and my husband to the InterContinental, and it was one of our best breaks, so thank you to you and your team. It was superb.

David: Hopefully they weren't too difficult to guest, Mohamed?

Mohamed: I have the pleasure of meeting her and her husband. She was just joining IHG. Honestly, while she's in vacation, she managed to make time to connect and to check on me, and that left a very good impression then. Thank you so much for that.

Eunice: Oh, thanks Mohamed.

David: Nice, okay. So, before we dive into your career journey, Mohamed, we'd like to start with a quick warm-up, we like to call Early Check-In which is a rapid-fire round of this or that questions. Are you ready?

Mohamed: I'm ready.

Eunice: I'll kick us off. Infinity pool or private plunge pool?

Mohamed: Private.

Eunice: Oh, lovely. Love that.

David: Five-course tasting menu or local street food?

Mohamed: Local street food.

Eunice: Delicious. Okay. Strategy sessions or time on the floor with your team?

Mohamed: Time with my team.

David: Lovely. Digital playlist or curated vinyl?

Mohamed: Curated, definitely.

David: Any particular genres of music you lean into, Mohamed?

Mohamed: You know, music defines my mood, so I like to listen to music while I'm walking, so I'm more into relaxing music in the evening time and more upbeat music in the morning time.

Eunice: That's fantastic. Okay. Classic luxury or modern minimalist?

Mohamed: Modern minimalist.

Eunice: Modern.

David: Suite upgrade or late check-out?

Mohamed: Suite upgrade. I take my late check-out by default being an IHG Platinum Ambassador, so that's for guarantee.

Eunice: Brilliant. Okay, tough one. Watches or cars?

Mohamed: Watches. I'm a watch collector, so I have a wide range of watch collections.

Eunice: Gosh, that's quite impressive.

David: That really is. I can't imagine you're often late even, Mohamed, if you've got so many watches in your collection.

Mohamed: But I have advice for GMs. If you make your bonus you can buy good watches.

David: Time is such a precious thing as well. Cooking at home or eating out?

Mohamed: Cooking at home. One of the things that I used to do when I was single, my dating trick was cooking at home, yeah. So, that's how I got to my wife, our relationship, I cooked for her and then we become friends, then we ended up married, so cooking at home definitely.

David: Oh, wow. What particular dish?

Mohamed: You know when you do dating and cooking, you need to go for something that's fast to be prepared, so pasta Bolognese with a glass of red wine had always worked for me well.

David: Oh, lovely. Do you like cooking, Eunice?

Eunice: I do love cooking. I was brought up in Italy, so we make our own fresh pasta. So, 100%, Mohamed, agree, Italian cooking, just the best, with a glass of Vino.

Mohamed: I agree.

Eunice: Okay. Audio books or podcasts?

Mohamed: Podcast.

Eunice: Podcast, of course. We're on a podcast today.

David: That was the right answer, Mohamed.

Eunice: The right answer.

David: Leading by data or leading by instinct?

Mohamed: Instinct. I trust my instinct big time. You know once you have this sense inside you, it helped me a lot to decide on many things. And I should say I've been quite accurate in my instinct on many occasions, particularly in hiring. And many business decisions that my heart told me what could be right, what could be wrong, and it evolved always toward what I feel.

David: Have you always had that or has that come with time, Mohamed?

Mohamed: I'm driven by emotions sometimes from childhood and it grows me, but it's not only your instinct but you're accumulating experiences add to that, so it's not only the heart but your brain drives you. It's a combination of both. At very early stage it was only the heart but now heart I would say 75% and brain 25%, so a combination of both.

Eunice: Perfect, I love that.

David: Mohamed, let's rewind a little bit. Your journey in luxury hospitality spans decades and continents. Can you tell us a little bit about how it all begun for you?

Mohamed: Well, today's a remarkable day for me, it's marked 25 years with IHG, more than two decades, a lot of partnerships, relationships, commitment from my side and opportunities from IHG. I've been given a lot of opportunities to grow, a lot of opportunities to explore new experiences, so I have done most of the flagship of InterContinental in Middle East. I have done InterContinental Pyramids Park, InterContinental Saudi Arabia Riyadh, InterContinental Bahrain, InterContinental Fujairah, InterContinental Durrat Riyadh, InterContinental Ras Al Khaimah, so I've been given great hotels. I've been given great opportunities and here I am talking to you today, so a long relationship with the company.

David: Well, congratulations from both of us on 25 years. That's incredible.

Eunice: What a celebration. 25 years. That's incredible. I think it's a real testament to your commitment to the organisation and also your learning as an individual, which hopefully we're going to get into a little bit later on, around leadership and learning.

Mohamed: Absolutely, absolutely. It is kind of a marriage which is two-way giving, you know, so. I started as a receptionist and I am where I am because of the opportunities been given from IHG to grow. To be honest, I'm proud of this relationship because somehow it inspired a lot of younger generations.

Eunice: Gosh. Whenever I talk to our talented general managers, I'm always just overwhelmed with the complexity of the role that you play. And you're not looking after just one of our properties in Dubai, are you, Mohamed? You're looking after soon to be two, isn't that correct?

Mohamed: That's correct, that's correct.

Eunice: Tell us a little bit about what consumes you in your day when you're trying to manage multiple properties, which are high profile as well?

Mohamed: Both hotels are two different business models; one is InterContinental Residences Business Bay which is up and running, the team will bring the hotel to that level, so obviously our number one focus is our team training and learning, and that translates to every experience we bring to our guests in this hotel, so purely we are totally focused on guest experiences, tailored experiences, connection, feeling, emotions, and for Kimpton, it's on the making. We're working on the pre-opening stage. We had a lot of preparations. We had the commitment to make it a leading hotel in the regions. It will be the first in Dubai. We are going to have a beautiful hotel from broader perspective, locations in the city like Dubai, very vibrant. It really needs a brand like Kimpton in Dubai. So, we are Kimpton-ising Dubai for very soon to open, Kimpton Dubai.

Eunice: That's very exciting, isn't it, David? Love a Kimpton brand.

David: It certainly is, yeah, I love Kimpton. Obviously, you've worked in some of the most iconic InterContinental. But how have you found it immersing yourself into that new brand?

Mohamed: I think I feel myself in the brand. It's a lifestyle. I like bringing things to life. A very fashionable brand driven by design. It works around great value, inspiration, connections and soul, and it just needs the true personality to bring it to life. You know, what I like about Kimpton the most is come as you are, and that's my introduction to the brand.

David: Yeah, their philosophy of being authentically yourself is such an incredible part of that brand. And I guess more broadly as well, how has the luxury space shaped your growth, when you look back across those 25 years?

Mohamed: You know, I look at luxury as a layer. I'll challenge anyone to give me a real definition for luxury. For people it could be time, it could be experiences, it could be—but what defines luxury for me, I started by knowing what is not luxury at the first stage, you know. I can't tell you that's not luxury, and your level of acceptance completely grows to be different. Once you know it's not luxury, you can add on things from a starting point. So, if you're working, you're articulating your senses, what you feel, what you connect to, I think that's the foundation it came from my experience in luxury brand. So, it's all for me today about my true senses when I step in the lobby, the level of the music, the temperatures, the connection with people, and then it evolves around experiences, so that's how I see it myself.

Eunice: And leadership takes time to curate over time, a little bit about the experiences we give to our guests. I'm just wondering if there was a moment in your leadership career that was quite defining for you as a GM.

Mohamed: Absolutely. You know the position that I enjoyed the most was Duty Manager. I come from front office background, yeah? Most of my friends that I have until today, I made them out of that position, you know. The ability of turning some people's experience to be a good experience while you are duty manager or guest relation manager, you have a massive opportunity to connect and engage, especially the ones who are not happy, you know, and then you turn them around and then they like you, then the friendship comes from that perspective, so. By the way, that was the longest position I ever did in my career, four years duty manager, yeah, same role. Maybe because I never pushed to change because I was enjoying it. So, small advice for younger generations, it doesn't matter that you stay short or long, what does matter is what you learn in the role. As far as you have a long-term plan, I think things will work very well. So, what shaped my career really is that role. I have enjoyed that role the most.

Eunice: It's so true that when you're in the role that you love, you stay the long time. But it's not necessarily the role that grows you. You have to seek other roles which sometimes you don't enjoy, do you, but you grow the fastest.

Mohamed: Yeah. And one thing I tell my team on the onboarding, while you are in the role, strengthen your skills for the next role. Once you are in the next role, you should be really confident to deliver. So, as I said, I stayed four years as a duty manager, but I stayed nine months only as a front office manager. So, because of the experience that I got in the duty manager role, it made me better caliber.

David: It sounds like that experience served you incredibly well. And just on those stretch opportunities that come about within the business and looking at your front-line colleagues that you work with, how do you create those opportunities for others in your team?

Mohamed: You know, IHG is one of the companies that gives us a very, very solid frame of people development. We have a very solid performance cycle from goal setting, personal development, quarterly conversations. We have this robust system in IHG, to give people opportunity to grow. But one key learning from me is get the team around common goals and try always to unlock people's potential. One commitment that I have made in my last assignment is to get the best out of my team members. I'm committed to make them better individuals every single day. And I assure you, none of the team members who started together their journey is the same like one and a half year ago. They all know that they can be better versions of themselves, they all know that it is an opportunity, and we need to grab it together. So, every single day we try to unlock our potential together. And it's starting from myself, I know I still have a better version of myself, that's why I evolve toward different leadership styles, different commitment, different priority, and I always take it from there.

David: I always think with GMs, that level of consistency within the luxury space from an outsider's point of view, for a mere mortal like myself, it feels really challenging to be able to maintain that level on a daily basis. How do you do that or how have you grown into being able to offer that for your guests within the luxury space?

Mohamed: It's coming from the top to bottom, bottom to the top. Everybody knows that after tailoring details, tailoring preferences, create memories, and that's a reflection on our online reputation of the hotel being #1 in Dubai. It is all about those small details that the team does every day, and it is a culture—it is a culture, and it is inherited now in the hotel that we need to look after every guest in a tailored way, in much more emotional connection than anything else.

David: That culture piece is something that I think we're going to dig into a little bit more as we go through this podcast. Before we move off from the grove section, I also just wanted to ask, from the offset before you got into hospitality, what did you initially want to do, Mohamed? What was the initial dream?

Mohamed: I was a child who loved to play football, so I played until 14, I was not good enough. I think it is inherited in the family, so my brother managed to make my dream come true, so he plays for our national team football. But after that, if I'm not a hotelier, I might be a fashion designer. I like that feeling of window shopping, choosing things, tailoring things, and I enjoy that. I think that meditates me and that makes me happy to work and buy things that I love to have.

Eunice: Oh, me too. I so understand that.

David: I was just about to say, I think that's something that my co-host enjoys also.

Eunice: Perfect match, made in heaven.

David: Fantastic. We're going to move on to the Hotel Spotlight. So, let's just turn the spotlight on to your current hotel, the InterContinental Residences in Dubai Business Bay. What's your favorite thing about that property?

Mohamed: The hotel stands very well for the quality of the product, yeah, so the owner was very generous to invest on the hotel. Beautiful artwork, very detailed, and it tells a story. Every corner of the hotel, it tells you a story, from how Dubai evolved, to how it became a vibrant city. But what always melts my heart is the view of the terrace. The hotel is at the waterfront, the Dubai canal view, with Burj Khalifa. It is the best spot in Dubai to celebrate New Year's Eve, and I love the location of the hotel. So, that's from the product standpoint, but what I love the most is the culture of the connection with the guests, it's standing out in my hotel. So, it is complimenting a great product with great people that we have in the hotel. It is the best recipe of great InterContinental Residences.

Eunice: God, that sounds gorgeous. I can't wait to come and see, Mohamed.

Mohamed: You are my guest, most welcome.

Eunice: And tell me, when I speak to our general managers, there's always a spot, a particular place in a hotel that they absolutely adore, where's that for you in the InterContinental Dubai Residence?

Mohamed: The colleague restaurant is the place where people come to connect the most in my hotel. It is very well designed, and it gives the opportunity to spend time together. We've been working together to bring the best quality of food for our team as well. I always believe that if you want to bring the best experience for our guests, we really need to look after our colleagues, from uniform designs, from food offering, from rewarding and benefits. So, all this marry and come together in Marasi Drive, it's the venue where we enjoy our meal every day.

Eunice: Gorgeous, love that. Community eating is so powerful, isn't it, coming together to share food.

Mohamed: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Especially if the food is good and the vibe is good. People really connect.

David: Absolutely. I was going to ask a similar question about Kimpton Dubai as well, Mohamed. Is there a particular area or location that you're particularly fond of?

Mohamed: One thing that stands out of the hotel is the hotel taken from the façade, very beautiful design. It's a diamond shape. So, every small aspect of the hotel is it's tailored for a leading hotel in the destinations. The hotel is a sundowner hotel. So, I think the pool area is going to be a killer, where our team and our guests are going to enjoy a beautiful view and connect in our social hour of Kimpton.

Eunice: Yes, of course. The social hour is in every Kimpton hotel around the world. Tell us a little bit about that for our listeners today.

Mohamed: You know, when Bill Kimpton came up with the brand, he built it around connections, around getting people together. And social hour is an opportunity for our guests to connect, to know each other, and share their experiences, and it is working well in several hotels of Kimpton. I visited a couple of them, Kimpton Malay and other Kimpton around the world, and this is a great opportunity. And it's not necessarily to be hosted by the GM and that's the beauty of it, so it's bringing the entire team together to connect with the guests, so it's a beautiful thought.

Eunice: Lovely. And it's complimentary. And I think Bill's intent was to ensure that solo travelers had an opportunity to meet other guests whilst they were travelling alone. And it is amazing to see the other guests and meet them in a very relaxed setting, isn't it?

Mohamed: I just want you to imagine that, just close your eyes and imagine you are over Dubai canal view with the beautiful weather, sundowners, glass of wine and perfect cheese selections, and connecting with people that you love is going to be a great experience.

Eunice: It's going to be great.

David: I can't wait for an invitation, Mohamed, we'd love to come and see. I just wanted to ask you as well about that opening process. Obviously it's such a unique opportunity and exciting one for a GM, how have you found that process?

Mohamed: Honestly, this is the best thing that I do in opening a hotel, and it comes with a lot of opportunities, it comes with a lot of risks as well. Imagine that you give birth for something, you become very connected to the hotel, you know. I stepped in many hotels, it was just Porta Cabin, and then it is full of life, full of experiences, full of story. You know the hotel that I opened is the closest hotel to my heart because I did have my DMA, let me say it that way, or they have my thoughts, they have my dream to bring it to life to be a great hotel, so I enjoy opening hotels, and it's a great opportunity. And one of the things that made my relationship with IHG for 25 years, is because I was given the opportunity to open great hotels. InterContinental Ras Al Khaimah is a beautiful hotel. I opened InterContinental Fujairah as a hotel manager. I opened InterContinental Durrat Riyadh, and opened InterContinental Residences

Business Bay, so it is an opportunity to shape a hotel and bring it to life. It is a real achievement and a real proud moment the day that the hotel is opened.

David: We're going to move on to belonging. So, let's talk about belonging, and you described your hotel culture in one word as tailored. What does that mean in practice?

Mohamed: Okay, tailored experiences for guests. You know, every guest who come into the hotel, they're coming for a purpose, coming for something they've planned to do, so either business, pleasure, or meeting. So, every guest from the guest point of view have something that is tailored especially for them, either their amenities, their offering, their culinary experience. One thing that the team have done very well, this hotel has won Business Traveller Middle East Magazine, Best Leisure Hotel in the Middle East. That tells us that we cater for every segment different, every need is different, so the team knows that knowing the guests' names, knowing their kids' names, knowing their preferences, knowing their food preferences, it makes the guests feel their belonging to the hotel. We opened in September 1st. We had some people who stayed here more than 30 times and that tells you they are feeling belonging to the hotel. We know every regular guest's coffee preferences, and you know how coffee is, inspiring people to connect. So, too much detail that the team are building to make guests feel they belong to the place, they belong to the team member, they belong to the experience as well.

David: And the same question for your team as well. How do you approach that for obviously such a multi-cultured team of people working within the hotel, how do you create that sense of belonging?

Mohamed: We are a small team and there is no three people coming from the same nationality, so we have more than 40 nationalities in a very small team in the Residences. The feel of belonging for the team starts from them treated very well as individuals, them connected as a family in the hotel, we cater for all their preferences when they come, what kind of food they eat at home. So, we had offering on the colleague restaurant depending on the team nationality mix, for example. The belonging also happen when you tailor special training for the team members, tailored personal development plan for individuals, spending time with them to get their feedback. Don't forget the fun aspect. The minute that you bring the fun aspect to the team members—we had the fun hop in the accommodations where it make us connected together. We never waste an opportunity to get together, either in the hotel or outside the hotel. So, building the family culture have helped the team to feel belong to each other and belong to IHG as well.

Eunice: So, we've been speaking to your team and they've used incredibly inspiring words about you as a leader. They've used the word resilience, visionary, charismatic, and I can be a testament to all of those things, because I have met you

and spent a little bit of time with you. So, which of those characteristics do you think you lead with the most? Do you think it's resilience? Do you think it's charisma? What is it that you lead from the front with?

Mohamed: I will agree the most with resilience. Opening hotels, it comes with opportunity. Somehow we need to adapt for changes, you need to capture opportunities, you need to bring more situational leadership in different occasions. I had very difficult times sometimes in opening and then things evolved toward the great moment. So, one advice that I have got from leadership team that the more we are resilient, the more that we can capture opportunity and grow.

David: Also I wanted to ask you, Mohamed, about work life balance, and I know you're very much keen into your fitness, and obviously being a GM in a luxury space is a very demanding role. How do you find balance and what's your approach and philosophy towards that?

Mohamed: I slightly have different approaches towards this. First of all, I disagree it's two different things. It is one thing that's life, yeah, and everything comes under life including work. There is no harm to have fun while you're working and there's no harm to do a little bit of work after work. The most important is that you stay away from stress, so as much as you plan a perfect day after work and get close to the people that you like to spend time with. It's so great to get on your sofa at the end of the day, and have a good meal and relax, and appreciate everything that you do, you know. I never felt that this is work and this is life, and I need to separate it. It's one thing, life come on top and then everything else. One important thing to always keep in mind, to keep this balance great, is family. Keep the family in the center of every decision you make, either work or life balance. Make sure you make time to them and then things will work well together.

David: We're going to move on now and talk about impact. You've led several CSR initiatives across properties. What are you most proud of?

Mohamed: We do a lot of initiative to connect with the community. One of them is very close to my heart. We work with Ihsan, a charity, to look after orphan cats, so we bring them to the hotel. We get them in many activities at the hotel. We had, during months of Ramadan, we had iftar with them, and it was a great experience. It's something, you know, I think that the children are happy, it is something that we should be so proud of doing. We also work with, not only children, but senior people. There is a community called 4get-me-not, it is for Alzheimer, so we work very closely with them.

Eunice: It's quite obvious to David and I that your passion, your commitment, 25 years after all, goes beyond the day-to-day. What motivates you? What fuels that drive?

Mohamed: Just to be proud of what I'm able to deliver, yeah. Getting the best out of me as an individual is a great source of inspiration for myself and being able to bring the best day-to-day of my team. The industry of hospitality is very genuine and very people oriented, so it gives me opportunity to connect every day and get the best out of the team and myself as well.

Eunice: That's such a lovely answer. And being new to hospitality, I have to say I wish I had found this industry years ago, it is such a special industry, isn't it, where human centricity is the heart of everything, don't you agree, David?

David: Absolutely. We've been so fortunate to be able to go into hotels and meet colleagues, and just the people that work within a hotel, it's just a real energy in a lot of the properties that we have and there's vibrancy that you just don't see in other industries, so it's incredible. And they all have their own unique feel and I know something, Mohamed, that you've mentioned, that your personal travels have really inspired some ideas that you brought back to the hotels that you worked in. I was wondering if you could share some examples of the type of things that you've seen or taken or pulled from that, that you've applied?

Mohamed: I've been so lucky that my wife works in the aviation industry, so we're always privileged with that good combination of tickets and beautiful hotels, so.

Eunice: What a combo.

David: That is quite some combo.

Eunice: That's astonishing. I wish I'd been more strategic in my marriage, a definite next time. Sorry, George.

David: I was thinking that but I didn't want to say it on camera, just in case she watches it.

Eunice: Brilliant.

Mohamed: So, it gave me the opportunity to travel a lot and see new experiences. It's so often that I'll come back from a travel and say, let's do the flower arrangement slightly different, or let's try that dish, or let's try that cocktail or mocktail, taking photos from every hotel and share it with the team. It's not necessarily that we adopt everything but it's always great to see how it would look like. So, it always helps to travel and bring new ideas every time.

Eunice: You sound like me, Mohamed, I need to be inspired by new experiences, see new things. And it's just joyful when you find something, you bring it back, you try it and it works. Whether it's cooking, décor, flowers—yeah, I agree with you.

David: Lovely. And finally, we just wanted to look to the future and ask you Mohamed, what predictions do you have for luxury hospitality and the things that

you're preparing for personally in your properties and your future property Kimpton Dubai?

Mohamed: My prediction for luxury is that it's going to continue to grow. I will see more elimination for entry level luxury and I will see that people getting toward ultra luxury. The acceptance of similar experiences will be eliminated and everybody will be looking for a unique experience offering, so you'd see more beautifully designed hotel that will be given but if we don't invest more on tailored experiences and curated experiences, we're losing opportunity. So, there will be a lot of growth and experiences versus what's being offered now.

Eunice: Yeah. And experiences are the memories that we leave with our guests that they cherish which brings them back for sure.

David: Well, Mohamed, it's been a pleasure hearing your story, from the bold hotel launches to the global inspiration and culture shaping leadership. Before you go, we have one question left from our previous guest which is Merry Antoja at Kimpton Los Monteros in Marbella. She said you've lived and travelled to some amazing places. What's the one destination that changed that way that you see the world?

Mohamed: Not to the extent that I changed the way that I see the world, but there are some destinations that I enjoyed the most and it inspired me. I would pick up Da Nang in Vietnam. It is a beautiful destination. We had one of our best hotels there. Everything was tailored, everything was natural. Beautiful view, beautiful food, and this is something that makes me value how I can maximise my vacation time, you know. That was an experience where I felt, yeah, maybe I need to explore more destinations like that. When I started my travelling, I was getting the most toward popular destinations, for example, Marbella, Barcelona, Madrid, London, Key City Hotel, but now I'm getting more toward undiscovered destinations where I can enjoy unique and new experiences the most.

Eunice: What a lovely way to end our conversation today. It's been such a pleasure. I've been following you relentlessly since we last met a couple of years ago, and your career is just going from strength to strength, and it's just a joy to watch, so thank you for your time today.

Mohamed: Pleasure. I personally want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to connect and thank you so much, and thank you David for everything you did to bring this to life. Thank you so much.

David: To our listeners, thank you for tuning in to Leading a New Era where we go behind the scenes with our GMs shaping the future of luxury and lifestyle at IHG. If you've enjoyed hearing Mohamed's story and you're interested in more episodes like this, be sure to subscribe, share and check out our next episode where we'll be

heading to Honduras in the Caribbean to chat to Diego Padula, the GM at Kimpton Grand Roatan Resort & SPA in Honduras. See you then.