

learning log

by Georgiana Hodor

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KITCHEN, FOOD AND BEVERAGE LEARNING LOG

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Kitchen, Food and Beverage Learning Log

The knowledge gained in a kitchen, food and beverage management departments is essential in hospitality, event and hospitality management. Practice in a related field is equally important as it helps to maximise the impact created by training. Practice enables the learner to become proficient in a new behaviour or skill. Most people join a practice with high expectations, but the results and experiences during practice may vary greatly from one person to another. As a result, the ability to reflect on the experiences, strengths and weaknesses as well as using lessons gained to improve one's performance may be a defining skill among learners. In this learning log, I recount my experiences during practice.

During my practice, I got an opportunity to work at Marriott, a hotel located in Swansea that offers both beverages and food to customers. Before joining the hotel, I was excited about the opportunity, but I felt anxious about the new experience. However, I discovered that the employees were friendlier and supportive than I thought. I gradually adapted to the workplace environment, performing different roles under different departments. Some of the most impactful departments in my placement were kitchen and food beverage. Headed by the executive chef, the role of the kitchen department is the preparation of food for guests. The restaurant department, on the other hand, is in direct communication with customers. In addition to taking orders from customers and forwarding them to the kitchen staff, the restaurant staff ensures that customers attain high satisfaction. The restaurant is also responsible for collecting payments from customers, which is the main source of hotel's revenue. While there were exciting moments and triumphs when working in these departments, there were challenges too. As a result, the two departments are also the ones that gave lasting impacts on my practice.

Importance of Communication

One of the most important lessons that I learned during placement was the importance of excellent communication between the restaurant and kitchen departments. At the restaurant, customers may make orders with specific instructions either due to preferences for particular cooking styles or allergies to certain foods or ingredients. Failure to transmit the exact instructions and subsequent implementation by the kitchen department could lead to complaints or illnesses of patients. For instance, some customers are allergic to food colourings and sodium benzoate. Consequently, the inclusion of these additives in food prepared for a customer with the respective allergy will lead to complaints. Additionally, the customer could develop illness leading to a low level of satisfaction. For customers with specific preferences, food delivery is further complicated by vegetarians and vegans. A vegetarian is an individual who do not consume meat, fish, game, or their by-products but rather prefer vegetables, grains, fruits and nuts. In particular, vegans are opposed to animal meat and products derived from the due to reasons such as religion, environment conservation, ethics or health. As a result, the inclusion of any animal by-products in their food could lead to negative feedback and poor experience. As such, effective communication between the two departments is critical to the success of the business as it ensures that unique preferences and instructions from a particular customer are captured in food delivery. For people with complications such as celiac disease, food must be gluten-free. Gluten refers to a protein found in foods such as triticale, rye, barley, and wheat. Avoiding gluten helps autoimmune patients prevent an attack of the small intestine by the immune system. Since gluten could cause significant damage even in trace amounts, no amount of the chemical is tolerable to a celiac disease patient. At the least, these cases underscore the importance of communication between restaurant attendants and chefs. Special instructions and allergy

information from the customers must be captured by restaurant attendants and transmitted to the kitchen staff for consideration.

As a student, I also learnt the importance of listening to customers and understanding their requests. Quality service to guests is at the heart of the hotel business to ensure repeated sales or retention and loyalty from customers.  6 Poor services can dissuade customers from making purchases. As such, the management of the hotel is keen on ensuring that the business offers satisfactory service to customers. Offering such services requires attention to details and willingness to listen patiently to customers as they make their requests. Lack of attentiveness could lead to the omission of important details making it inevitable to deliver food that does not match the customer's specification. Since the process of taking requests precedes most other processes of serving, restaurant staff must be exceptionally keen while taking details of the request.

Beyond taking customers' instructions seriously, kitchen staffs find food poisoning an important concept in their duties. The term refers to the consumption of toxic, spoiled, or contaminated food. The illness could lead to symptoms such as vomiting, nausea, and diarrhoea. While food poisoning can take place virtually anywhere, food is especially vulnerable in the kitchen. Since food poisoning could lead to poor customer experience, illness and loss of customers, kitchen staff must exercise great caution when handling food. In order, to prevent or reduce food poisoning, kitchen staff in the hotel have always been urged to strictly observe kitchen rules which include thoroughly washing hands before and after handling food, avoiding using the cutting board for different types of raw and cooked food as well as correct handling of knives to avoid cuts. Accidental cuts could, in turn, lead to contamination of food or food poisoning. Since food contamination could also occur during delivery, restaurant staff must also handle food with care to reduce chances of contamination.  7

The placement opportunity has provided me with an exciting experience and opportunity of providing service to guests, especially during the Christmas party lunch when guests banqueting for platinum members reached 140. In line with my expectations before placement, the workplace has been characterised by moments of both high performance and challenge. While moments of exemplary performance have provided me with a chance to showcase my knowledge and skills in the field, challenging moments gave me the opportunity to discover my weaknesses.  Being more aware of own limitations, in turn, has enabled me to develop an improvement plan. In addition, the placement has provided me with an opportunity to reflect on the knowledge gained in class and make a stronger connection between theory and actual practice.

References

- Lewis, S., 2021. *Three reasons to go gluten free and three reasons not to*. [Online] Available at: <<https://oregon.providence.org/forms-and-information/t/three-reasons-to-go-gluten-free-and-three-reasons-not-to/>> (Accessed 23 November 2021).
- Vergeer, L., Vanderlee, L., White, C. M., Rynard, V. L. and Hammond, D., 2020. Vegetarianism and other eating practices among youth and young adults in major Canadian cities. *Public Health Nutrition*, **23**(4), pp. 609-619.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31603064/> (Accessed 29 November 2021)

FINAL GRADE

51 / 100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

1. Research-informed Literature 1/5

Your work must be informed and supported by scholarly material that is relevant to and focused on the task(s) set. You should provide evidence that you have accessed a wide range of sources, which may be academic, governmental and industrial; these sources may include academic journal articles, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites. You should consider the credibility of your sources; academic journals are normally highly credible sources while websites require careful consideration/selection and should be used sparingly. Any sources you use should be current and up-to-date, mostly published within the last five years or so, though seminal/important works in the field may be older. You must provide evidence of your research/own reading throughout your work, using in-text citations in the main body of your work and a reference list that is alphabetical at the end of your work. Please use the Harvard/APA referencing system.

Specific to this assignment: Students need to be aware of the models of reflection, for example Kolb and Schon, and use this to demonstrate their understanding of the placement experience

There are no intext citations at all within your writing, this means that the majority of your content is unsupported, you have listed two resources that you have used, but there are many more that should and could have been included. Although you have written on the whole within a reflective style you have not indicated which model of reflection you have used, again this would have provided you with a further reference source and in-text citation.

2. Knowledge and Understanding of Subject 10/30

Your work must demonstrate the growing extent of your knowledge and understanding of concepts and underlying principles associated with the subject area. Knowledge relates to the facts, information and skills you have acquired through your learning. You demonstrate your understanding by interpreting the meaning of the facts and information (knowledge). This means that you need to select and include in your work the concepts, techniques, models, theories, etc. appropriate to the task(s) set. You should be able to explain the theories, concepts, etc. meaningfully to show your understanding. Your mark/grade will also depend upon the extent to which you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding; ideally each should be complete and detailed, with comprehensive coverage.

Specific to this assignment: Students are required to show knowledge and understanding through reflection of their practical placement, demonstrating key learnings from the hotel departments.

3. Analysis 15 /20

Your work must contain evidence of logical, analytical thinking, evaluation and synthesis. For example, to examine and break information down into parts, make inferences, compile, compare and contrast information. This means not just describing What! But also justifying: Why? How? When? Who? Where? At all times, you must provide justification for your arguments and judgements. Evidence that you have reflected upon the ideas of others within the subject area is crucial to you providing a reasoned and informed debate within your work. Furthermore, you should provide evidence that you are able to make sound judgements and convincing arguments using data and concepts. Sound, valid conclusions are necessary and must be derived from the content of your work. There should be no new information presented within your conclusion. Where relevant, alternative solutions and recommendations may be proposed.

Specific to this assignment: Students are to analyse their placement in means of not just describing tasks, but demonstrating the why? how? what? when? Through practical tasks, reflective writing and discussions with hotel employees.

4. Practical application and deployment 15/25

You should be able to demonstrate how the subject-related concepts and ideas relate to real world situations or a particular context. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in that context, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or solutions to solve problems, some of which may be innovative and creative. This is likely to involve, for instance, the use of real-world examples and cases, the application of a model within an organisation Page 15 of 36 and/or benchmarking one organisation against others based on stated criteria. You should show awareness of the limitations of concepts and theories when applied in particular contexts.

Specific to this assignment: Students need to consider how they would apply solutions within the workplace of their placement property, highlighting what they have learnt on placement and how they could deploy this in future careers.

5. Skills for professional practice 10/20

Your work must provide evidence of the attributes expected in professional practice. This includes demonstrating your individual initiative and/or collaborative working. You must communicate effectively in a suitable format, which may be written and/or oral, for example, essay, management report, presentation. Work should be coherent and well-structured in presentation and organisation.

Specific to this assignment: You should write the report in a recognised format within the assignment word count. All writing should be academic style, formal, focused, concise and subject specific. It should use a font of Arial 11 point or Times New Roman 12 point and be 1.5 or double spaced.



Citation Needed

Cite Source:

Please use the link below to find links to information regarding specific citation styles:
http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_citation_styles.html



Comment 1

You have mentioned reflection b but what model have you chosen to use?



Citation Needed

Cite Source:

Please use the link below to find links to information regarding specific citation styles:
http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_citation_styles.html



Comment 2

This show a good insight, and expected feelings prior to going onto placement.



Comment 3

Good content- you have used your learning to inform your practice.



Comment 4

This is unnecessary content here- you only have a limited word count so choose your content with care.



Comment 5

This is unnecessary we need you to share your experience and what you had to do to provide excellent service rather than backgrounds to underlying guest health problems.



Comment 6

This is relevant and well noted.



Comment 7

You have written this section as if you were writing an essay rather than a reflection- we can assume that then reader has this knowledge so a very brief overview would have been better here and then what you did to prevent food poisoning- what did you learn and what skills did you acquire for the future.



Comment 8

This is a good insight into your experience and you are here reflecting on your skill and knowledge acquisition- well done.