

**STUDENT LEARNING LOG Module: Managing Food &
Beverage Operations (BMIH6002)**

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Introduction

Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa operates in Cheshire as a historic hotel with daylong dining services between breakfast and dinner at its bar and restaurant routes. The Food and Beverage department stands as a key player who delivers outstanding guest quality through both service standard upholding and operational effectiveness and customer expectation handling. I shadowed a supervisor at the department for 10 weeks to gain practical skills in leadership approaches, together with team dynamics and customer service expertise. This report examines my experiential learning

experience according to Kolb's model to demonstrate its impact on my professional growth, increased technical skills, and better comprehension of hospitality management complexities.

Learning objectives

The primary objectives of this placement within the F&B department were:

- To develop an in-depth understanding of the supervisory role within the department.
- To enhance work-based skills such as communication, teamwork, and task management.
- To apply theoretical knowledge to practical food and beverage operations.
- To critically assess organisational challenges and suggest viable solutions.
- To reflect on personal and vocational growth in the hospitality sector.

Section 1: Reflection on Experience and Personal Development

My placement allowed me to observe a supervisor working directly with staff members when they addressed guests and when they maintained operational speed. The structure of my reflection followed the framework of Kolb's experiential learning model.

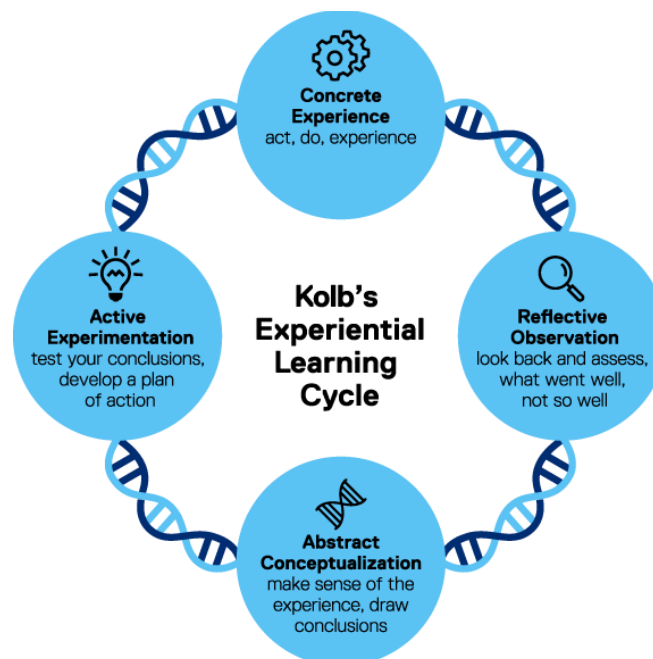


Figure 1: Kolb's experiential cycle

Source: (Watson et al., 2019).

Concrete experience

Our daily departmental operations involved coordinating service processes while addressing guest concerns, assisting supervisors during staff supervision tasks, and enforcing proper quality standards in food and beverage delivery. Part of my daily work involved creating communication channels to help kitchen and service staff work together and improve the speed and efficiency of operations.

Reflective observation

The observation highlights the importance of strong leadership and clear communication when building effective team coordination. The service pressure experienced during peak hours created conditions where miscommunication became a regular reason for delays and unhappy customers (Davis et al., 2018). The supervisors performed various concurrent responsibilities, including resolving staff conflicts and ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations.

Abstract Conceptualisation

Theoretical knowledge helped me understand how situational leadership is crucial in hospitality management. Staff management employed authoritative methods when customer traffic was heavy, but they shifted to supportive methods when business levels were low. According to Tuckman's model, team function reached its best level because both role clarity and cooperative behaviours were maintained (Martin, 2020).

Active experimentation

Based on my insights, I established a new active method by recommending that waitstaff send instant updates about guest requests to kitchen staff for better communication. This reduced order mistakes and improved overall service speed.

Impact on personal and vocational development

My vocational development advanced exponentially because of this particular experience through the following elements:

- The combination of guest and staff communication helped me develop my capability of clearly exchanging information, which enabled efficient service coordination.
- The fast-moving work environment proved how essential teamwork is, as every worker played a necessary function in achieving operational efficiency.

- Task management capability, together with effective time management, became essential since high-demand periods required optimal execution.
- My adaptation skills improved notably because I learnt better strategies for facing unexpected issues, such as sudden menu changes and staffing shortages.
- My observation of supervisors' work helped me understand how they use emotional intelligence to deliver excellent guest interactions.

The placement experience brought hospitality theory concepts to life after I completed theory classes from Level 4 to Level 6 as part of my academic learning. My experience within the industry trained me to grasp the dual operations between front-of-house staff and those working in the back-of-house.

Section 2: Critical Analysis of Work-Based Skills and Technical Knowledge

Organisations need work-based skills combined with technical knowledge to maintain excellent guest service standards (Walker, 2021). Working in the F&B department gave me the opportunity to perfect vital professional abilities and leadership skills.

- Supervisors must make rapid decisions while giving out tasks effectively to maintain regular service operations (Fallon & Rutherford, 2010).
- To shorten waiting periods, operational management must be mastered by comprehending stock maintenance systems, food preparation duration, and service delivery protocols.
- Quality control of food and drink appearance leads to higher guest happiness alongside better brand image (Wijnen-Meijer et al., 2022).
- The professional handling of staff conflicts and guest complaints leads to improved workplace solidarity and superior service quality (Wood, 2013).

Examples from Experience

Small staff shortages resulted in longer food preparation times, which angered resort guests during this specific evening service. My quick updates to the chef, alongside precise delivery of waiting estimate times, successfully regulated client frustration levels. One guest expressed dissatisfaction with the food excellence at the restaurant facility. The supervisor employed active hearing to resolve complaints while offering substituted food and giving complimentary beverages to resolve the matter. The service recovery paradox became evident to me during this experience when an effectively handled complaint led the guests to become more loyal. Implementing digital order

tracking reduced service time while minimising errors after my suggestion of introducing a new system. The example illustrated that simple operational modifications substantially affect total efficiency levels.

Section 3: Reflection on Organisational Issues

The staff shortage represented my biggest placement challenge because it especially affected peak service time functions. This challenge resulted in:

- Stressed staff members combined with elevated workloads produced fatigue as a result.
- Slower service times negatively affect guest satisfaction.
- Operational duties performed by supervisors resulted in decreased opportunities for managerial duties.
- The departmental execution and the quality of guest service suffered adverse effects.

Staffing deficits directly led to inferior service quality because guests became annoyed by delayed wait times, which ruined their entire visit. Additionally, staff members felt their mood drop because they needed to handle too many responsibilities simultaneously. Insufficient personnel levels prevented the department from delivering stable service quality.

Proposed Solutions

- Historical booking data should be used to develop a shift rotation strategy that enhances staff allocation during times of highest demand (Chiu, 2019).
- Training waits for staff to complete basic bar tasks and do preliminary kitchen work, enhancing operational flexibility and minimising staff role dependencies.
- Staff motivation will increase through performance-based incentives, leading to decreased absenteeism.
- Implementing digital staffing software that performs reservation prediction enables businesses to distribute staff effectively (Sinha, 2023).

The proposed solutions correspond with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory by demonstrating how satisfied employees stay longer and become more motivated (AbuKhalifeh et al., 2013).

Conclusion and Action Plan

I learnt about supervisory work within the Food and Beverage department while doing my placement at Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa. High service standards require effective leadership, clear

communication, and team collaboration, according to my placement experience. Watching the supervisor alongside him demonstrated that seamless coordination among kitchen staff, servers, and management affects how pleased hotel guests become. During the placement, I understood operational management demands significant technical expertise, including inventory management and maintaining consistent food presentation alongside service quality control.

Future career aspirations and skill development

My time at Crew Hotel & Spa has made me refuse my commitment to becoming a hospitality professional who focuses on food and beverage management. I have outlined three strategies that will help me improve my skills.

- Management training programs about leadership development will help me build my leadership skills.
- I will explore deep technical knowledge that combines revenue management practices with operational efficiency principles.
- Mastering better tools for conflict resolution includes training in superior customer service techniques and negotiation practices.

My skills development strategy will enable me to deliver impactful services to the hospitality field and succeed as a future leader.

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