

Placement Restaurant Management

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Lecturer: Chris Rogers

Reflective Portfolio of Practical Tasks

Introduction

My journey in restaurant management has been both challenging and enlightening, providing me with a wealth of experiences that have significantly contributed to my vocational, self, and academic development. This reflective portfolio aims to encapsulate the essence of my placement experience, emphasizing the dynamics of the restaurant team, my personal learning outcomes, and the overall impact on my career goals. The portfolio is structured into two main elements, each delving into specific aspects of my placement experience.

Team Dynamics in Restaurant Management

Working as part of a restaurant team during my placement has exposed me to the intricate dynamics of communication, leadership, and collaboration. The team's communication played a pivotal role in the day-to-day operations. Effective communication ensured that orders were accurately relayed to the kitchen, resulting in timely service for customers. However, I observed instances where miscommunication led to errors in order execution, causing delays and customer dissatisfaction. However, I soon realised it is the role of a good leader to get the team back on track. Quick, regular



chats with an employee can work wonders to increase employee motivation, and improve communication across the whole team (Constantino, 2022).  2

The leadership within the team showcased both strengths and weaknesses. The head chef demonstrated excellent leadership skills by maintaining a calm and focused demeanor even during peak hours. A good leader not only sets the tone for the  3 restaurant but also inspires and motivates their team to achieve their goals (Bruce, 2023b). However, there were moments when the lack of a clear chain of command led to confusion among team members, impacting the overall efficiency of the kitchen. Recognising the significance of leadership in a fast-paced environment, I have identified this as an area for personal improvement.  4

Collaboration was evident in the successful coordination between the kitchen and front-of-house staff. The spatial arrangement in the restaurant should connect the frontend of the restaurant well to the backend, which comprises of the kitchen (Francis, 2022). The seamless interaction ensured that the restaurant functioned as a cohesive unit. The value of an organised restaurant is priceless as it improves efficiency and allows for the  5 smooth running of the business. On the flip side, there were instances where breakdowns in collaboration resulted in disorganized service and compromised customer experiences. I quickly realised the importance of adaptability in the fast-paced environment of restaurant management. The manager emphasized the need to navigate unexpected challenges and to think on my feet. This insight has influenced my approach to future learning and skill development, with an increased emphasis on agility and adaptability.  6

In evaluating these dynamics, I have recognised the need to enhance my communication skills and develop effective leadership abilities. I have learned that I can start a good restaurant but if I do not have good leadership skills I will not succeed to the best of my abilities. It is an excellent approach to human resources that truly sets a restaurant apart from the competition (Dhiman & Marques, 2011).  7

To achieve this, I plan to engage in leadership workshops, communication training, and seek mentorship from experienced professionals in the field. Furthermore, I aim to

foster a more collaborative mindset, understanding the importance of interdepartmental co-operation for overall success in restaurant management.



Missed Opportunities

Reflecting on my placement, I acknowledge that there were instances where I missed opportunities for enhanced learning and skill development. One notable example is the limited exposure to financial management within the restaurant. Owning a restaurant means navigating two different yet equally challenging roles: small business owner and restaurant manager (Bensoussan, 2023). Understanding the financial aspects, such as budgeting, cost analysis, and profit margins, is crucial for effective restaurant management. As well as this it is important to keep records of all your restaurant's money and make yearly financial reports following HMRC rules (Sutherland, 2023). Although my primary focus was on daily operations, I now recognise the importance of gaining insights into the financial aspects of the business.



Embarking on my placement has also opened my eyes to the legal landscape of starting up a restaurant that I was partially oblivious to before. It is vital to consider the rules and legislation to make sure your business is compliant and to protect business interests. National legal frameworks are a key pillar in an effective food control system (Food laws & regulations, no date). I was quickly made aware of all food and safety processes in place that the business must adhere to as it will be checked by local authorities to make sure it is following food safety rules (Government Digital Service, 2016). It is crucial to establish proper food handling practices and train staff in food safety procedures. This will help the business comply with the Food Standards Agency (FSA), which provides food hygiene certificates (Sutherland, 2023).



Moving forward, I plan to address the gaps in my knowledge by taking additional courses or workshops focused on restaurant financial management. This proactive approach aligns with my commitment to holistic development in the field, ensuring a well-rounded skill set that extends beyond operational aspects.



Future Career Development and Skills Application

The reflective process has also prompted me to envision my future career trajectory and how the skills acquired during my placement will be applied. My ultimate career goal is to become a successful restaurant manager with a keen understanding of both operational and strategic facets of the business.

To achieve this, I intend to pursue advanced coursework in restaurant management, participate in industry conferences, and actively seek mentorship from seasoned professionals. Continuous learning and staying updated on industry trends will be integral to my growth. Nearly anyone can be a restaurant manager in the short-term, but their ability to learn, challenge themselves, and build rapport with staff, vendors and customers is the real mark of a born leader (Taylor, 2023). I aim to implement innovative practices learned during my placement to enhance the overall efficiency and customer experience in any restaurant I manage.

Integration of Theory into Practice

One of the notable achievements during my placement was the successful integration of theoretical knowledge into practical scenarios. Concepts learned in academic settings, such as customer service strategies and quality management, were directly applied to enhance the overall dining experience. This aligns with the overarching goal of any educational placement – the seamless transition of knowledge from theory to real-world application.

I must express my gratitude to the entire restaurant team, my placement tutor, and kitchen supervisor for their unwavering support and guidance throughout this placement. Their collective efforts have significantly contributed to my learning experience and have been instrumental in shaping my understanding of restaurant management.

As I move forward in my academic journey, I am inspired to continue bridging the gap between theory and practice. This integration not only enriches my understanding of theoretical concepts but also enhances my ability to make informed decisions in dynamic, real-world settings.  17

Conclusion

To conclude, this reflective portfolio has served as a valuable tool for assessing my journey in restaurant management. It has allowed me to not only realise my achievements and strengths but also identify areas for improvement and future growth. The emphasis on self-reflection, critical analysis, and forward planning has been instrumental in shaping my understanding of the complexities within the restaurant industry. As I embark on the next phase of my academic and vocational journey, I am committed to carrying forward the lessons learned and continually refining my skills in restaurant management.  18

The experiences gained during this placement have instilled in me a deep appreciation for the multifaceted nature of the hospitality industry. Moving forward, I intend to explore additional facets of the industry, such as event management and culinary arts, to broaden my skill set and gain a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness within the  19 This portfolio encapsulates my journey in restaurant management, from team dynamics to personal growth and the integration of theory into practice. It serves not only as a testament to my accomplishments but also as a roadmap for continuous improvement and development in the vibrant and challenging realm of restaurant management.

The lessons learned during my placement will undoubtedly shape my approach to restaurant management, equipping me with the skills and knowledge necessary for a successful career in the industry. The journey has been transformative, and I am eager to apply these experiences in my future endeavors.

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Placement Restaurant Management

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

Please check the Rubric for detailed feedback

55 / 100

PAGE 1



Comment 1

What caused these delays and problems in communication? Was it busy times at peak, difficulty with language, noise? It would be interesting to see if there is one reason more than others

PAGE 2



Comment 2

Good point and it can also limit embarrassment to speak personally rather than in front of a group.



Comment 3

Can you give an example when this happened and the effect it had on the team? Did the chef take control of a situation, or perhaps just set the tone by example that kept everyone focussed at a difficult time



Comment 4

What does that mean for you in terms of leadership? Do you feel you could you not step up previously and is this the reason for your improvement? What do you feel you need to change?



Comment 5

and very much adds to the posidrive customer experience, help promote customer loyalty and feeds into a virtuous circle in terms of staff retention and satisfaction



Comment 6

What situation occurred that prompted this feedback from the manager? An example here of where something went wrong can really feed into your personal reflections on weaknesses and the opportunity for further growth



Comment 7

What do you imagine your approach will be? How will you need to change your current approach to achieve this?

PAGE 3



Comment 8

Would you set this up with weekly Team Meetings, WhatsApp groups or another method of communication? What do you think will work best?



Comment 9

How did you discover this? What lead to your understanding of this particular weakness?



Comment 10

Would you consider employing a bookkeeper or accountant to help with this side of the business? This would give you more time to focus on running the business, if this is where your primary skills lie



Comment 11

How would you discover what you needed to do? What agencies or websites would you look at to ensure you were following all the legal advice?



Comment 12

Do you know what Health and Safety and Food Hygiene courses you need for your staff? How do you plan to organise and cost this up?



Comment 13

Again, where will you find these courses. Some research into what courses are available and at what cost will enable you to plan your time and progress more effectively

PAGE 4



Comment 14

Examples please



Comment 15

Have you looked at Business Wales for these sorts of things? I'm unsure as to whether they offer courses to people who are not self employed, but they would be a great place to start



Comment 16

Sounds great. Some examples of the innovative practices would be useful here too



Good Point

Really good point here

PAGE 5



Comment 17

That's the real point of this course - to marry the principles of academic principles and real world practice. It would have been interesting to see specific examples of this in action, or feedback from your manager of how your thoughts have influenced practice in your Placement



Comment 18

What are the main points you have learned this year that have really changed your perspective? It may be worth considering these further as you progress and using them as working examples



Comment 19

Do you feel you need a Placement somewhere to reflect this?

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GRADING FORM: BMGM4004

MOUSTAFA SOLIMAN

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ENGAGEMENT WITH LITERATURE

Demonstrate a clear understanding of the relevant literature and theories related to restaurant management. Engage critically with the literature and draw upon it to support your arguments and reflections. Use appropriate referencing and citation practices to acknowledge the sources of your ideas. Use a minimum of 10 references.



You have made good use of sources, but I would like to see more academic papers and journals in your references moving forward. What you have you have used well, but you need to widen your pool

7

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You should demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the principles of restaurant management. Clearly articulate the challenges and complexities of working in a restaurant environment. Show evidence of learning and growth in your knowledge and understanding throughout your placement



You demonstrate good understanding of the concepts and some of the challenges of Restaurant management, including communication and collaboration and it's also good to see you've identified you lack of financial knowledge and understanding at this stage. I really want to see more direct examples of your experience with some of the things you bring up, your actions or reflections on the specific issues and then some critical thinking as how this could be improved upon/alterd the next time you encounter these situations

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COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL

Analyse and evaluate your own experiences and actions, drawing on critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Demonstrate creativity and innovation in your approach to addressing challenges. Show evidence of reflective and self-aware thinking.



You understand principles and give good general examples of the theories of management, but without necessarily breaking them down and analysing them at a more granular level. Doing this and then finding the correct academic sources that back up your argument will really help you here

4

PRACTICAL SKILLS

Discuss specific examples of how you applied your knowledge and skills in a practical setting during your placement. Reflect on the effectiveness of your actions and identify areas for improvement. Demonstrate an understanding of the practical implications of theoretical concepts and ideas.



You have found the practical nature of the course useful and have applied your knowledge and self reflection to the situations you have found yourself in. Whilst you mentions a good many situations in the round, you are somewhat lacking in specific examples of many of them, this has been a theme across your work and I have no doubt you will remedy this in the future.

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TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS

You should write this assignment as a reflective essay, provide your student name, number, module name and module code and assignment title. You should use a font of Arial 12 point. Justify your

text, in order for your journal to look professional. Use 1.5 line spacing throughout the document. Spelling and grammar should be accurate.



Your writing and communication is good and the key elements of the knowledge you possess you show well. You have a great enthusiasm and willingness to learn and progress, deploying both your practical experience and academic studies.

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