

Hotel Placement – Managing Hotel

Administration

BMIH6004

Learning Log

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## Introduction

The internship I applied for was with **Novotel Wembley** and the **hotel administration department** I was assigned to was the Front Desk; the **offerings of the department** was related to coordination of the guest check-in and check-out, handling of complaints and ensure the billing process was achieved without hindrances. The standard time for check-in at Novotel Wembley is 3 pm and the time for check-out is 12 noon (All.accor.com, 2025). The property offers a flexible policy for check-in with the front desk operating round the clock to provide exceptional services. The guests when checking-in are required to product their credit card and photo ID and it is preferable that the guests inform the hotel about their time of arrival well in advance (Novotel-london-hotels-of-london.com, 2025).

The three learning objectives I aspire to achieve during this internship include the following:

- To conduct an assessment of how leadership impacts the performance of the staff
- To observe the administrative systems applicable at the front desk
- To identify the future trend in technology for improving administrative operations.

## Section 1: Role Reflection

The Schon's Reflective Model has been used while **outlining the role held during placement**; the model is a framework applied for improvement of professional practice by means of reflective learning and includes reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Arnesson and Albinsson, 2019). Reflection-in-action during the internship demonstrated the need of interacting with the guests, handling of queries and processing transactions which require detailed thought process, for example, when a guest is unnecessarily difficult, it is required to understand what means of response would get through to the guest and if there are any alternative approaches that can be taken (Nalley and Bufquin, 2020). The first example

is, when faced with a billing error, I observed that the PMS software was malfunctioning and therefore I calculated manually and then verified the invoice with the guest. Reflection-on-action after the internship or shift in the specific event aids in reviewing what happened. As an intern, I asked myself questions on my performance, the interactions I had with the guests and the challenges I was faced with (Ustrov, Valverde and Ryan, 2016). The second example is once the billing error was momentarily sorted with manual processing, I suggested the front desk team include cross training of the executives for manual billing which was accepted for facilitating team resilience.

**Key responsibilities and means of exercising leadership in the department** include handling of check-in and check-out, managing of the books, use of the Opera PMS and providing assistance with the shift reports (Wang et al., 2023). **Reflecting on the supervisory role impacting operational efficiency within the department**, it was observed that **technical knowledge was applied**, inclusive leadership was applied for **honing skills** and all **challenges faced** were mitigated with critical thinking and logical analysis. I observed that to excel in the role, it is essential to be calm in pressure situations, demonstrate confidence while using the opera PMS and be adaptable (Kumar and Ranjan, 2025); however, limited knowledge of policy during the early phases of the internship held back performance optimisation.

In view of the reflection conducted herein, the **action plan** includes the following factors:

- Apply shadow training with the shift leader to understand the nuances of the role
- Study the brand standard operating procedure on a weekly basis
- Attend training sessions provided for handling of guest complaints.

## Section 2: Key Hotel Administration Issues

**One administrative issue recognized** during the internship was overbooking of rooms when there was inadequate communication between central reservations and the front desk team (Alemar, 2024). While I was interning with the hotel, on one particular weekend, we had three guests with confirmed bookings waiting to be checked-in with no rooms available within the property. Though the shift leader offered to all three guests with free upgrades in a nearby hotel, there was sharp rise in guest dissatisfaction as well as staff stress.

This issue brought to light the fact that the booking platforms essentially required real-time integration. While studying the industry trends, I reviewed the way competitors applied a centralised system that is cloud based for correct booking and also improved visibility (Zhechev and Todorov, 2010). In view of this issue and the way it was handled by the shift manager, the following recommendations would be of value:

- Conduct of availability audits on a weekly basis
- Introduce live integration of Accor Reservation Portal and Opera PMS
- Train the staff to conduct double check on room allocations during periods of high demand for both front office booking and centralised reservations.

## Section 3: Future Trends in Hotel Administration

**Future trends in hotel administration** will have high influence of digitalisation with mobile keys and kiosks for self-check-in gaining prominence. The implications of such a trend would speed up the check-in and check-out processes, the role of the front desk executives would be more inclined towards handling of guest queries than on administrative tasks such as handing out room keys and processing the check-in (Vishvakarma, Dua and Ranjan, 2024). Furthermore, as observed during the Covid pandemic, social distancing was essential, having

digital means of check-in and mobile keys would reduce the physical touch points which would enhance hygiene as well as safety of both the front desk personnel and the guest.

**Impact on the selected department in the future** would be tremendous as Novotel Wembley uses the traditional model for front desk where in the reception agents shoulder the responsibility of guest check-in and check-out, reservation management, handling queries and also resolving issues. The front desk personnel also has to handle the financial transactions, settle the guest accounts and assist with availing the concierge service (Insights, 2023). By including self-service kiosks and mobile keys, the hotel will be able to reduce the queues at the front desk and demonstrate improved level of efficiency.

The **challenges** in this regard are threefold; firstly, guests might have a resistance towards technology as not everyone is technologically proficient, especially the elderly and often require assistance when using kiosks. For this purpose, it is essential to make the kiosks easy to navigate with proper instructions that can be followed without difficulty; furthermore having personnel for assistance would be an added boon. Secondly, the use of digital means require staff retraining which is a time as well as cost consuming process (Aynaoui, Jaidi and Zaouni, 2022). Staff members who are used to the traditional ways of front desk operations would be required to be retrained to adapt to the use of technology which would require availability of the staff for a particular period of time. Lastly, system costs would escalate as digitalisation would require inclusion of kiosks, software, operating systems and much more.

## Conclusion

This experience has been knowledge enhancing and constructive wherein I believe I have achieved the desired objective in the understanding of the systems of hotel administration, identification of the gaps within communication and exploration of a future trend such as digitalisation that will enhance the performance of the hotel as well as experience of the

guests notably. The duration with Novotel Wembley as an intern with the front desk department has helped in broadening the awareness I had about front desk operations which is the first interaction point of the guest and the hotel thereby adding significantly to the perception of the guest and reputation of the organisation. While working with the hotel, not only did I gain experience, but shared my inputs and feedback wherever relevant so as to streamline issues identified and ensure the front desk team is to perform well.

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