

Applied Leadership and Management in the Workplace
Module Assignment Submission

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1.0 Introduction

Developing a learning organisation is important because it helps businesses improve employee skills, share knowledge and prepare for future challenges. A learning organisation encourages continuous learning and uses employee development to support organisational goals (Örtenblad, 2018). Within the hospitality industry, this is particularly important because employees across different departments need to work together to provide a consistent service and positive guest experience.

This report focuses on a luxury boutique hotel that also operates as a wedding venue. The hotel has several departments, including Food and Beverage, Front of House, Events, Housekeeping and back-office functions. Although each department contributes to the hotel's success, limited opportunities to work across departments can restrict employees' wider understanding of the business.

The report will examine the benefits and challenges of employee development, how organisational needs can be balanced with individual expectations, and the development methods available to address skills gaps. These areas will then be applied to Ethan, a Food and Beverage Supervisor who aims to progress to Deputy Manager. A development plan will be created to identify his current skills, areas for improvement and suitable development activities, alongside methods for monitoring and evaluating progress.

2.0 Main Findings

2.1 Impacts of Developing Individuals in the Workplace

Taghavi-Stevens, (2022) explains that employees who work within a learning organisation have a clear picture of how the business works, the ethos, and the company culture. This provides context; putting them in the perfect position to evaluate how their role and department fits into the whole, where problems or obstacles lie, and how they can be adapted and improved.

Employee development is important because it enables the business to improve the skills and knowledge of its employees. It prepares them for future responsibilities. Deloitte (2015) explains that the right learning and development programme can help organisations become more adaptable and resilient, while encouraging employees to develop new ideas and explore new services. It also helps employees develop a better understanding of how the hotel operates, its ethos and culture, allowing them to recognise how their role and department fits into the daily running of the business and contributes to the hotel's overall structure.

Having a broader understanding can support identifying problem areas, make better and more informed decisions, encourage communication and support departments working together.

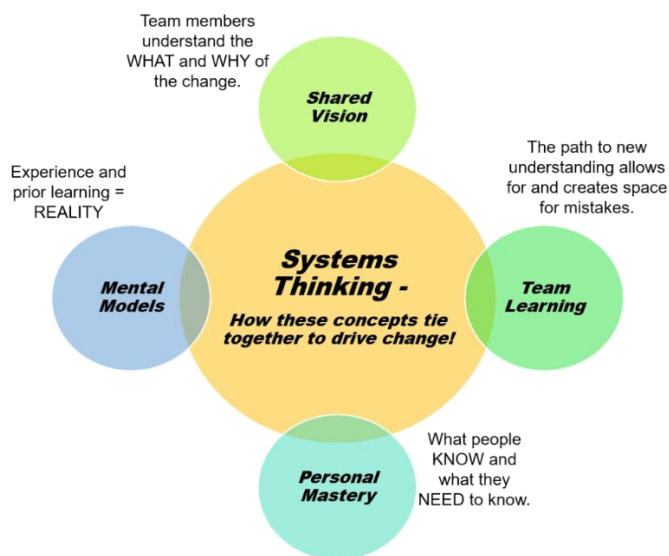
The hotel can identify gaps they have and develop the employees they already have to fill these needs, the employee gains new knowledge, skills and confidence and will be more willing to share new ideas and identify more effective ways for the team to work together, improving productivity and supporting continuous improvement. Development can improve employee engagement and motivation by proving that the hotel is willing to invest in its workforce therefore providing opportunities for career progression and encouragement for employees to remain working within the hotel to develop their career. This can improve performance as the employees become more confident in their roles. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) highlight the benefits of training and development for individuals, teams and organisations, supporting the view that developing employees can improve their capabilities and contribute to better organisational performance.

Developing existing employees for the senior positions rather than recruiting externally means the hotel can promote employees who already have knowledge of how the business operates and an understanding of its policies and procedures knowing the expectations before starting a new role can make the transition easier for both the employee and the hotel, it saves money and time on recruitment and inductions. This also supports succession planning by preparing employees to fill future vacancies and helping the hotel maintain experienced staff in key positions. However, the hotel must ensure that the chosen employee still receives the relevant training and experience before starting a new role and taking on extra responsibilities. Promoting someone just because they have worked there for a long time does not always mean they have the skills needed for a more senior position. Employee development should also support the hotel's aims and objectives understanding how the hotel operates and what the future goals are. Employees can see and understand the role they have in making the business successful. They can create an environment that encourage other employees to learn from them and encourage them to develop their skills. This can help create a more positive workplace culture where employees feel supported, valued and encouraged to contribute their ideas. Overtime this will help the hotel to become a learning organisation where learning and development are part of everyday practices.

Employee development must also be considered in relation to the hotel's costs and future objectives. Although training requires investment, developing existing employees may reduce recruitment and induction costs while helping the hotel prepare staff for future vacancies. However, training can take employees away from their normal duties, place additional pressure on other staff and requires financial resources. There is also a risk that employees may leave after gaining these new skills, meaning the hotel does

not always receive the full benefit of its investment. Development should therefore be linked to the hotel's business strategy and the skills it needs to achieve its future aims. This helps ensure that the time and money spent on development benefit both the employee and the organisation. Investing in learning and development leads to a more capable and motivated workforce, which translates into improved organisational performance. Equipped with updated skills and fresh perspectives, your employees become more efficient and effective in their roles, driving productivity and innovation. (van Santen, 2025)

2.1.1 Learning Organisations and Senge's Five Disciplines



Peter Senge's concept of the learning organisation focuses on continuous learning and improvement within a business. Keegan (2024) explains that Senge identified five disciplines that support a learning organisation: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning and systems thinking. These disciplines encourage employees to develop their skills and knowledge, question existing ways of working, share ideas and understand how various parts of an organisation connect.

The five disciplines can be applied to the hotel in different ways.

Discipline	What this means	Example within the Hotel
Personal Mastery	Continuously developing individual skills and knowledge.	Employees complete training and learn new responsibilities to improve their performance and prepare for career progression.
Mental Models	Questioning existing assumptions and being open to new ideas.	Departments review their working practices and consider better ways to

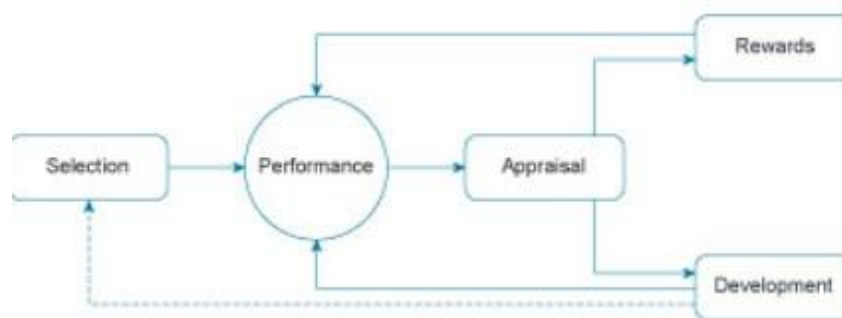
		communicate or resolve guest complaints.
Shared Vision	Working towards a common goal.	Employees understand how their roles contribute to providing a high-quality guest experience and achieving the hotel's objectives.
Team Learning	Sharing knowledge and learning through collaboration.	Employees from different departments share information and learn from experiences after busy shifts or events.
Systems Thinking	Understanding how various parts of an organisation connect and affect one another.	A wedding booking requires coordination between events, food and beverage, housekeeping and reception to ensure a successful guest experience.

Edmondson (1999) found that psychological safety can support learning behaviour within teams. For the hotel, employees need to feel comfortable asking questions, sharing ideas and discussing mistakes so that departments can learn from experience and improve working practices.

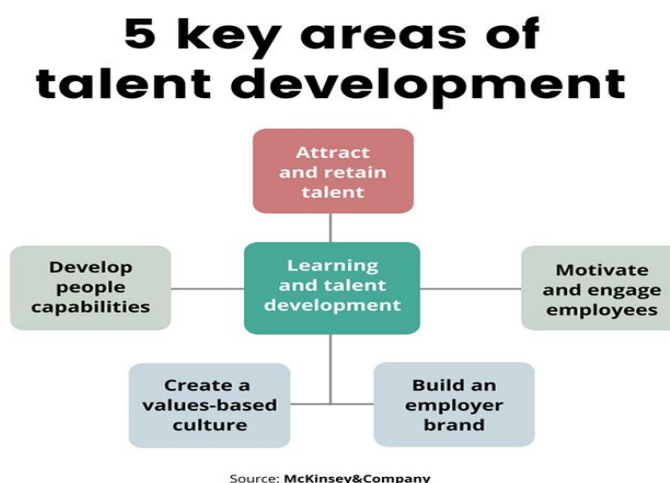
Applying these disciplines can help the hotel improve communication, encourage employees to share knowledge and identify opportunities to improve working practices. However, becoming a learning organisation requires commitment from both management and employees, as learning needs to be part of everyday working practices rather than being limited to formal training. This highlights the importance of having suitable systems and development opportunities in place to support continuous learning.

2.1.2 The Michigan Model and Five Key Areas of Talent Development.

The Michigan Model



Five Key Areas of Talent Development



Imbrex, (2026) explains the Michigan model as a strategic Hr framework that argues policies should be tightly aligned with the business strategy. It links human resources with the overall aim and objectives of an organisation it consists of four areas Selection, appraisal, rewards and development; these work together to ensure the employees have the skills, knowledge and motivation to contribute to the success of the business. In an article by TestGorilla it is stated that learning and development should be a way to motivate and engage your existing staff it helps to boost employee engagement, productivity and morale (*Learning and Development: How to Leverage This Talent Acquisition Strategy and Attract Motivated Candidates*, 2023). When these two principles are combined, they can help organisations attract and retain suitable employees and build a positive employer brand creating a supportive workplace culture and develop the capabilities of the employees.

SELECTION: This involves recruiting employees who	APPRASIAL: This allows managers to review employee	REWARDS: Can include pay, recognition, benefits and	DEVELOPMENT: Focuses on improving employees' skills,
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have the right skills and knowledge, their attitudes should match the needs of the hotel. Attracting the right candidates can help the hotel maintain high standards and keep guest experiences positive. Having a good recruitment process can make the hotel more attractive to potential employees. However, recruitment alone cannot guarantee that employees will perform well they need appropriate training, inductions and opportunities to develop alongside a supportive environment.	performances, recognise achievements and identify areas where further development is needed. Helping individuals understand their strengths and what they need to improve. Regular feedback can also help employees see how their work contributes to the Hotel's objectives. When appraisals identify skills gaps, the organisation can provide appropriate development opportunities. However, if appraisals are inconsistent or employees feel they are being treated unfairly, they could have little benefit and could negatively affect motivation.	opportunities for promotion. Recognising employees for their contributions can encourage motivation and help them feel valued by the organisation. This can support employee retention, as individuals may be more willing to remain with an employer that recognises their efforts and provides opportunities for progression. Rewards can also reinforce a positive workplace culture by encouraging behaviours that reflect the organisation's values. However, rewards alone may not be enough to retain employees if they lack career opportunities, support or access to development.	knowledge and abilities so they can perform effectively in their current roles and prepare for any future responsibilities. This includes training, mentoring, coaching and opportunities to gain experience in different areas of the business. Developing employees can help the organisation fill gaps, improve performance and prepare suitable individuals for more senior positions. It can also encourage employees to remain with the organisation because they can see opportunities to progress. However, development requires time and resources and must ensure that opportunities meet both employee needs and those of the Hotel.
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Together the four elements of The Michigan model can support the five areas of talent development attracting and retaining talent, motivating and engaging employees, building the brand from the employer's perspective, creating a values-based culture and

developing employee capabilities. These areas are connected because recruitment is simply the beginning the hotel must also recognise performance, provide appropriate rewards and support employee's development when these are all managed well the employee becomes more capable, engaged and willing to share knowledge and ideas within the team. However, the Hotel needs to manage these practices fairly, be consistent and keep relevant.

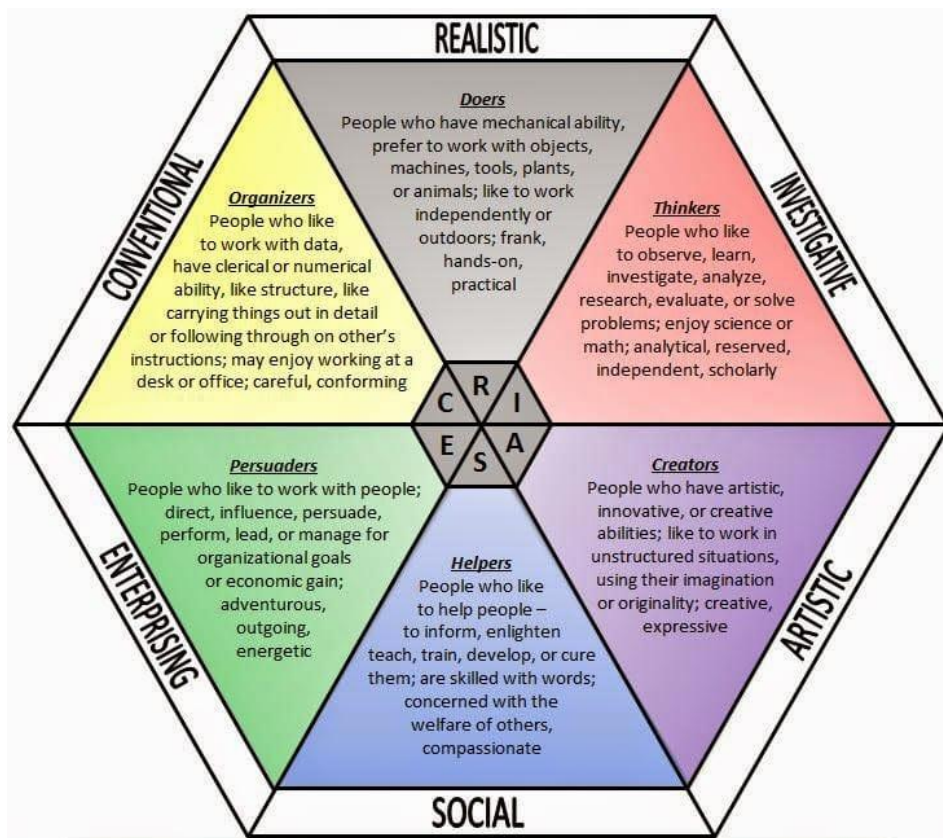
2.2 Managing Employee Expectations

Managing employee expectations involves understanding the individuals career ambitions and taking these considerations onboard to see that they align to the needs of the hotel. From the very beginning it is important to manage realistic expectations from both the employee and the Hotel. Expectations shape reality (Macintosh, 2024).

Employees may want to develop their skills and gain experiences and progress into more senior roles understanding these ambitions helps the business to identify suitable development opportunities and ensure that they are able to support these goals while also meeting the developing needs of the Hotel.

Ethan is a 28-year-old male he has worked at the hotel for 3 years he started as a food and beverage assistant and in the last 12 months was promoted to food and beverage supervisor. He is hardworking, eager to learn and has built positive relationships with colleagues across all departments in the hotel. He is also popular with guests who have often mentioned him by name in reviews. Ethans long term ambition is to become a deputy manager which means he needs to develop a broader understanding of the hotel's operations beyond the food and beverage department. His ambition involves both career and management development. The career development focuses on his longer-term progression while management development focuses on building the skills and knowledge needed to take on greater responsibility and manage different areas of the business. Understanding Ethans strengths, interests and ambitions will help the hotel to consider which development opportunities will be the most suitable and how these could benefit the hotels future needs.

2.2.1 Holland's Model of Vocational Choice



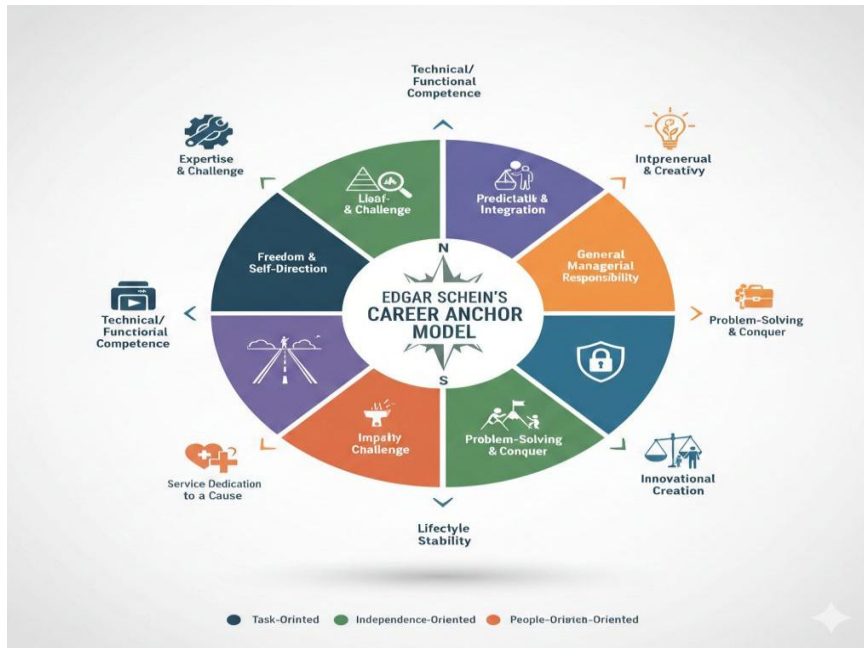
Holland claims that most people fall into one of six personality types as shown above in the diagram. It is thought that each individual seeks out the work environment that their skills and abilities are best suited (*John Holland's Career Theory*, n.d.). Individuals are more likely to feel satisfied and motivated in roles that match their interests, personality and work interests. Identifying where employees sit can help employers to understand what motivates employees and what environments would be best suited for them. Understanding these preferences can help employers identify suitable working environments and potential career development opportunities.

In Ethan's case his enthusiasm for learning and positive relationships may suggest he enjoys working with people and developing his abilities, these alone are not enough to determine his Holland personality type, and the hotel would need to discuss his interests and career preferences with him to get a better understanding. This information could help the hotel to identify suitable opportunities for him to gain experience in other departments this includes events, front of house and housekeeping as well as the back-office operations. Exposure to different areas would also allow him to develop a broader understanding of the hotel's operations, which is important for his ambition to become a Deputy Manager.

Holland's Model should not be used on its own to make decisions about Ethan's career development as his interests may change as he spends more time in different

departments, he may enjoy some aspects more than others but lack the skills required. Using Hollands model alongside discussions and performance reviews and weighing those against the operational needs of the hotel can help identify areas needed for development and the opportunities available to Ethan to support his future development.

2.2.2 Schein's Career Anchors



Schein (1996) explains that career anchors are the values, motivations and abilities that influence an individual's career decisions. Rodrigues (2015) also discusses how career anchors help explain what individuals value in their working lives and what influences their career choices. Understanding these priorities can help organisations identify development opportunities that are meaningful to employees while considering the needs of the business.

Ethan's dedication to his supervisor role and ambition to become a deputy manager would suggest that he takes management responsibilities seriously and they are important to him and his development. Schein's theory helps explain how a career goal can be influenced by the things he values within his working life. Although Ethan has professed his wishes to progress to management the hotel would need to understand what motivates him and ensure that these needs are met to ensure he gains the knowledge and skills needed for this role. Providing Ethan with the opportunities to gain experience across different departments would develop his wider knowledge within the industry and would benefit both Ethan in his career development and the hotel as they prepare for having a future manager.

However, Schein's theory should be used as a guide rather than the only basis for development decisions, as the hotel must also consider Ethan's needs and skills alongside its own future priorities.

2.2.3 Matching Individual with Organisational Need

Ethan's ambition to become a Deputy Manager offers the hotel an opportunity to develop an existing employee for a future management role. However, as his experience has mainly been within Food and Beverage, he does not have a lot of experience within other areas of the Hotel. Gaining experience in these areas could help address this gap. Holland's theory can help the hotel consider Ethan's interests when selecting suitable opportunities, while Schein's theory provides insight into the career values that influence his choices.

Close (2025) says that Learning and development can only be effective if it is integrated and aligned to the wider strategic goals, ambition and direction of the organisation. This is relevant to the hotel because Ethan's development should help prepare him for greater responsibility while also supporting the hotel's future requirements.

However, there are some practical limitations that would need to be considered whilst Ethan is undergoing management training his absence from his usual duties could put additional pressure on the Food and Beverage team, particularly during busy periods. The hotel must then also consider the cost of external training, promoting another employee to fill his role and the time managers can dedicate to training and supporting him. Training may need to take place gradually until Ethan is more competent to avoid disrupting daily operations.

Ethan should also understand that development does not guarantee immediate promotion, this will depend on future vacancies and the hotel's requirements. Kerr and Jackofsky (1989) discuss The need for support for the hotel to consider its future requirements when deciding how to develop Ethan. By taking these factors into account, the hotel can provide realistic development opportunities that support Ethan's career goals while meeting its own needs.

2.3 What Development Vehicles Are Available and Suitable for the Individual

Development vehicles are the different methods an organisation can use to help employees develop their skills, knowledge and experience. Van der Sluis and Hoeksema (2001) explain that management development can take place through work experience, job rotation, coaching and mentoring. These methods provide different ways for employees to learn and prepare for future responsibilities. The most suitable approach

will depend on the individual's development needs and the resources available within the organisation.

Mentoring

Mentoring involves an experienced employee sharing their knowledge and experience to support another employee's development. For Ethan, a member of the hotel's management team could provide guidance on the wider responsibilities of managing a hotel, including communication between departments and decision-making.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Shares experience and knowledge from an established manager.	Requires time and commitment from the mentor.
Provides ongoing support for career progression.	The quality of support depends on the mentor's experience and ability to guide others.
Helps Ethan understand the expectations of a management role.	Advice may be limited by the mentor's own experiences and approach.

Coaching

Coaching focuses on helping an individual improve their performance by working towards specific goals, discussing challenges and reflecting on progress. Ethan could receive coaching from his manager when taking on new responsibilities or dealing with situations outside his usual role.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Focuses on specific development needs and goals.	Requires regular time from both the coach and employee.
Encourages independent thinking and problem-solving.	Progress may be limited if there are few opportunities to practise new skills.
Provides feedback and helps build confidence.	Coaching may be less effective without a suitable, trained coach.

Shadowing

Shadowing allows an employee to observe an experienced colleague carrying out their role. Ethan could shadow managers in events, front of house, housekeeping and back-office operations to understand responsibilities outside Food and Beverage.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Gives Ethan an insight into departments he has not worked in.	Observation alone may not develop practical skills.
Allows him to see how decisions are made in real situations.	Can take managers away from their normal duties.

Usually involves less risk than immediately assigning new responsibilities.	Learning may be limited if Ethan is not encouraged to ask questions or reflect on what he observes.
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On-the-job learning and job rotation

On-the-job learning allows employees to develop through carrying out tasks in the workplace. Job rotation allows employees to work in different roles or departments for an agreed period. Both methods could help Ethan understand how the hotel's departments operate and contribute to the guest experience.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Provides practical experience in real working situations.	Mistakes may occur while the employee is learning unfamiliar tasks.
Improves understanding of how departments depend on one another.	Moving between departments can place pressure on staffing and workloads.
Encourages communication and collaboration across the hotel.	Requires planning, supervision and cooperation from department managers.
Allows Ethan to apply knowledge rather than only observe.	Without clear objectives, the experience may not address the right development needs.

Formal training and qualifications

Formal training and qualifications provide structured learning to develop specific knowledge and skills. Ethan could undertake training in areas such as budgeting, staff management, health and safety or business operations to support his future management responsibilities.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Provides structured learning and clear learning objectives.	Course fees and travel may increase costs.
Can provide recognised qualifications or evidence of learning.	Employees may need time away from normal duties to attend training.
Helps address specific gaps in knowledge.	Theoretical knowledge may not transfer into workplace practice without further experience.
Can improve confidence and understanding of management responsibilities.	A qualification alone does not guarantee readiness for promotion.

Online learning

Online learning allows employees to access courses and learning materials digitally, often with greater flexibility than classroom-based training. Ethan could use online

courses to develop knowledge of subjects such as finance, leadership, business operations or performance management.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Can be completed flexibly around working hours.	Requires self-motivation and time to complete.
May be less expensive than external classroom training.	Offers fewer opportunities for face-to-face discussion and practical experience.
Provides access to a wide range of subjects.	Course quality and recognition can vary.
Allows Ethan to revisit materials when needed.	Completing a course does not necessarily mean he can apply the learning effectively at work.

Each development vehicle offers different benefits, so the hotel should select methods according to Ethan's development needs and the resources available. Mentoring and coaching could support his longer-term management development, while shadowing and job rotation would help him gain experience across departments. Formal training and online learning could address specific knowledge gaps.

A combination of these methods would be more suitable than relying on one approach alone. For example, Ethan could complete training in hotel finances, shadow a manager responsible for budgets and then undertake supervised tasks to apply what he has learned. This would connect formal learning with practical experience while allowing the hotel to monitor his progress.

2.4 Identifying Development Needs for an Individual and Performance Management

2.4.1 Training needs Analysis and PDP

Training Needs Analysis identifies an employee's current skills and knowledge and determines what further development may be required. Close (2025) explains that learning needs should be identified by considering the organisation's future requirements alongside employees' existing capabilities. This allows the hotel to identify the development needed to support its future aims and prepare employees for greater responsibilities.

For Ethan, the Training Needs Analysis would focus on the expectations of a Deputy Manager role and how these compare with his current experience. He has experience supervising the Food and Beverage team, he has less experience across other departments and the hotel's wider operations. The table below outlines the main areas that Ethan and the hotel should be working towards.

Development Area	Current Experience	Training needs identified
Events	Has some knowledge as Events work closely while executing the events. Planning and meeting knowledge is extremely limited	Develop knowledge of event planning, coordination and delivery
Front of House	Can perform basic tasks like booking rooms, checking in and checking out.	Understand reception operations, reservations and guest enquiries, emails and third-party booking procedures.
Housekeeping	Very Limited can use washing machines and ironing press.	Understand housekeeping standards, ordering, stock control, laundry order and allergens.
Finance and Admin	Is confident in end of day banking and closedown procedures.	Develop knowledge of budgets, costs, financial targets and reporting.
Management	Confident in supervising a large team at quieter and busy times,	Develop decision making skills across all departments.

Once Ethans training needs have been identified a Personal Development Plan can be made to plan the development. At this point it is quite important for Ethan to work alongside the Hotel managers to form a realistic timescale and expectancy. The below PDP will outline the first 6 months of development.

Development Need	Action	Timescale	Monitoring
Event Planning	Shadow the Events Manager and assist with an event.	Months 1–2	Can explain the event process and complete agreed tasks.
Front of House Operations	Shadow the Front of House Manager.	Months 2–3	Demonstrates understanding of key reception responsibilities.
Housekeeping Operations	Spend time with the Housekeeping Manager.	Months 3–4	Understands departmental standards and priorities.
Finance and Admin	Complete supervised tasks involving budgets, costs and reports.	Months 4–6	Completes agreed tasks accurately with appropriate support.

Wider Management	Attend suitable management training and review progress with a mentor.	Months 1-6	Demonstrating improved decision making and coordination across the departments.
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2.4.2 Monitoring and Evaluating Development

Ethan's progress should be monitored throughout the six-month development period through regular meetings with his manager, feedback from other departments and observation of how he applies his learning at work. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006) identify four levels of training evaluation reaction, learning, behaviour and results. This model would help the hotel assess whether Ethan has gained useful knowledge, applied it in practice and improved his performance.

At the end of the six months, a formal review should compare Ethan's progress against his agreed objectives and identify any remaining development needs. This would allow the hotel to decide whether further support is required and whether the development has improved Ethan's performance while supporting the hotel's operational needs.

3.0 Conclusion

Developing a learning organisation requires employee development to be linked to business objectives while also recognising individual needs and career ambitions. As the report has discussed, development can improve skills, encourage knowledge sharing and help prepare employees for future responsibilities. However, it requires appropriate support, time and resources, with progress monitored to ensure that development benefits both the employee and the organisation.

Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) highlight the benefits of training and development for individuals, teams and organisations, supporting the importance of investing in employee learning. For the hotel, providing opportunities for employees to gain experience across departments could improve collaboration and create a broader understanding of its operations.

Ethan's development plan applies these principles by identifying the gap between his current experience and the knowledge and skills needed for a future Deputy Manager role. Cross-department experience, supported by feedback and regular reviews, can help him work towards his career ambition while developing capabilities that benefit the hotel. Overall, an effective learning organisation should treat development as an

ongoing process that supports both employee progression and long-term organisational success.

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