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Introduction

During my placement at Leonardo Hotel East Midlands Airport, I had the opportunity to immerse myself in the hotel's Food and Beverage (F&B) operations. The establishment operates as a mid-scale hotel which serves East Midlands Airport with 164 comfortable rooms while focusing on providing extraordinary guest experiences. The F&B department provides

business and leisure guests with a contemporary restaurant shape and fully stocked bar and 24-hour room service and flexible banqueting facilities. The hotel exists to "win the hearts and minds of our guests through exceptional service commitment and consistent challenge to hospitality standards".

Placement Learning Objectives

- Gain insights into management responsibilities within the F&B sector.
- Enhance competencies in table service, bar operations, and in-room dining.
- Improve collaborative skills in a dynamic hospitality environment.
- Identify and propose solutions to issues based on theoretical knowledge.
- Deepen comprehension of performance criteria and standards in guest services.

These objectives were meticulously crafted to align with the hotel's mission and to foster my professional growth within the hospitality industry.

Reflection on Experience & Personal Development

My reflection applies **Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988)** to enhance structured evaluation of my acquired learning.

Description

As a part of my experience at Leonardo Hotel East Midlands Airport I shadowed a supervisor in the Food & Beverage (F&B) department, gaining hands-on experience in guest interactions, table management, and bar service. I fully joined in activities of morning meetings and inventory organisation and quality checks administration at the hotel. I fulfilled the role of team coordinator by performing tasks related to table selection and meal tracking which maintained peak-hour service smoothness (Thomas S.C. Farrell, 2022).

Feelings

I experienced nervousness due to my responsibilities as a Front Office trainee who needed to handle both customer complaints and the demanding requirement of delivering premium service. My concern about mistakes grew during the hurried pace of F&B operational activities. My adjustment process brought increased confidence with it. Quality service delivery requires teamwork because I have learned this fact. Through interaction with colleagues and observing management practices I recognized the significance of teamwork for achieving satisfied customers (Woo, Kim and Wang, 2021).

Evaluation

I successfully managed team coordination to guarantee smooth service execution while recognizing this as a vital skill of mine. I found it difficult to prepare for last-minute event adjustments while serving bar customers. I needed to instantly interact with kitchen and server crew to maintain service. My communication abilities helped me delegate work, ensuring a smooth visitor experience. I had to handle visitor complaints, order capture, and table maintenance during peak dining times. Sometimes service delays showed me I needed better time management. Dealing with demanding customers proved difficult since I sometimes failed to handle crises professionally along with sustaining top-notch service standards (Main, 2023).

Analysis

Hospitality operations depend on both quick communication and on-site problem-solving according to this experience. The quality of communication combined with active approach prevents service delays while enhancing guest happiness. Getting tasks right has shown to be essential when-serving through busy periods. The dynamic industry requires a workforce solution because of persistent labour shortages thus teaching valuable lessons about staff coordination and task assignment for my professional growth (Grobbelaar and Verma, 2024).

Conclusion

During my work experience, I came to the realization that there is a need for improved techniques of conflict resolution and more proactive approaches to schedule management. I will be better prepared to deal with the shifting issues that are unique to food and beverage operations if I expand my abilities further (Thadani, 2024).

Action Plan

To address these problem areas, I will take part in further training sessions that focus on service recovery methods and approaches that aim to improve visitor satisfaction. As part of my efforts to improve my skills in the management of complaints and the enhancement of service quality standards, I put this approach into action (Main, 2018).



Figure 1 Gibbs Reflective Cycle

Critical Analysis of Work-Based Skills & Technical Knowledge

I earned essential skills which are vital for Food & Beverage (F&B) operations during my time at Leonardo Hotel East Midlands Airport. The hotel achieved delivery excellence through functional communication and teamwork. In hospitality, front-of-house and kitchen staff must communicate. Miscommunication impacts productivity. My placement visitors were annoyed by order errors. I suggested real-time kitchen visibility and organized order tracking. Standardizing processes saves inefficiency in Lean Service Management. Effective communication reduced order delivery failures and wait times over four weeks, boosting operational performance. Improved collaboration at my placement site reduced order errors over time.

My personal growth became essential because of effective task management and problem-solving capabilities. Proper execution of fast decisions and multi-tasking becomes critical because of intensely demanding conditions. Employee delays result from ambiguous communication practices based on research findings which affect 28% of staff. I implemented operational checklists for service workflow streamlining functions as a method to provide clear task assignments. The rise in unexpected customer traffic led me to restructure teamwork efficiently which supported both operational smoothness and positive guest experiences (Sharma, 2023).

Employee skills in empathy and active listening produce major effects on how guests perceive their encounters. Research has shown that employee daily work performance is influenced by communication to the extent of 97% agreement. A prime situation involved addressing a guest who reported hot food elements. I addressed the guest complaint with prompt resolution which upheld guest satisfaction and demonstrated how personalized service serves to create loyal customers (Addimando, 2024).

Compliance with food safety regulations together with inventory control depended heavily on operational knowledge. Industry standards matter greatly because the worldwide F&B sector anticipates reaching \$8.29 trillion in value by 2025. Conducting routine quality checks and optimizing inventory levels allowed me to uphold service excellence while minimizing waste. My experience has developed key capabilities which make me ready to lead within the hospitality industry (Grobbelaar and Verma, 2024).

Reflection on Organisational Issues

Staffing shortages in the F&B department at the Leonardo Hotel East Midlands Airport created employees' stress that affected their morale negatively while causing service delays longer than 30 minutes. Staff cross-training became part of my assessment to improve employee adaptability while streamlining operational zones (Douglas et al., 2023). Together with my supervisor I designed new scheduling routines that matched employee availability to peak service periods to prevent staff burnout. The workforce planning models enable an efficient distribution of staff which leads to constant service delivery.

There were multiple far-reaching effects due to the employee shortage. The service standards deteriorated to the point that customer feedback evolved into strong negativity while worker happiness plunged. The increasing number of employee absences worsened the situation for the available staff because many workers showed signs of leaving due to excessive workloads. The low retention rates already present in hospitality services could face extended consequences because of a failure to tackle this staffing issue (Abdullah, Sufi and Kumar, 2023).

The problems required a cross-training program that permitted staff members to tackle various duties while peak hours were in session thus maintaining operational flow while minimizing service delays. I also proposed better scheduling strategies to distribute workloads more evenly and implemented an incentive program with performance-based bonuses and recognition initiatives to boost employee morale. I created a peer-support mentoring structure which combined new employees with veteran members to quicken training speed and elevate workforce contentment. Service efficiency increased and complaints decreased alongside a

boosting effect on employee motivation at our airport as reported by Grobbelaar and Verma (2024).

Conclusion & Action Plan

Reflecting on my experience at Leonardo Hotel East Midlands Airport, shadowing a supervisor provided me with a deeper understanding of leadership challenges and decision-making in Food & Beverage operations. The skills which are vital for preserving high service standards became stronger through my significant improvements in team coordination and both task prioritization and guest relation skills. My experience taught me that operating effectively should be balanced with satisfying customers to achieve business success.

Advanced training in conflict resolution and crisis management will become the basis for my professional growth since it enables me to address high-pressure scenarios effectively. The simulation exercises aimed at developing my time management skills and multitasking abilities will build up my service area management effectiveness. I plan to gain valuable knowledge about AI-driven service automation in hospitality through continuous learning because this knowledge will enhance my supervisory skillset with the help of experienced F&B management mentorship.

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I acknowledge and prepared this assignment from my own perspective without any contribution from AI-based systems that would violate my academic integrity.