

Generic overview of overall placement

(This section does not achieve any marks but allows you to give a general overview of your experience to allow for more focussed writing within the next four sections.)

I was asked to do a work placement while studying a international gastronomy management BA course in order to acquire practical skills to support my academic knowledge. I choose to based this placement at Morgan's Hotel in Swansea Marina, which is the place in which I'm currently working. The reason why I choose to based it there is because I already have knowledge of internal operations within the hotel, and more chances to adapt the placement to my needs. Based on my placement experience I want to outline in this portfolio my feelings and thoughts about it, as well as do a reflection on what skills I have achieved, what I still need to achieve, and how this experience can be productive for my future within hospitality.

Section 1

Key skills of : Understanding the importance of maximising a positive customer experience, valuing the importance of the guests within the service experience.

Due to the prestige of the Hotel, which is a four star hotel, expectations on customer experience are high, as delivering excellent customer care is the core value of the organisation. The hotel aims to offer excellent customer service, as a matter of fact managers and supervisors pay attention and give importance to staff trainings in order to make sure that the service is done correctly. In addition, since customer satisfaction depends on guests overall experience, each department of the hotel is well-trained in order to offer a great experience. Small details as offering different menu options, including vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free meals are details that add value to the company and to the overall customer experience. Food and beverage staff is trained in order to provide a positive customer experience: staff has a in-depth knowledge of drinks so that every guest's concern or queries can be solved and asked, as well as a strong knowledge of how to offer good dining service. It is quite easy to understand the importance of customer experience in hospitality, but evidences to support this theory might be found in different hospitality websites. The CSM website offers a list of explanation on the importance of positive customer experience as follows:

1. Company's reputation: a research carried out by TripAdvisor in 2018 revealed that possible future guests take in consideration customers' reviews before making the decision to go for your company, as a consequence bad feedback based on poor customer experience will result in poor future customers acquisition.
2. Customer expectations: Guests expect you to offer the best service possible, especially nowadays cause modern customer are defined "sophisticated" as stated in an online article on LinkedIn, as they have more access to information thanks to technology development, as a result they might easily find a valuable competitor if they are not satisfied. (CSM,n.d)
3. In addition, it is estimated that customer service affects 70% of all purchase decisions. (Ahaworldcampus.com,2017).

Based on my experience, I feel up to affirm that current customer experience level at the Morgan's is high: I had the chance to be part of several management meetings aimed to discuss how to achieve customer experience as well as evaluate the current level. In addition, most of customer review are positive.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Ahaworldcampus.com. (2017). Why Customer Service Is Important in Hospitality - AHA World Campus. [online] Available at: <https://www.ahaworldcampus.com/b/customer-service-important-hospitality-industry>.

CSM (n.d.). Why Customer Service Matters Most in the Hospitality Industry. [online] www.customerservicemanager.com. Available at: <https://www.customerservicemanager.com/why-customer-service-matters-most-in-the-hospitality-industry/#:~:text=Excellent%20customer%20service%20is%20also> [Accessed 01 Dec. 2022].

Kwateng, A.K. (2017). 5 Advantages of the "Sophisticated" Customer to any Business. [online] www.linkedin.com. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-advantages-sophisticated-customer-any-business-kwateng-amcimg/> [Accessed 01 Dec. 2022].

Section 2

Evaluate the range of service skills and the provision of these within the everchanging environment of service in restaurants and how to achieve service excellence

Specific skills are needed in order to offer excellent service within hospitality. Some skills are addressed as:

- Attention to detail: each small detail has an impact in the overall guests experience, as a consequence staff must be well-trained and must develop the ability to give importance to small details.
- Patience: this is a key skill in hospitality, as working within this industry might results difficult sometimes, especially when it comes to busiest time. You should be able to solve problems despite consistent challenges even when it comes to frustated and possibly rude customers feedback.
- Professionalism: recognise and respect guest's boundaries is another basic skill needed. Being professional might just mean to have the ability to use the correct tone of voice in a specific situation.
- Multitasking: since working in hospitality requires to deal with large groups of guests, especially in hotel inudstry, staff should develop the ability to deal with lot of guests in once, without making anyone feel not valued.

- Positivity: it is important to be able to positively engaged with guests even during stressful situation, as guests expect you to treat them fairly and kindly.
- Empathy: this is one helpful skill when it comes to understand hidden issues and resolve them in the right way. Being able to understand guests feelings using empathy allows you to have a clear idea of how they want to be treated.
- Problem-solving: this is one ability that we all should achieve and improve even in everyday life, and is one main skill in hospitality as you are expected to create a plan in order to resolve issues and ensure customer satisfaction.
- Flexibility: it often happens that last-minute events take place, as a consequence strong flexibility skill is needed in order to be able to face potential unexpected situations.
- Teamwork: especially in hotel industry, teamwork is a key skill to develop in order to offer an overall excellent service. Working as a team will help you save time and offer consistent customer care. (Indeed Career Guide, 2020.) Based on my experience as supervisor, I've been in charge of training new staff, and I had the chance to teach them my own strategy and give them all the relevant information about service and related operations. I made sure that they had the right training on bar and floor by giving them all the information they needed, as some of them were new in the industry. My personal opinion is that you have to make sure that staff is well-trained and has no insecurities when a guest approaches. Also, it is important to always listen to customers.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard referencing system

Indeed Career Guide. (2020). Hospitality Skills: Definitions and Examples. [online] Available at: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/hospitality-skills>.

Mata, K. (n.d.). How to Achieve Service Excellence: 7 Critical Steps. [online] hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu. Available at: <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/how-to-achieve-service-excellence>.

Section 3

Organisational Issues:

Service Skill Requirements and Operational Issues- Operational systems for resource co-ordination, specific service skills. Changing industry, consumer demands, training initiatives

	food hygiene, requirements, menu planning, legislation, cultural influences, performance measures, verification, and grading. Social media influences (TripAdvisor) and digital management responses.
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Organisational skills and management skills are a difficult field in hotel industry, as the work that comes with hotel management is not always easy. Things to be taken in consideration are:

- Constantly changing expectations of customers: You have to find a way to bridge the gap between perception and actual delight.
- Continued technological changes: as technology is under constant growth process, nowadays guests are more tech-savvy, and as a consequence aspect you to offer them all the technological benefits they are looking for.
- Political and security challenges: hotels managers have to rely on specific security systems in order to ensure guests safety, as unfortunately there are lot of potential risks such as crime and terrorism.
- Health and safety: this is one of the most complicated and important area, as it ensures both staff and guests safety. In fact, some of the most common risks within this area in hotel industry are: fire and electrical shock hazards, slips and falls and food safety. It is vital for a hotel management to ensure health and safety as it help reduce staff turnover, develop a reputation of quality customer service, increase profits, minimise loss (Amentiz,2022). Speaking about my personal experience, I am aware that I still have to learn a lot in terms of health and safety regulations, as this is the field that I find more difficult since it requires an in-depth knowledge of specific regulations, so my plan for the future is to learn more and ask general managers to share documentation with me so that I can learn more about it. Recently I had a negative experience of food safety, as a customer complaint about his food stating that he asked for gluten-free food. Food safety is a tricky aspect, as contamination in kitchens might cause serious issues; chefs must avoid any contamination especially with gluten, and waiters on the other hand must ensure the same when serving food. Making sure that a vegan meal is truly vegan is mandatory, as well as state any "might contains" in the menu to make customers aware.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Amentiz. (2022). What are health and safety protocols in hotels? - Amenitiz Blog. [online] Available at: <https://www.amenitiz.com/en/blog/health-and-safety-protocols-in-the-hospitality-industry/> [Accessed 01 Dec. 2022].

JOBS, S. (2019). Top 6 Management Issues in the Hospitality Industry. [online] Global Hospitality Portal. Available at: <https://www.soegjobs.com/top-management-issues-hospitality-industry/>.

Section 4	Introductory service skills, setting up table mise en place. In service table service, carrying plates, replacement of cutlery, condiment offer, check back. Clearing and re-lay.
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Service requires different skills in order to be excellent, as it is the result of setting up tables, mise en place, and other related actions that need specific skills. In order to make sure that you are doing the correct mise en place, there are lot of tiny details that need to be perfect: cracked crockery should not be put on table, the handle of the cup should be on the right while placing them on the table, all crockery used for the table should be of the same pattern and color, side plates should be placed on the left-hand side of the cover, furthermore cracked glassess should never be used and glasses should be polished and have not stains, then they must be placed upside down at the tip of the large knife and should be of the same design. These are just a few tips of how a mise en place should be done, and based on my experience I proudly affirm that my knowledge of mise en place and service related actions is excellent, as a result of a background of 8 years of experience in hospitality as well as thanks to my academic path. Since I am one of the most good in terms of mise en place and table settings, I always am in charge to do it. In fact, a recenlty experience of Beaujolais Day has resulted helpful in terms of service, tables settings and mise en place: I was asked to be the magaer of the event, as my manegers is currently considering to promote me to higher position, so I was asked to deal with 1200 guest, and run a service with my brigade. I created a plan starting from deciding the time slots for guests, then setting up tables with 3 settings of 240 guests, divided into 20 tables with 12 people, and then I exmplained to my brigade how I wanted the service to be done to avoid complaints. The overall feedback was great, no complaints at all, and staff was feeling good as they felt well-organised.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Mondal, D. (2020). What Is Mise En Place In Hotel - Hotel Management Tips. [online] [www.hotelmanagementtips.com](https://www.hotelmanagementtips.com/mise-en-place-in-hotel-and-restaurant/). Available at: <https://www.hotelmanagementtips.com/mise-en-place-in-hotel-and-restaurant/> [Accessed 01 Dec. 2022].

Restaurant Engine. (2015). 5 Ways to Deliver Excellent Customer Service at Your Restaurant. [online] Available at: <https://restaurantengine.com/deliver-excellent-customer-service/> [Accessed 01 Dec. 2022].