

STUDENT LEARNING LOG

Module: Managing Hotel Administration (BMIH6004)

Lecturer name: Kathryn Roberts

Student name: Gergo Balla (2209327)

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Introduction

Hotel administrative operations are vital because they directly impact guest satisfaction and organisational stability and financial results (Ozdemir et al., 2019). Administrative functions at Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa operate in the departments of reception, back office, finance, and revenue management. Throughout the 10-week Level 6 placement, I observed what supervisory work entailed throughout the hotel administration to understand management's multidimensional challenges. The primary learning objectives for this placement were:

- To develop an understanding of administrative functions within hotel operations.
- To enhance work-based skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.
- To acquire technical knowledge related to hotel administration and guest service management.

- To critically evaluate an organisational issue within the department and propose viable solutions.

Section 1: Reflection on Experience and Personal Development

My reflective practice underwent four key stages in line with Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle.

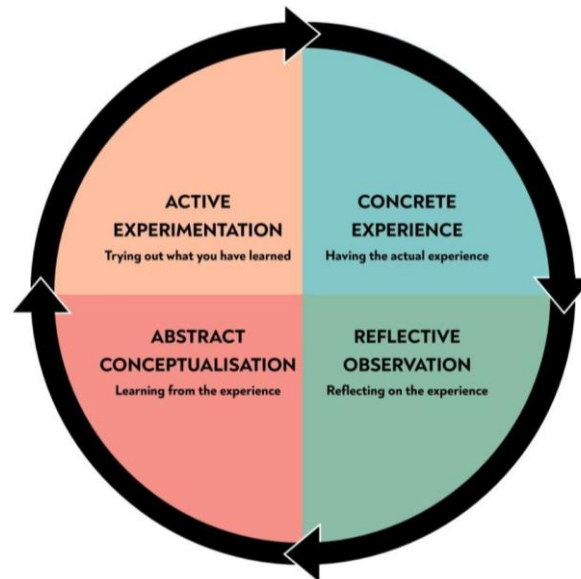


Figure 1: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

Source: (Morris, 2020).

Concrete experience: I dedicated my placement to observing and assisting with administrative work between reception and back-office spaces. A vital part of my responsibilities involved observing a supervisor as he addressed guest enquiries and handled bookings and complaints. Guests experienced difficulties understanding the hotel layout, as it contained an old building with two entrances and no dedicated reception area for the new extension, which resulted in numerous enquiries and complaints.

Reflective observation: The specific observations of guest directional difficulties shaped my awareness of how essential clear signage should be in hotel operational areas. The supervisory duties demonstrated the need for implementing solutions between operational resource limitations

and guest expectations since this showcases essential hospitality management capabilities (Casado, 2012).

Abstract conceptualisation: My previous work experience once again confirmed what I already knew about vital administrative skills in hotel management. Successful implementation of communication methods, team cooperation, and guest service delivery served as essential tools for handling regular operational challenges. My academic study in hospitality management allowed me to use theoretical models that explained guest satisfaction measurement alongside operational effectiveness and management decision-making assessments.

Active experimentation: Active experimentation enabled me to implement minimal changes by improving communication between guests at check-in while adding better signs in the new building section. The altered procedures facilitated a better guest journey and minimised guest confusion.

Experience in the hospitality industry proved essential during my professional training at the hotel. Previous customer service experience allowed me to adapt rapidly, interact with guests professionally, and grasp operational challenges through practical knowledge (Thoriq et al., 2024). Through the placement, I developed advanced task management skills and improved my decision-making abilities while learning how crucial it is to work together in a high-pressure system.

Section 2: Critical Analysis of Work-Based Skills and Technical Knowledge

The ability to deliver effective hotel administration depends on work-based skills and technical knowledge (Wood, 2013). During my time at Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa, I learnt important competencies needed for hotel operation efficiency.

- The hotel required clear, professional communication to handle guest enquiries and complaints. Staff used problem-solving abilities and active listening techniques to provide prompt, satisfactory solutions to guests. People who receive inadequate communication from hotel staff are more likely to write negative reviews that damage the hotel's reputation (Vallen & Vallen, 2014).
- The simultaneous efforts of front-office staff, housekeeping, and back-office personnel maintained good service quality through their collective coordination. According to my observed experience, efficiency reached new heights through coordinated teamwork at both check-in and check-out periods.

- Supervisors needed to manage their tasks and carry out multiple responsibilities instantaneously between check-ins, guest problem resolution, and housekeeping coordination (Tewan, 2009). When I observed my supervisor at work, I learnt about the necessity of establishing priorities while handling various tasks under time-sensitive conditions.
- Knowledge of property management systems (PMS) achieved importance since supervisors needed this understanding for managing all bookings, processes, financial transactions, and check-in procedures (Zarezadeh et al., 2022). The hotel reservation system served as a vital component in generating revenue as well as satisfying guests during my placement period. Staff members' lack of technical capabilities could trigger system errors alongside operational inefficiency issues that produce disruptions in hotel operations.
- The delivery of successful guest satisfaction demanded active intervention according to industry standards. Enhanced guest satisfaction resulted when staff proactively met operational needs before they escalated and solved any arising problems quickly (Olorunsola et al., 2022). The hotel improved guest perceptions of the facility by giving precise directions about the extension before arrival.

The placement experience exposed me to the fundamental value these skills bring to achieving quality services and operational excellence while offering enhanced guest experiences.

Section 3: Reflection on Organisational Issues

The new extension faced a main issue because it failed to include a reception area. The configuration of Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa led to guest misunderstanding when unfamiliar visitors needed to navigate the premises. Many arriving guests first used the main reception area of the old structure before being directed to stay at the new extension rooms. Several guests became lost in the layout, which led them to make multiple requests at reception areas before ending in guest dissatisfaction.

Impact of the Issue

The guest experience was negatively impacted because the confusion resulted in delays and sporadic complaints. All visitors experienced dissatisfaction because they required extended walks, although the individuals with disabilities said it was the most challenging. Guiding guests through unfamiliar paths to the new extension required front desk personnel to repeatedly interrupt

their main duties. Additional work fell to reception personnel as peak time queues became more frequent. A hotel's layout and ease of navigation influence guest perceptions (Rughubalan, 2009). A separate entrance for the new building area should have existed since it confused guests about the institution's order.

Suggested Solutions

The following solutions will help resolve this issue.

- The hotel experience becomes more user-friendly by installing visible direction signs systematically throughout its facilities. Interactive maps and digital displays should be placed at the main reception area to give guests simple visual directions. Bitner's Servicescape Model from 1992 demonstrates that hotel guests form their impressions and satisfaction based on the physical facility environment (Lee, 2018). The wayfinding implementation supports this concept because it reduces stress for guests and improves their overall satisfaction.
- Silent guest preparation starts with sending detailed mapping information that directs bookings to their proper accommodations before arrival. Hotel staff should provide customised explanations using real pictures or digital tours, guaranteeing proper guest preparation before check-in. The research (Ali et al., 2021) demonstrates that reliable and responsive services form the core elements of quality service delivery according to their Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL).

Conclusion and Action Plan

The reflective learning log enabled me to discover vital knowledge about hotel administration and the basic work skills needed for excellent management. My firsthand experience at supervisory-level management at Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa showed me how service management combines operational efficiency and teamwork. A placement experience reinforced my understanding that hotel operations depend on skilled communication and problem-solving abilities, together with the ability to multitask. Analysing the guest orientation problem with that newly constructed extension highlighted the need for proactive service design and strategic decision-making practices in hospitality management. Future improvement of my skills will require me to:

- Additional education about hotel property management systems (PMS) will help me become proficient in their operation.

- Pursuing additional supervisory positions will help me develop competencies for leadership and decision-making abilities.
- Improving my guest service skills needs improvement because of customer service training programs.
- Participating in hospitality industry workshops and networking events will help me stay current on industry trends and best practices.

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