Restaurant Management Reflective Diary and Professional Development at Mishtidesh

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Introduction

As the Manager of Mishtidesh, an Indian restaurant located at 1B Heathfield Road, Lozells, Birmingham, B19 1HA, I began a valuable journey into the practical world of restaurant management. My responsibilities included overseeing daily operations, communicating with kitchen staff, coordinating service, and helping to ensure that customers had a positive dining experience. The placement provided an opportunity to develop professionally while gaining direct experience of the challenges and responsibilities involved in the food-service sector.

This reflective diary considers my experience at Mishtidesh and the lessons I gained from it. The desire to progress professionally is common across many industries, and this placement allowed me to reflect on the challenges, achievements, relationships, and important moments that shaped my development. In the long term, I hope to strengthen my managerial abilities and become a versatile professional who can apply leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills in different working environments.

Background and Context

Mishtidesh operates within Birmingham's diverse restaurant market and offers Indian cuisine to local customers. The restaurant aims to provide a welcoming environment together with food that reflects the flavours and traditions of Indian cuisine. Its location in Lozells places it within a culturally diverse part of Birmingham, where restaurants contribute to the city's broader gastronomic variety.

The mission of Mishtidesh is to introduce customers to varied and authentic Indian flavours while providing a memorable dining experience based on quality, authenticity, and customer satisfaction. During my placement, I learned about restaurant operations from a managerial perspective. My responsibilities involved improving operational efficiency, managing teams, coordinating different areas of the restaurant, and supporting customer satisfaction.

On a daily basis, I worked to ensure that operations ran smoothly and that staff members were able to perform their duties effectively. Cooperation between the front-of-house team, kitchen staff, and

administrative functions was important to the quality of service. This experience helped me understand how different parts of a restaurant depend on one another and how effective coordination can support service excellence and customer satisfaction.

Learning Objectives

Before beginning the placement, I identified several learning objectives that would support my professional development. I wanted to contribute positively to Mishtidesh while also improving my knowledge of restaurant operations, leadership, customer service, and Indian cuisine. These goals helped me monitor my progress and evaluate the practical value of the experience.

Improving operational performance. Restaurant management involves coordinating the kitchen, stock, employees, and customers. One of my objectives was therefore to improve my understanding of operational efficiency and learn how better organisation and procedures can contribute to a positive dining experience.

Developing leadership and teamwork. I wanted to strengthen my ability to lead, motivate, and support a team. Effective leadership requires more than giving instructions; it also involves communication, encouragement, and creating a workplace in which employees can cooperate effectively. Transformational leadership, for example, emphasises motivation and the development of people rather than relying only on formal authority (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Improving customer satisfaction. Another objective was to understand customer expectations and preferences in an Indian restaurant environment. I wanted to become more confident in responding to customer feedback and identifying practical changes that could improve the dining experience.

Developing culinary and menu knowledge. I also aimed to improve my understanding of Indian food, its cultural background, cooking methods, presentation, and menu management. Working with the kitchen team provided an opportunity to observe food preparation and presentation more closely.

Roles and Responsibilities

During my time as Manager at Mishtidesh, I performed a wide range of responsibilities that contributed to my professional development. These duties gave me practical exposure to different aspects of restaurant management and helped me understand how operational, financial, and interpersonal responsibilities are connected.

Operational supervision. I monitored employees, kept track of supplies, and helped ensure that services were delivered efficiently. This experience improved my understanding of workflow and resource management and showed me how operational decisions can affect both staff performance and customer experience.

Teamwork and leadership. I supported both front-of-house and back-of-house activities and encouraged communication between team members. By taking responsibility for the team and promoting cooperation, I developed my leadership skills and became more confident in dealing with day-to-day management issues. This experience also strengthened my understanding of leadership development and reflective practice.

Customer service. I monitored customer interactions, considered feedback, and looked for ways to improve the dining experience. This helped me understand how customer preferences and satisfaction influence restaurant performance. It also taught me that service quality depends on consistent attention to communication, responsiveness, and the customer's overall experience.

Kitchen collaboration. I worked with kitchen staff, contributed ideas about menu items, and paid attention to the presentation of food. Through this involvement, I gained a better understanding of Indian culinary practices, food presentation, and menu management.

Financial management. I also gained exposure to expenditure, budgeting, and financial analysis. Participating in these activities helped me understand the importance of cost control and financial planning in maintaining the restaurant's sustainability. This experience relates closely to the wider principles involved in financial management for small businesses.

Overall, these responsibilities helped me make progress toward my learning objectives and gave me a stronger foundation in restaurant management.

Challenges Faced

During my placement at Mishtidesh, I encountered several challenges that tested my ability to manage pressure and respond effectively to changing situations. Unexpected increases in customer demand sometimes created tension because the restaurant needed to maintain service quality while operating at a faster pace. These situations required adaptability, communication, and careful coordination between different members of the team.

The introduction of a new point-of-sale system also created a period of adjustment. Staff needed time to become familiar with the system, and technical difficulties occasionally affected the normal workflow. This experience taught me that operational change requires patience, clear instructions, and practical problem-solving rather than expecting employees to adapt immediately.

Communication within a culturally diverse team could also be challenging at times. Different communication styles and backgrounds sometimes created misunderstandings, which made clear and respectful communication particularly important. Cross-cultural management literature similarly emphasises the need to recognise cultural differences when working across diverse teams (Adler, 2017).

With support and mentorship, I was able to respond to these difficulties and improve my communication, problem-solving, and adaptability. The challenges ultimately contributed to my professional development because they required me to apply management skills in real situations rather than understanding them only in theory.

Achievements and Contributions

During my placement, I contributed to both the working environment and the restaurant's operational processes. By encouraging open communication, providing direction, and recognising collaboration, I helped create a more cooperative atmosphere among staff. This contributed to improved morale and stronger teamwork.

I also became more aware of the importance of financially practical decisions. Considering commercially viable alternatives helped me understand how managers need to balance service quality with cost and operational sustainability. My collaboration with the kitchen team also gave me an opportunity to contribute ideas for distinctive dishes and presentation. These experiences strengthened my understanding of how employee cooperation, financial awareness, and customer satisfaction work together in restaurant management.

Skills and Knowledge Gained

My placement at Mishtidesh provided valuable practical experience. I developed a better understanding of restaurant operations and became more confident in responding to problems through adaptability and practical decision-making. I also strengthened my leadership and communication skills through direct responsibility for team activities.

My knowledge of Indian cuisine expanded as I worked more closely with the kitchen team. This influenced the way I thought about food preparation, menu decisions, presentation, and purchasing. Exposure to budgeting and expenditure also improved my business awareness and helped me understand the financial side of restaurant management.

The placement encouraged me to take greater initiative in the workplace. Proactive behaviour can involve anticipating issues and acting to improve situations rather than simply reacting after problems occur (Grant & Ashford, 2008). I found this particularly relevant when dealing with service pressures and operational difficulties. Overall, the combination of operational, leadership, financial, and interpersonal learning made me feel better prepared for future responsibilities.

Interactions and Relationships

The relationships I developed at Mishtidesh were an important part of the placement. Working closely with managers and colleagues improved coordination and helped create a more supportive organisational environment. Cooperation with the kitchen team also encouraged me to think more creatively about menu items and gave me a deeper understanding of Indian cuisine.

Guidance from more experienced colleagues supported my professional growth. These interactions made daily responsibilities easier to manage and created a stronger sense of teamwork. They also demonstrated that workplace relationships can directly affect communication, morale, problem-solving, and the way employees respond to challenges. The experience reinforced the importance of organisational behaviour and interpersonal cooperation in achieving shared goals (Colquitt et al., 2019).

Personal Growth and Development

My placement at Mishtidesh had a significant effect on my personal development. Overcoming challenges increased my self-awareness and strengthened my adaptability and resilience. Taking responsibility for different team activities also improved my understanding of leadership and helped me become more confident in interpersonal communication.

Learning more about the restaurant sector increased my interest in restaurant management and the culinary field. Achieving the objectives I had set for myself gave the experience a clear sense of purpose and helped me identify the areas in which I would like to continue developing. Career development is not defined only by promotion or status; it can also involve personal satisfaction, learning, and a clearer understanding of one’s professional direction (Dries et al., 2008).

The placement therefore contributed not only to my professional skills but also to my confidence and future career planning. It helped me understand how practical experiences can shape longer-term goals and how reflection on career development can make transferable skills more visible.

Conclusion

My experience at Mishtidesh was a valuable period of learning that contributed to both my academic and professional development. The challenges I encountered helped me improve my adaptability, communication, leadership, and problem-solving abilities. At the same time, practical involvement in restaurant operations, customer service, kitchen coordination, budgeting, and team management expanded my understanding of the food-service industry.

The placement also showed me that professional development often occurs through a combination of

responsibility, reflection, interaction, and practical experience. The relationships I developed and the skills I gained have influenced the way I think about my future career. What began as a work placement became an opportunity to turn difficulties into learning experiences and to convert general career ambitions into clearer professional objectives. The knowledge and confidence developed at Mishtidesh will continue to influence my future work in restaurant management and related areas.

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