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I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

I am on a restaurant placement in an Indian restaurant, Taste of India, in Forest Hall, Newcastle Upon Tyne which first opened in 2007, (Tasteofindiaforesthall.com, 2025). It is a small, but a successful business that offer Vegetarian, Vegan and Halal dishes as well as their usual menu, catering for a wide range of audiences.

My goal in this place is to see how everything runs in the business and how the staff and manager as a team manage the company. Having these mental goals will remind me what needs to be done to get to the manager position, (www.leapsome.com, n.d.). My role is of an assistant manager but to try and get to understand the staff and get to know them I am working with the chefs in the back of house and on other days at the front of house as a waiting staff. Having the chance to work in two different areas of the business, it gives me a better understanding of how the whole business is run and especially how the manager is running it and how well it works. The management in this place is an autocratic managerial style, where only one person makes all the decisions, the disadvantage to this style of management is that the employees can lose their own creativity, but it is good in times of crisis, when quick decision making is needed, (Martins, 2024).

With the experiences that I am getting here, I am learning an exceptional amount. Mostly how the manager carries himself and how effective the running of the business is. Great management equals exceptionally successful businesses, (Suellentrop and Bauman, 2021). The business is a cosy traditional one, rather than fancy dishes, and modern catchy decor they emphasise on traditional dishes and decor. The pricing of the menu is at a competitive rate, (Evening Chronicle, 2011).

The job of a restaurant manager is to oversee the daily operations of the food service. They co-ordinate with, give directions and offer support to the kitchen and the front of house staff to create top quality experiences for customers, (Indeed Career Guide, n.d.). They have the responsibility of the promoting and marketing side of things to ensure that consumers are aware of their latest promotions and deals and that the business is profitable. Handling customer service issues is an important part of the job, as unless handled correctly it can give a bad reputation and loss of revenue, (Wade, 2023). Inspection of the business is crucial to ensure that the restaurant complies with food safety regulations, (Food Standards Agency, 2022).

My goal and career ambitions are to become a general manager of a restaurant, and I see myself as becoming one and would want to manage a business in 5 years' time.

One of my strengths are that I can easily get on with people and become a good team member and at this placement I am able to experience work all round work and observe more of how the manager is working and able to learn a tremendous number of skills. With the help of the Gibbs' reflective cycle model, which was developed in 1988 and created by Graham Gibbs for examining different experiences, to be able to see which things go well and which did not then to learn from it and plan again, (McLeod, 2024). The GIBBS reflective model looks at six distinct stages to an experience. The first is the actual experience and its description. Secondly, the thoughts and feelings of the experience. Thirdly, the evaluation, when you think about the good and about the bad of the experience. Fourthly the analysis, to be able to make sense of it all. After that is the conclusion where you think about what has happened and what you could have done differently. And finally, the last stage is the action plan. The action plan is to think about how you might do things a little bit differently in the future in comparable situations or make some appropriate changes that are needed, (The University of Edinburgh, 2024).

The food and hospitality industry are an incredibly competitive business, and customers have grand expectations of the place they would like to eat at, (Mazzetti, 2021). A company's success depends on quality service and good management. Setting career goals are vital for the success and growth of the business, as is setting the standards of customer service and employee performance.

During my work experience as assistant to the manager I modelled good customer service and professional practices. I witnessed how the manager would deal with all the front of house staff and the kitchen staff as well as the guests that were coming through the doors. He was warm and welcoming to all the business guests and to us he was firm but also respectful. He would tell us what needed doing, straight, without any hesitation. I understood it, putting myself in his shoes as if I imagined myself in his position and if I were too soft and nice and let staff have their own ways in being relaxed with work, this would cause issues of not wanting to follow orders when given them. They will start losing respect for the manager when they take the relationship as a friendly one over being a professional one, (www.managementtoday.co.uk, n.d.). I would need to have that respect level. When a manager models great business practices and excellent customer service, they teach the employees and set exceptional expectations. Our placement manager was approachable but also allowed us to get on with tasks and then give feedback. The manager wants the same exceptional customer service from all the staff as customer service is one that cannot be compromised with, (shephyken, 2015). The manager is leading by example for which I have more respect for him and something that I would like to carry on and offer to the team and I would want to manage alone in the future.

I am building on all my previous experiences in the placements and am focusing more on the details. This is giving me more confidence in the area that I would like to

go on and specialise in the future. I am learning about the areas my strengths are and focusing and working on it as it is important to understand fully.

Being a manager, it is important to be professional and consistent in the way you come across to all the staff and the customers that you interact with daily. Leading the team and concentrating on maximising profits and sales. In supporting the staff, with issues that arise, whether it is about them needing more training, or any sort of other assistance, they have the confidence in progressing in certain areas. Working on increasing loyalty for better staff retention. Being the manager will result in facing a lot of challenges but with the advantage of the range of different previous experiences of handling issues and conflicts with confidence helps to deal with and manage similar situations as learning should be continuous and the more, we experience it the more it is reinforced. As I have had experiences from the different areas of the businesses, I am being able to interact with different sets of employees in different areas and many different customer experiences which helps to give perspective.

Using the Gibbs reflective model I will be able to reflect on my work, (University of Cumbria, 2020).

Two members of staff in the back of house got involved in a conflict in the placement restaurant I was at. The issue was over a certain part of bench area that they both needed to use at that same time and the issue got a bit out of hand and one of the members of staff was about to walk out. However, after speaking to this employee, he agreed to go back to work and carry on with his orders. It was established that the area got a bit overcrowded by staff leaving a few things in the place they should not have. It was the job of an assistant to have the items put away in the right place so that the chefs had enough place to do their jobs.

I felt extremely disappointed in myself for not noticing the fact that the kitchen assistant had been leaving things in certain areas and not cleaning and tidying the things away as they should have been put away right away. I raised my voice a little bit which made the assistant look sad and annoyed. I should have been a little calmer, but I felt extremely anxious, worrying about one of the main chefs walking out. The miscommunication between both the chefs made the issue escalate between themselves as they were both blaming each other for the mess. If they had both listened to each other they would have got to the conclusion that it was not neither of them, (www.linkedin.com, n.d.). I felt embarrassed and annoyed with myself for not seeing what was happening in the first place and asking the assistant to do the job that was required of them as I was in the kitchen for a quite a while during that time.

I was able to manage the situation by solving the conflict by calmly explaining to them to have the mess tidied away by the assistant then they both have enough

space to prepare their food. Although the conflict was solved, it should not have happened. If it had not happened, then the food would have gone out on time and the rest of the orders would not be delayed as a result. Although the customers did not complain, I knew that it was delayed, and it is not good quality customer service. Working hard in a hot, fast paced kitchen for long hours, it can get tough and on top of that if there's issues amongst staff, every order falls behind and gets delayed and morale goes down, (Fresh.technology, 2025). Communication is key to keep the pace going. Although everything was fine afterwards some of the orders were delayed and that meant it affected customer service.

After thinking of the situation critically, about the conflict that happened in the kitchen between two members of staff over an area of workspace, it left the kitchen atmosphere uncomfortable and demotivated. The complete set of kitchen staff seemed like they were sick of work and demotivated. After I explained to them that the situation arose due to lack of effective communication and teamwork, they in fact agreed that that was the reason, (Khan, 2023). The opportunity that came out of this situation was the realisation that teamwork and the importance of it needs to be encouraged more in the kitchen. By realising this I would be able to plan better how the kitchen should run by setting firm rules, (Service that Sells!, 2021). Resolving this issue gave me the chance to think about my future aims that I already had and if they were going to be achievable. I am happy to have been able to successfully resolve the issue and it has been achievable. I would take the same steps again as I did but would like to be able to stay calm and less anxious than I was.

Solving the conflict, as stressful as it was at the beginning, I got to experience the actual authentic experience and got to understand as it happened, rather than just thinking that I would know exactly how to manage the situation when it arose. The authentic experience of solving a conflict has been achieved. Although I cannot say that it went perfectly smoothly, as it did not, but at the end they understood that communication is vital between all the staff members or things can easily go wrong. My role is to ensure that the food is cooked safely and beautifully presented and served on time. Unfortunately, it was not the case, as there were delays due to the incident that took place in the kitchen. It is extremely crucial to stay firm but also fair, (East Coast Chair and Barstool, 2020). However, with the threat from one of the chefs saying that he was going to walk out shocked me and I on the spot had to think and just directed all the blame at the kitchen assistant. Although the assistant was at fault, the behaviour of the two chefs needed to be a bit calmer as should have been the way I approached the assistant. I could have explained to the kitchen assistant in a much more sensible way. If this incident were avoidable altogether then it would have gone 100% well. But it did not, and customer orders were delayed which means the customer service and experience were affected, even though they did not complain. My job is to ensure that everything goes well and smoothly and in a timely

manner as late service could put customers off from returning, on the other hand as could serving the food soon after guests arrive and sit, as it gives them a sense that they want the table empty as soon as possible, (Tanzilo, 2007).

The plan of action I would need to take would be multiple things. These are the things I would like to improve on and create the plan of action, so the business runs as smooth as possible without any interruption. I must motivate my employees to work as a team. There is always good productivity when the employees get along and work together as a team, (Blink, 2023). I would like to make the staff understand the benefits of them working together as a team. They would be able to support each other, help build each other, that way it will boost morale, and lead to high quality work, (Herman, 2024). Behind every successful company there is good teamwork.

Working on teamwork is a continuous job, it is not easy but necessary for the growth of the business, (Ward, 2022).

S.M.A.R.T. goals that stand for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound, is a simple guideline for setting practical, focused, and clear goals, (Bitesize Learning, 2023).

Specific is to be able to solve conflicts and manage the restaurant.

If I were to measure, then I would say it was not the worst experience, however I would need more experience in dealing with conflicts as I was left annoyed and a bit embarrassed for not knowing how to deal with things right away. I may need to think and go over conflict scenarios and think how I should be dealing with them. I know this target would be achieved when I can settle issues amongst employees and know that I did it fairly. I know it will be achievable as conflicts happen everywhere but what matters is that it can get resolved and though challenging, realistically it is achievable.

It is relevant to be able to solve conflicts in any workplace or it will hinder the progression of the success of the business.

Time bound; it can be achieved in 4 months, by that time I realistically think I would be more comfortable in dealing with such incidents. (Gawkowski, 2023).

I was waiting at the front of house and a customer on a table of 6 asked for a glass of coke. I poured a glass from a new bottle and served it. Moments later he complained it was flat. I instantly said that was not possible as I just opened a new bottle. The customer responded saying there was no fizz, and he wanted the drink replaced. I thought he would have given up after I told him that I just opened it, but he demanded a replacement. I stuttered and could barely get the words out to say there was nothing wrong with it. At that point another waiting staff came up, it looked as if he was annoyed at me and took over the situation. I walked away from the table but

heard him apologise on my behalf. Then they had a little laugh. He was not friendly to me or did not even try to be polite. Not getting on well with colleagues can cause lack of motivation, (Team, 2023). Later that night the waiting staff told me that I should not have argued with the customer. Which I felt I did not do, but he thought it came across as that and not having empathy towards their complaint.

I thought the customer was lying so I got defensive and refused to believe him. When he told me he wanted a replacement I felt like he made me out to be a liar and I felt angry, embarrassed, and lost for words, as the truth was that I did open a new bottle. I could not get the words out as I was trying to think of what to do next. I could see other customers were looking over and I felt miserable and distressed. I thought everyone will be disappointed in me at the inability to solve the issue and as the other member of staff accused me of arguing with the customer.

I felt like a complete failure, unable to solve the issue. I did not speak much for the rest of the night; I felt like I had lost my confidence. I was annoyed with myself as the customer was fine with the other staff. Before the end of the night a member of staff told me that I should not have gotten defensive as he was a genuine and regular customer who believed the coke was flat. That made me feel worse as then I thought he was thinking I was lying. I should have spoken calmly which I did not as in hindsight I did start talking fast, and was not listening completely to the complaint which also showed I was not a good role model for the rest of the team as the situation had to be taken over by someone else, (publicspeakingacademy.co.uk, n.d.).

The situation was made worse by me not understanding how the customer felt. I should not have thought what I believed had to be right. For customer loyalty and to maintain a positive reputation you must be able to keep the customers happy by resolving issues in their favour, (www.cloudtalk.io, n.d.).

I would do things differently. I should have apologised and accepted what he said and changed the drink. Complaints should not be taken personally and it is important for customers to feel heard and understood, (www.cloudtalk.io, n.d.). I should not have avoided the staff, and neither should have felt annoyed at them as they were giving honest feedback and teamwork is crucial

In the future I will listen to the team rather than think they are against me. It is important to trust and have good understanding with colleagues as it gives a sense of belonging which boosts morale and productivity, (Wong, 2020).

If I wanted to be excellent at communication, and deal with difficult customers then I would use the SMART analysis to work out how long it will take for me to master the goal.

The goal is for customers to receive excellent customer service. It is crucial to stay calm with a frustrated customer, actively listen, think critically and be consistent, (Service, 2021). Taking ownership is important and a genuine apology can go a long way, (Ortega, 2023). It is measurable as we can tell if customers are satisfied after a complaint. It is achievable as a manager must be able to handle a tricky situation and it is relevant as customer service must be excellent for the business to run smoothly. One negative review can damage the businesses reputation. Online reviews are incredibly influential, and the effects can be exceedingly long lasting, (Anon, 2022). I would be able to achieve this over the next three months as customer complaints need to be handled with care and the situation can be changed into an opportunity by showing excellent customer service and win over the customer, (Mailchimp, 2024).

I was working in the front of house on a busy Friday night. The restaurant was almost full, so we were rushing to get the food out on time and serve it. I was serving a table of four guests. There was a combination of starters, mains, rice, nan bread and sides they ordered. I had to really think about which dishes were which so I could serve to the right people. As I called out the names of the dishes, they all started to speak at the same time calling out what their dishes were. I tried to ask each person at a time, but they kept all speaking quite loud, and I got muddled up a bit and started handing out the dishes. As I did, they told me that the other dish were theirs, so I had to pick some dishes and pass them over. They did not complain but to me it felt like it took a long time to get everyone the right food that they ordered. I did not feel the situation went well.

I felt disappointed in myself and felt invisible to them when they all spoke over me, and no one looked my way to listen to me calling out the names of the dishes. Yet I continued saying the names as I put the dishes down, but they were too busy talking amongst themselves and deciding which dishes were theirs by looking at them after they were all down. I felt like it was a failure and my goal of becoming a manager was going to be impossible if I was unable to handle a simple situation like this. I felt defeated and wished I was not there.

I felt like I completely failed the task, and the experience was extremely daunting. A colleague of mine reassured me that it was fine, and I will be okay the next time I serve as this table was a loud one and would have done the same with others. I was certain she did not genuinely mean it and must have believed I was terrible at it. I felt like I had no confidence, but it could be because it was one of my first shifts in a new place and the first thing, I had to deal was that (Thebeeswing.co.uk, 2022). It made me realise that I need to work on my interpersonal skills for this job and especially as a manager it is crucial and that is my goal, (Restaurant Management & Growth Blog, 2019).

The situation was made worse by the fact that they did not even attempt to listen to me the second time after I went over, then when I was calling the names of the dishes out, they did not pay attention as they carried on chatting. I felt embarrassed when they decided to say that the furthest dishes away from them was theirs, so I had to bring them back to the right person. I should have spoken louder, maybe I felt shy and spoke too quietly and that did not help the situation.

In retrospect I would do things very differently. I would use an exciting voice and speak loud and clear and tell them that I will be serving the starters first. I should have taken a pause and waited for their attention, but I got too nervous and wanted to get the dishes served as soon as possible so it was done and over with. It could be that they felt I interrupted them so I should have stopped for a few seconds and waited for them to stop chatting first.

In future I will ensure that I go up to the table in confidence and wait until everyone stops talking. I will speak friendly but loud and clear. I would not repeat the same mistake of showing all the dishes on the trolley instead will call out just the starters first, then main and lastly rices and naan breads, that way I would not confuse myself and they would get the right dishes they ordered. The reason why all the dishes came out together was because they wanted it out together.

Using the SMART analysis, I will set a specific goal which would be to treat customers with respect and provide prompt assistance, (Maslavi, 2024). The customers' needs must be met. It will be measurable as when the goal is achieved, the customers would be happy with the way their issues were solved. It is relevant as customer service needs to be top of the list to keep business going as 60% of people purchased from a brand which had good customer service, (Chinn, 2022). I can achieve being great with customers over the next three months with plenty of experience at my placement. To keep customers, it is relevant as exceptional customer service is required no matter how wonderful the food and decor is, it won't help if customer service is not good, (Help Scout, 2018). I will achieve the goal in three months with lots of experience from my placement. The only thing that can hinder and get in between is if other staff step in without giving me the chance to deal with it myself, (Gallo, 2023). And so that doesn't happen I will politely speak to them to give me a chance to deal with situations unless if they must intervene.

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