

restaurant management in practice reflective portfolio

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BMGM4004 portfolio assignment resit

Placement restaurant management

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Introduction

This reflective portfolio explores my understand analysis of restaurant management through the observation of el pescador a well established restaurant located in Swansea that I have closely studied . The purpose of this portfolio is to connect theoretical knowledge of restaurant management with practical insights, while also reflecting on how these observations have influenced my understanding of effective management practices. This portfolio critically evaluates key aspects such as operations management customer service staff management and financial control. I will be reflecting as reflection is a used as a tool to identify my strengths and areas of improvement (Mardock, 2024)

overview of the restaurant

the restaurant I observed is El Pescador a mild sized bistro dining establishment located in Swansea marina Often a busy location. the establishment offers a diverse menu with a focus on quality ingredients and consistent service the restaurant operates with a semi clear structure including a general manager kitchen manager front of house supervisor and a team of servers and kitchen staff. From the outset it was pretty evident that the restaurant priorities efficiency customer satisfaction and brand consistency however there were moments where this consistency wasn't fully maintained particularly during peak hours when service standards dropped this suggests that whiles the restaurant strong foundational practices execution can vary under pressure.

operations management

One of the most noticeable aspects of the restaurant was its operational structure the workflow between the kitchen and front of house staff was generally well coordinated which helped minimise delays and ensured relatively smooth service (Saraiya, 2025). From a theoretical perspective this reflects the importance of operations management in hospitality where coordination and timing is important. The use of their systems such as order tracking and table management software supported efficiency during busy periods (Umar and Muhammad Ahmad Baballe, 2025).

However I did observe several operational weaknesses during el pescadors peak hours communication breakdowns occurred between servers and kitchen staff which lead to

delays or incorrect orders in some instances tables were left waiting longer than expected without any updates which negatively impacted the dining experience (Cain, 2025). There appeared to be a lack of contingency planning when the restaurant began overcrowded staff seemed very overwhelmed which clearly suggests that staffing levels or shift planning may not always align with demand forecasting. Reflecting on this I realised that effectively operations management requires not only systems but also strong leadership clear communication and proactive planning. If I were managing the restaurant I would implement pre shift briefings and improve coordination strategies during peak periods.

Customer service management

Customer service is a fundamental aspect of restaurant success, and this was clearly emphasised in el pescador many staff members demonstrated friendliness and a willingness to assist customers Contributing to a generally positive atmosphere. The restaurant aimed to deliver a high quality customer experience aligning with service quality models for example servqual (Jonkisz, Karniej and Krasowska, 2021) which emphasises reliability responsiveness and empathy.

However inconsistencies in service quality were evident while some staff were attentive and engaging others appeared disengaged or less responsive particularly during busy shifts, there were occasions where customers had to wait to be acknowledged or struggled to get the staffs attention. This inconsistency highlights a gap in training and performance management it suggests that while expectations may be set there are not consistently reinforced. Thinking about it from a critical perspective the restaurant could improve by introducing more structured training regular performance reviews and clearer service standards. Reflecting on this I was able to recognise that delivering consistent customer service requires both effective management motivated staff

staff management and leadership

Staff management is a key component of restaurant operations at el pescador there is a clear hierarchical structure which helps define roles and responsibilities. the leadership style observed was a combination of transactional and transformational approaches managers provide clear instructions and expectations but also occasionally motivate staff through encouragement. However there were noticeable weaknesses in leadership during high pressure situations management became more directive and less supportive which sometimes created a tense working environment staff appeared stressed and communication became less effective. Another observation I noticed was there seemed to have been limited feedback provided to staff during or after shifts this could hinder employee development and reduce opportunities for improvement. this observation connects to leadership theory which emphasises adaptability and emotional intelligence while a directive approach may be balanced with support and constructive feedback. Reflecting on this I understand the importance of maintaining a positive team environment even under pressure if I were a managerial role I would focus on consistent communication self support and regular feedback to improve morale and performance.

Financial Management

Although financial operations were less visible some aspects could've been inferred, the restaurant demonstrates cost control through portion management menu pricing and inventory practices. designing reflects elements of menu engineering with a mix of high margin and popular items which suggests an understanding of profitability and sales performance (Gansser, 2024). however there were some insufficiencies observed there were many occasions where there were stock shortages which led to certain menu items being unavailable which could negatively affect customers satisfaction revenue (TheVeesionTeam, 2024) This indicates potential weaknesses in regards to inventory management or demanding forecasting.

During quieter periods staff appeared underutilised which may suggest insufficiencies in labour costs management (Team, 2026). From a reflective perspective this highlights the challenge of balancing costs control with operational efficiency effective financial management requires accurate forecasting efficient scheduling and a strong supply chain coordination (IMD, 2024).

marketing and brand management

El pescador maintains a recognisable brand identity through its decor menu and service style which contributes to a cohesive customer experience (El Pescador, 2025). The restaurant appears to rely primarily on social media and word of mouth for promotions although effective to some extent there is limited evidence of more strategic marketing initiatives for example there were no visible loyalty programs, theres a lack of promotional offers and no targeted campaigns to attract repeat customers. This represents a missed opportunities to strengthen customer retention and increase revenu (Perrotte, 2025). to reflect on this I understand that marketing is a critical component of restaurant management I think it would be beneficial for the establishment to enhance the restaurants competitive position for example el pescador could have a stronger focus on digital engagement, customer feedback and promotional strategies (londonsba, 2025).

personal reflection and learning

This observation has significantly enhanced my understanding of restaurant management in practice it has demonstrated that while theoretical models provide a useful framework real world application is often more complex and unpredictable (Wellton et al., 2016). One of the key lessons I learned is the importance of adaptability for example restaurant environments are fast paced and managers must respond effectively to challenges such as high demand, staff shortages and customer expectations (AB, 2024). I also developed a greater awareness of how small issues such as poor communication on inconsistent service can have impact on overall performance (admin1, 2024)

This experience has strengthened my analytical thinking as I was able to identify both strengths and weaknesses in the restaurant's operations it has also highlighted areas for my own development particularly in leadership communication and problem solving, if I were to work in restaurant management I would aim to create a more supportive and organised working environment with a strong focus on staff training, communication and consistency.

Conclusion

to conclude this portfolio, this reflective portfolio has provided an opportunity to critically analyse restaurant management practices and connect them with theoretical concepts El Pescador demonstrates several strengths including clear structure, strong brand indemnity and generally positive customer service. However the restaurant also faces challenges particularly in maintaining consistency during busy periods, managing staff effectively under pressure and implementing stronger marketing strategies, through this reflection I have gained valuable insights into complexities or restaurant management and the importance of balancing operational efficiency, customer satisfaction and employee wellbeing. This experience has contributed to my personal and professional development and has reinforced my interest the hospitality industry.

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