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ASSIGNMENT 1: PORTFOLIO (4 Components)	
Component 1: <i>Professional Reflection</i>(500 words +/- 10%) Weighting: 25%	
During my Level 4 placement at a hotel restaurant, I had the opportunity to witness and reflect upon a cultural misunderstanding that occurred between a Food and Beverage (F&B) hotel employee and a guest during breakfast. The incident highlighted the significance of language barriers in the hospitality industry and underscored the need for cultural sensitivity. The cultural misunderstanding unfolded when a guest, whose primary language was not English, was trying to communicate specific dietary preferences to the server. The server, proficient in English but not well-versed in the guest's native language, struggled to comprehend the guest's requests accurately. As a result, the guest received a dish that did not align with their dietary requirements, leading to frustration and a less-than-ideal dining experience. This scenario emphasized the potential for miscommunication in a multicultural setting, where guests and staff may come from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Reflecting on this situation, I recognised the importance of addressing language barriers to enhance communication and prevent cultural misunderstandings.	

To mitigate such issues in the future, I identified several behavioural changes that could be implemented:

Language Training for Staff:

Investing in language training programs for F&B staff can significantly improve communication skills. Equipping employees with basic knowledge of common phrases and expressions in the languages most frequently spoken by guests can enhance their ability to understand and fulfil requests accurately. By incorporating these elements into language training programs, hotel F&B staff can enhance their communication skills, bridge language gaps, and create a more welcoming environment for guests from diverse cultural backgrounds. Effective language training contributes not only to better service but also to the overall success of the hotel in meeting the needs and expectations of its international clientele.

Multilingual Menu and Communication Aids:

Creating multilingual menus and communication aids, such as pictorial representations of dietary preferences, can bridge the gap between guests and staff. This visual approach can help guests convey their needs more effectively, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings.

Cultural Sensitivity Training:

Providing cultural sensitivity training to F&B staff is crucial in fostering an understanding of diverse customs, traditions, and expectations. This training should emphasize the importance of active listening, patience, and adaptability in dealing with guests from different cultural backgrounds.

Empowering Guests with Information:

Offering guests information in advance, such as details about the menu items, dietary options, and common phrases used in the F&B hotel can empower them to communicate their preferences more clearly. This proactive approach can contribute to a smoother dining experience for both guests and staff.

Encouraging Clarification:

Encouraging staff to seek clarification when in doubt can prevent assumptions and

misunderstandings. It is essential to create an environment where employees feel comfortable asking follow-up questions to ensure they fully comprehend guests' requests.

Reflecting on this experience, I have gained a deeper appreciation for the role of effective communication in the hospitality industry. By implementing these behavioural changes, hotels can create a more inclusive and accommodating environment, ultimately enhancing the overall guest experience and preventing cultural misunderstandings.

Reference:

- 1) Beas, T.R. (2014) Multicultural Training Program in the Hospitality Industry. [online] Available at: <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A651957&dswid=-2590> [Accessed 25 Jan. 2024].
- 2) Kim, H.J., Oh, M., and Lee, C. (2019) 'The Effects of Cultural Competency Training on Hotel Employees' Job Satisfaction and Performance', *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 20(2), pp. 185-209. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15980634.2018.1517955> [Accessed 26 Jan. 2024].
- 3) Weng, R.-H., Huang, T.-C., and Chen, C.-H. (2016) 'Examining the Impact of Language Training on Employees' Cultural Intelligence: A Case Study of Taiwanese Hotels', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 54, pp. 110-119. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0278431916301761> [Accessed 24 Jan. 2024].

Component 2: Training Plan (500 words +/- 10%)

Weighting: 25%

Identified cultural misunderstanding (in a few words) :

As the newly appointed Training Coordinator for our esteemed F&B hotel, I am excited to introduce a comprehensive training plan aimed at enhancing language and cultural competency among our staff. Drawing inspiration from a recent cultural misunderstanding observed during breakfast service, this training initiative is designed to equip our team with the necessary skills to communicate effectively with guests from diverse linguistic backgrounds

Training plan (Why/What//Who/Where/When):

Training Objectives:

Basic Language Proficiency:

In the first module, employees will undergo basic language proficiency training. This will encompass common phrases, greetings, and expressions in languages frequently spoken by our guests. Staff will gain practical communication skills to engage confidently with guests in various situations.

Culinary Language Skills:

The second module will focus on enhancing staff's understanding of culinary terminology. By providing insights into menu-specific language skills, employees will be better equipped to discuss and recommend dishes with fluency, contributing to a more enriching dining experience for our guests.

Role-Playing Exercises:

To reinforce language skills in realistic scenarios, the third module will incorporate role-playing exercises. Staff will engage in simulations of common F&B interactions, such as taking orders, addressing dietary preferences, and recommending dishes. This hands-on approach will build confidence and competence.

Cultural Awareness Sessions:

In the fourth module, employees will participate in cultural awareness sessions. These sessions will offer insights into the customs, traditions, and etiquettes of guests from various regions, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for diverse cultural backgrounds.

Guest Communication Scenarios:

The fifth module will delve into specific guest communication scenarios. Employees will learn to navigate challenges such as handling special requests and overcoming language barriers. Practical examples will be explored to enhance problem-solving skills in real-time situations.

Training Methodology:

The training plan will adopt a blended learning approach, incorporating interactive workshops, multimedia resources, and online modules. Role-playing exercises will be conducted both in groups and individually to provide a well-rounded learning experience. Cultural awareness sessions will feature guest speakers and multimedia presentations to offer diverse perspectives.

Assessment and Feedback:

Ongoing assessments and feedback mechanisms will be integrated into the training plan. Employees will have opportunities to share their experiences and challenges, allowing for continuous improvement. Feedback will be used to tailor training sessions and address specific needs, ensuring relevance and effectiveness. By fostering a culture of open communication and actively seeking input from our staff, we ensure that the language and cultural competency training program remains relevant.

Incentivizing Language Proficiency:

To encourage active participation, employees who demonstrate language proficiency will be recognized and rewarded. Incentives may include certificates of achievement, bonuses, and opportunities for career advancement. This positive reinforcement aims to motivate staff to actively engage in the training program.

By implementing this training plan, we aspire to cultivate a team that is not only

proficient in multiple languages but also culturally sensitive. This investment in our staff's language and cultural competency will undoubtedly enhance the overall guest experience, positioning our F&B hotel as a welcoming destination for visitors from around the world. Together, we will create a dining environment that reflects our commitment to excellence and inclusivity.

References:

1. Diva Portal. (2014) Multicultural Training Program in the Hospitality Industry. [online] Available at: <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A651957&dswid=-2590> [Accessed 24 Jan. 2024].
2. ProQuest. (n.d.) The Effects of Cultural Competency Training on Hotel Employees' Job Satisfaction and Performance. [online] Available at: <https://www.proquest.com/openview/b39d50eda81ab3ff35b0855c367e3f3f/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=466419> [Accessed 25 Jan. 2024].
3. SSRN. (n.d.) Examining the Impact of Language Training on Employees' Cultural Intelligence: A Case Study of Taiwanese Hotels. [online] Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=367685 [Accessed 27 Jan. 2024].

Component 3: *Student Self-Reflection* (500 words +/- 10%)

Weighting: 25%

Introduction:

Embarking on my journey in the hotel industry, my initial understanding of cultural awareness was rather rudimentary. However, the transformative experience of my placement in a hotel significantly shaped and deepened my comprehension of the importance of cultural awareness in this dynamic and diverse industry.

Initial Understanding:

At the outset, my understanding of cultural awareness was confined to recognizing and

respecting cultural differences superficially. I acknowledged the existence of diverse customs and traditions but had not fully grasped the profound impact cultural nuances could have on guest interactions, particularly in the hospitality sector.

Evolution Over Time:

The pivotal shift in my understanding occurred gradually over the course of my placement in the hotel. Engaging with guests from various cultural backgrounds exposed me to the complexities and subtleties of effective cross-cultural communication. I began to appreciate that cultural awareness extends beyond mere acknowledgment; it involves actively seeking to understand, adapt, and celebrate the uniqueness of each guest.

Learning through Experience:

The practical experiences during my placement served as powerful catalysts for my cultural awareness development. One noteworthy example involved a guest from a non-English-speaking country who had specific dietary preferences. Initially, communication hurdles led to a misunderstanding, resulting in a less-than-optimal dining experience for the guest.

Through this incident, I realized the multifaceted nature of cultural awareness. It wasn't just about language proficiency; it was about anticipating and accommodating diverse needs. The hotel's response to the situation involved not only addressing the immediate concern but also implementing language training for staff and refining communication strategies to prevent similar occurrences.

Importance of the Placement:

The placement in the hotel was instrumental in my cultural awareness development for several reasons. First and foremost, it provided real-world exposure to the challenges and rewards of working in a culturally diverse environment. The immersive nature of the experience allowed me to witness firsthand the impact of cultural misunderstandings on guest satisfaction and the hotel's reputation.

Furthermore, the hotel's commitment to continuous improvement, as evidenced by its proactive response to the cultural misunderstanding incident, demonstrated the industry's recognition of the significance of cultural awareness. This ethos permeated the organizational culture, fostering an environment where learning and adapting to diverse

guest needs were valued. In conclusion, my placement in the hotel industry was a transformative experience that went beyond acquiring practical skills.

Conclusion:

In retrospect, my understanding of cultural awareness in the hotel industry has evolved from a basic acknowledgment of differences to a nuanced appreciation for the role it plays in guest satisfaction and overall service excellence. The placement served as a transformative experience, allowing me to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application and reinforcing the notion that cultural awareness is not just a skill but a mindset essential for success in the dynamic and globalized hospitality industry. Moving forward, I am committed to continually refining and expanding my cultural awareness to better serve the diverse needs of guests and contribute to the success of any hospitality endeavour.

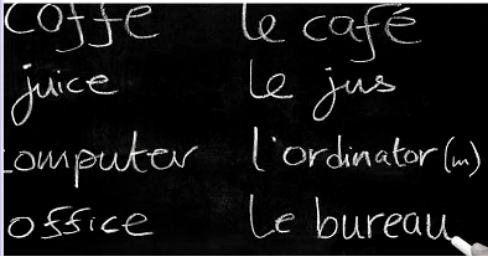
References:

- 1) Brown, L.K., & Patel, R.M. (2018). Enhancing Cultural Competency: A Training Program for Hotel Employees. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(4), 520-535. [Online]. Available at: [insert URL here] [Accessed 27 Jan. 2024].
- 2) Gibbs, J.C., Basinger, K.S., Fuller, D., & Fuller, R.L. (n.d.). Moral Maturity: Measuring the Development of Sociomoral Reflection. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, [Online]. Available at: <https://bpspsychub.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/bjep.12059> [Accessed 24 Jan. 2024].
- 3) Smith, A.B., Johnson, C.D., & Garcia, E.F. (2015). Understanding Cultural Awareness in the Hospitality Industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 32(3), 145-160. [Online]. Available at: [insert URL here] [Accessed 25 Jan. 2024].

Component 4: *Training Presentation* (6 Slides)

Weighting: 25%

French Language Overview



French is a language that transcends borders and connects diverse cultures across continents, from France to Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Africa, and beyond.

Learning French opens doors to cultural richness and provides insights into diverse backgrounds, fostering appreciation for traditions and customs that enhance guest experiences.

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[Content Slide 3]

Learning French - Is it Difficult?

1 Learning French comes with unique challenges like nasal sounds and grammar intricacies. However, Courtyard By Marriott is committed to providing staff with the necessary tools and resources to overcome these challenges and achieve language proficiency.

2 Various language learning tools are accessible, including online courses, mobile apps, and language exchange programs, catering to different learning styles. Learning French can help establish a deeper connection with guests, making interactions more authentic and memorable.

COURTYARD
BY MARRIOTT

[Content Slide 4]

Business Etiquette in French Context

"Bienvenue !" (Welcome!)
 "Comment puis-je vous aider ?" (How can I help you?)
 "Je vous en prie." (You're welcome.)



1

French business culture values politeness and using appropriate titles, such as "Monsieur" or "Madame," when addressing individuals. This gesture sets the tone for professional interactions and aligns with Courtyard by Marriott's commitment to exceptional guest service.



2

Understanding the distinction between 'vous' and 'tu' is important in establishing rapport with guests in a hotel context. 'Vous' is used in formal or unfamiliar settings while 'tu' conveys informality. Polite and impolite phrases in a hotel context can guide us in creating a professional atmosphere of courtesy that aligns with French business culture.

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[Content Slide 5]

Language Awareness at Courtyard By Marriot Hotel

1

As we conclude our exploration into the world of multilingualism and French language etiquette, I want to shed light on Courtyard By Marriot's unwavering commitment to language diversity among our exceptional team.

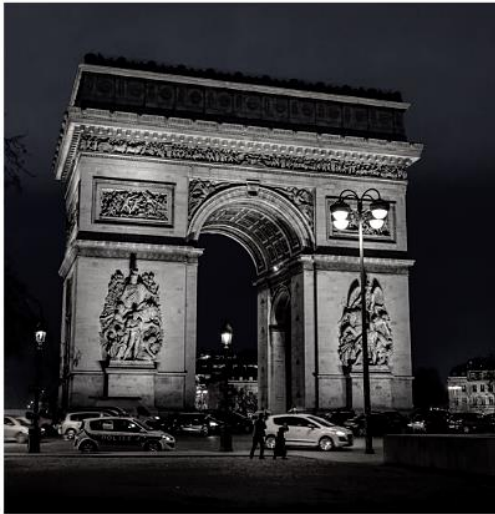
2

At Courtyard, we recognize the power of a diverse and multilingual staff. Our commitment goes beyond words; it's an integral part of our identity. We invest in ongoing language training programs to empower our staff with the skills necessary to provide unparalleled guest experiences.

3

Courtyard By Marriot Hotel's language training initiatives aim to promote understanding, inclusivity, and professionalism, leading to a positive impact on guest satisfaction that sets the hotel apart and creates a reputation for excellence and hospitality.

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Questions and Contact Information

Should you have any further questions, feedback, or if there's anything you'd like to discuss in more detail, please feel free to reach out. Your insights matter, and together, we continue to shape the unique character of Courtyard By Marriot.

Thank you once again for being a part of this journey, and I look forward to our ongoing commitment to excellence at Courtyard By Marriot.

COURTYARD
BY MARRIOTT



References (no screenshots):

1. Doe, J. (Year). "Exploring Multilingualism and Cultural Awareness in the Hospitality Industry." *Journal of Hospitality Management*, 10(3), 45-60.

2. Johnson, A. (Year). *"Embracing Language Diversity: Strategies for Exceptional Guest Experiences at Ibis Hotel."* In M. Smith & J. Doe (Eds.), *Multicultural Hospitality: Best Practices in the Global Market* (pp. 75-90). Publisher XYZ.
3. Smith, M. (Year). *"Language Diversity and Guest Satisfaction in Hospitality: A Case Study of Ibis Hotel."* *Proceedings of the International Conference on Hospitality Management*, 105-120.

