

Module Code: BMIH6003

Module Name: Managing Guest Service Operations

Component 1

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AI Acknowledgement

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

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Part 1: Learning Log-weekly journal entries.....	3
Part 2: Reflective Journal.....	3
Section 1- Reflection on experience and personal development.....	3
Section 2- Critical analysis of work-based skills and technical knowledge.....	5
Section 3- Reflection on Organisational Issues.....	5
Conclusion and Action Plan.....	6
References.....	7
Appendix.....	8

Introduction

The Ibis Hotel is located in Sutton, London, and has easy access to central London (Accor.com, 2024). Its guest service operation includes a front desk as the first point of contact for guests, helping with check-in, checkout, and other amenities-related queries. It also has housekeeping ensuring the safety and cleanliness of hotel rooms while tending to special requests such as guests. The following study will use Gibbs's reflective model, which consists of six stages: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan (Bassot, 2024). The main learning objective of the placement is to broaden one's pool of technical knowledge and hone a wide range of skills necessary to work in such an area.

Part 1: Learning Log-weekly journal entries

Refer to appendix

Part 2: Reflective journal

Section 1- Reflection on experience and personal development

In this section, to share my overall experiences, I have been using Gibb's Reflective Model, which allows me to share my understandings while evaluating those.



Figure 1: Gibb's Reflective Model

(Source: Adeani *et al.*, 2020)

Description

The description stage entails providing a brief overview of the experience and the specific details leading to the experience (Adeani *et al.*, 2020). During my placement, I engaged in shadow working with supervisors within the housekeeping and reception department of Ibis Hotel. While shadowing the supervisor at the front desk, I observed that the supervisor first started by logging in the pre-booked guests for the day within the PMS system and then proceeded to handle inquiries and complaints. While observing the housekeeping supervisor, I observed how they inspected rooms with a checklist ensuring the cleanliness of bathrooms and rooms and the availability of fresh and clean linens while simultaneously addressing the urgent cleaning needs of guest rooms.

Feelings

I was initially anxious and scared as I had no prior experience with the process within housekeeping, especially with room quality and standards of room preparation. However, I observed how the supervisor handled interaction and queries with guests in a calm and empathetic tone; it gave me confidence and encouragement to hone my own skills to offer guests the premium service they deserved in the future.

Evaluation

The evaluation stage focuses on highlighting the good and bad experiences of the situation (Markkanen *et al.*, 2020). Among the positive experiences, observation of the housekeeping supervisor, I observed the work-based skills required, such as communication, allowing smooth coordination with other departments and interpersonal skills, such as patience and composure, needed while engaging in high-pressure situations. While observing reception supervision, I noticed they used active listening skills to listen to customer complaints and devise effective solutions. A challenging aspect was observing the level of commitment and coordination required among departments to accommodate guests, revealing the way communication gaps lead to delays in service and customer dissatisfaction.

Analysis

The shadow work has helped in broadening my understanding of key work-based skills such as communication, critical thinking, interpersonal and more. While shadowing the reception supervisor, I analysed that clear and concise communication led to a positive guest experience, making them feel valued, while being calm and composed during complex situations taught me the importance of managing my emotions. Observing, the housekeeping supervisor taught me the value of effective time management, which they had honed, leading

to their superior effectiveness while delegating tasks, ensuring punctual delivery of services and more.

Conclusion

From a vocational standpoint, the wide and effective skills exhibited by supervisors were a reflection of their years of experience, which stipulated the need for continuous skill development. The placement provided me with key knowledge regarding my own capabilities, highlighting key skill gaps when compared to my supervisors, such as time management, communication, critical thinking, and ITC, all work-based and technical skills that I needed to hone.

Action Plan

I will be seeking further training in both the roles of housekeeping and front office, focusing on the development of key skills such as time management, which I would hone using the Pomodoro technique. I will enrol in online courses that provide certificates and the execution of real-life scenarios to hone my critical thinking skills. I will also read various books and engage in more public speaking to develop my communication skills.

Section 2- Critical analysis of work-based skills and technical knowledge

While shadowing the front desk supervisor, I observed how they handled the complaints from guests regarding changes in the room by engaging in active listening and showcasing empathy towards the guests' issues as part of his communication skills. Thus, this highlights the significance of communication as a work-based skill in upholding guest service (Jawabreh *et al.*, 2022). Shadowing the housekeeping supervisor, I noticed how they used PMS software to conduct an inspection of rooms, highlight key issues in the inspection, and use communication platforms to convey the issues throughout the department, highlighting the significance of proper ICT skills. Within the front desk, it was used by the supervisor to log in guests, check in and check out guests, and review the customer history, which helps them to personalise services for future reference (Hagg, 2013). My previous experience, shadowing the supervisor of the front office of Haven Hall, a small hotel in the UK, provided me with basic knowledge and information regarding the approaches to guest interaction; however, I was not able to gain much experience as the hotel was relatively smaller in size and lacked diverse customer group which I required to expand my experience and pool of knowledge. It was also during my shadowing work of the housekeeping supervisor that I noticed that it was imperative to maintain punctuality in the inspection of rooms, delegate

tasks to the employees under the department supervisor, and communicate issues in a timely fashion to other departments. This highlights the need for time management skills as a work-based skill (Zyoud, 2023).

Section 3- Reflection on organisational issues

The front office and housekeeping act as the central nervous systems of a hotel property, with the effectiveness of both departments playing a crucial role towards guest satisfaction and engagement (Bardi, 2010). Within the placement, there was one instance or situation involving a guest service issue which posed a huge challenge. The situation involved a certain guest who found their room to be of unsatisfactory quality and low standards of cleanliness, as expected when they arrived late. This posed a serious issue towards the hotel's housekeeping department, which is vested with responsibilities from refreshing rooms to providing 24-hour service throughout (Casado, 2012). This was, however, challenging as it was late and all the rooms were occupied, which caused more frustration to the guests. Since the front desk was involved in addressing the complaint, this led to a slowing down of the check-in process and diverted attention from other guests and their confrontations, causing a ripple effect (Rughubalan, 2009). This situation outlined the risks in lapses of judgment regarding proper inspection of rooms and upholding cleanliness standards. Among the possible solutions is the adoption of TQM or a total quality management framework aiming to improve the quality of organisations' services through everyone's involvement in the overall decision-making process (Permana *et al.*, 2021). Using this framework, the hotel can focus on continuous improvement aimed at reducing errors by conducting random room inspections and incorporating customer feedback collection to identify potential underlying issues (ASET, 2017). Furthermore, the hotel could use the principle of Herzberg's two-factor theory outlining the meeting of hygiene and motivator factors to help address the situation (Alrawahi *et al.*, 2020). The hotel could use such a principle to empower the front desk with the power to provide the guests with complimentary drinks, refunds, and room upgrades to resolve such issues. In the current situation, using Herzberg's theory, the receptionist and housekeeping supervisor provided the guest with complimentary drinks while focusing on meeting the hygiene factor of cleanliness and quickly cleaning the nearest available room (QAA, 2018). Such a combination of complimentary amenities as a gesture of goodwill and open communication helped to resolve the issue properly.

Conclusion and action plan

To conclude, shadowing work helped me observe how supervisors made use of key work-based skills and used their principles to conduct their duties. Shadow working has helped me better understand the need for ITC skills as it was one of my skill gaps hindering my ability to work in such a working environment. To improve this skill further I need to watch more tutorials, promote digital literacy and encourage collaboration.

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Appendix

Weeks	Tasks performed	Lesson learned	Challenges faced
Week 1	I started by familiarising myself with the PMS or property management system which was being utilised by the hotel.	I was able to learn the significance of having interpersonal skills such as patience while dealing with a diverse group of customers	Understanding the proper working of the PMS software being utilised by the hotel was a huge challenge
Week 2	I engaged in more front desk-focused roles entailing making reservations received from phone calls paced by potential guests or through emails.	I learned that clearly conveying the wait time that would take to process the booking, and providing clear information about the amenities available within the booking, and hotel policies help to reduce customer tension and frustration guests	Providing fast and effective services while maintaining proper balance and coordination with housekeeping staff to ensure reduced delays and booking of rooms was a huge challenge
Week 3	I took on additional duties of administration including reviewing	I gained valuable information regarding the importance of cross-checking and	The challenge most faced was the ability to multitask while simultaneously

	guests' feedback and review	coordination to avoid the reduction of errors	being effective in each activity
Week 4	I started collaborating more effectively with housekeeping staff to ensure the provision of amenities for guests and ensure their special requests were met	I was able to learn the importance of cross-departmental collaboration to ensure smooth conduction of activities.	Effectively coordinating with other departments posed a huge challenge
Week 5	I started to take more responsibility such as providing key insight regarding front desk activities to new staff engaged in training	I learned the value of maintaining composure while exhibiting staff training	Managing the training staff while simultaneously handling customer complaints posed a huge challenge
Week 6	I handled guest reviews, processed checkouts and conducted backlog work	I understood the value of honing work-based skills along with gathering financial acumen	One such challenge was managing the financial aspects of the front desk operations

Week 1

Activities/ Duty: Positive/Negative Experience: One of the positive experiences was that I aided a family of four in changing rooms at the last minute to better accustom the needs of their children for which they thanked me personally. A negative experience was that I struggled heavily to understand the PMS system due to my lack of prior knowledge leading to delays with check-ins causing frustration within the guest due to the extended waiting time.

Emotional Experience: I was highly nervous, anxious and stressed since it was my first week on the job and the tasks I had to execute were overwhelming however as the week progressed I felt more confident as I started to gain more positive feedback from my supervisor and guests.

Future Endeavours: In the future, I will aim to gain a better understanding of the PMS system, especially the reservation, rate and occupancy management process.

Week 2

Positive/Negative Experience: One positive experience was that I was able to resolve the issues of late cancellation by properly communicating our hotel policy and offering alternative solutions such as discounts in future booking

I faced difficulty in communicating with one of the guests as they spoke in a gorgin dialect which I was not able to understand creating miscommunication and confusion leading to delay of services.

Emotional Experience: I was heavily anxious about taking on added responsibilities which caused immense stress throughout the week.

Future Endeavours: I assessed that I need to work on developing my time management skills while operating the front desks to avoid overwhelming tasks and ensure the smooth conduction of activities on time.

Week 3

Positive/ Negative experience: I positively handled an error in booking regarding a guest by showcasing patience and problem-solving skill

An error was made in terms of billing a guest due to a lack of transparent communication between housekeeping and the front desk.

Emotional Experience: I was comfortable while performing the duties since my supervisor was highly impressed with my working ethic.

Future Endeavours: I need to observe a general enhancement of multitasking skills.

Week 4

Positive/Negative Experience: Booking a last-minute room for a guest became much easier for me as he cancelled his travel plan, which boosted me. However, I failed to relay a particular communication from a guest on how they wanted their room to be served by the housekeeping department, which caused some delay.

Emotional Experience: I'm motivated by the outcome since the guests who were served complimented me, which makes me feel assured.

Future Endeavours: I will concentrate more on developing my attention to detail and teamwork abilities.

Week 5

Positive/Negative Experience: My ability to convey key points to consider helped me greatly boost my confidence.

One of the guests complained of an overcharge in their bill due to an error from the hotel's restaurant.

Emotional Experience: I was stressed due to the added responsibility of managing and overseeing staff training

Future Endeavours: I will work more on developing my problem-solving skills

Week 6

Positive/Negative Experience: I was greatly appreciated by my fellow coworkers for providing support and for my work ethics

I had to deal with complaints from guests regarding room amenities and cleanliness

Emotional Experience: I was confident and felt a sense of accomplishment during the entire week

Future Endeavours: I will be working towards developing financial skills, communication and other technical skills.