

Title = Student Learning Log

Module = Managing Hotel Administration

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I conducted my placement at Maldron hotel, and I was present at the placement's orientation meeting. There were a few students which also attended, and the placement supervisor explained the placements job purpose. I was made aware of the rules and regulations of working in this hotel. I was also informed of all the safety precautions, such as the health and safety procedures, emergency exit procedures, fire and safety procedures and the emergency escape route. I was given real life examples and circumstances of other students that did this placement prior and was informed of their shortcomings, achievements, and job scopes. This ensures that me and all my fellow students can achieve our goals and with minimal mistakes and encouraging innovation at our time in the front office department. Certain learning objectives and things to do during the placement were given by the supervisor. The emphasis of the front office department was articulated. The value of the front office department is pivotal for the performance of the hotel. During my placement, some of my tasks were to observe guest check in and check out to widen my knowledge, assistance with reservations, help with guest services and enquiries, communication, issuance of key cards, helping to handle special requests, problem resolution, observing collaboration with other departments, emergency response, and maintaining a professional approach and appearance. My own learning outcomes for this placement were to develop and enhance customer service skills, communication skills, reservation management skills, guest

relation skills, problem solving skills, check – in and check – out skills, time management skills. Teamwork skills and adaptability skills. During my work in the front office department, I helped customers check in and check out, I did this about 80 times. I also gave customers they are number to store luggage and retrieved luggage with this number. I also gave keycards when necessary. My self-reflection is that I have developed some skills such as customer service skills, time management skills, communication skills and technology skills.

There have been a few problems that I have experienced, some have arisen from missed opportunities, some from increased number of customers and some from technology problems. One of the key issues at Maldron hotel is that there are sometimes demanding situations that arise. This is as front desk staff are presented with demanding situations as they get the most input as they are the reception of the hotel. Some of these issues may be dealing with irate guests, handling unexpected events, and managing emergencies. The solution to this problem may be providing staff with training on conflict resolution, emergency and crisis management which helps staff prepare for these situations. This problem is regarding people management. Another problem may be a language barrier between the staff and the customer. This problem arises as hotels are a hub for international procedures. This is a prevalent problem as I have experienced this during my placement several times. This could affect the customer as the front desk is unable to interpret their message which could cause problems later. To eliminate these problems a solution is needed. A solution might be to keep a translator available for the most common languages or inform all workers of the google translate tool that can be used online. This problem is an issue of culture, communication, and people management. Another solution that I have realised is time management. Front desks usually must balance multiple tasks simultaneously. Some of these tasks are check – ins and check – outs, talking to clients

on the phone, and responding to inquiries. This is especially demanding during the peak hours and early morning hours. The solution to this problem is developing an action plan during peak hours and early morning hours. Developing time management strategies are key to the operation of the hotel. Some tasks should be prioritised over hours which will create a well organised workspace, and this also enhances efficiency. This is an issue of management and can be resolved by communication.

A front desk hotel placement is a dynamic environment where self-management are perquisites for success. My placement will play a pivotal role in my learning as I have picked up a plethora of skills and I have been faced with multiple challenges which I have had to overcome. Some of the skills I have gained are self-management skills, communication skills, task management skills and initiative application.

Self-management and development skills are in high demand in the front office department, and I have honed these skills throughout my placement. These skills are needed as this department is fast paced and requires adaptability and resilience. This is as the jobs vary from managing guest expectations, navigating challenges due to technical problems, navigating during busy check in and out periods. During these hardships, composure and focus is essential. To use this skill, I needed to develop an awareness of my personal strengths and shortcomings so I can develop them. An example of when I used my self-management skills are when I welcomed guests during check ins, I needed these skills to handle multiple tasks at once and effectively manage the time. This significantly helped my personal development and helped me in the front desk role.

Task management is also part of the job. Effective task management can eliminate all problems, it can especially streamline the process during check – in and check – out. This includes multitasking (from ensuring a smooth experience of

guests to processing requests and reservations and handling guest enquiries. All these tasks require pristine planning and execution. In an instance, task management would be effective when managing a queue of guests while simultaneously on the phone handling calls and coordinating with housekeeping to meet the demands of the guests during peak hours. All these jobs demand task management.

The application of initiative in workplace to navigate away from problems is especially important as they are inevitable. Whether a staff member is dealing with unexpected and hard guest requests, dealing with reservation discrepancies, technical glitches and more. For example, one time I encountered a problem where a guest's reserved room was not available upon check – in needed some action. I swiftly communicated the issues to the guests and housekeeping to ensure the problems are resolved. The initiative to solve an individual's problem is aided by this skill.

Communication skills are very key in the front office. This is as you must communicate problems during check – in and check – out. The articulation of information in a concise way requires communication skills. Communication is needed for customers and other departments. For example, I have communicated check – in problems numerous times to housekeeping. I communicated with customers using international navigation if there are any language barriers. For example, one time I did this and used international navigation to confirm their name so they could check in and out.

Application of knowledge is needed as the front desk is a hub of information and the application of knowledge is important, especially during the check – in and check – out times.

Applying knowledge about payment procedures, recommendations and to pave the way around problems. An example of this may be when I was checking in someone when a technical problem occurred on the computer. I then navigated around the problem with my knowledge on technology.

In conclusion, my placement has been a transformative journey as I have developed and honed a plethora of skills which will transform my learning journey. I navigated through a range of objectives and jobs from check – in and check - outs. Customer service, time management, communication skills are vital. The challenges I were faced with were negated with all the skills that I have developed during this time. This placement tested my resilience and patience and improved it.