



**Faculty of Administrative Science
& Policy Studies
Universiti Teknologi MARA**

Bachelor of Administrative Science

Practical Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Being in the semester five student of Bachelor of Administrative Science (Hons), all of us are eligible to proceed with our practical training which is a compulsory subject to be taken in before we are finally graduate. This subject is specifically called Practical Training (ADS667). For this subject, we will going for an internship that will start from end of 29th January 2018 until 23rd March 2018 which is proximately 8 weeks altogether. Therefore, we were given the opportunity by our Industrial Training Coordinator to choose any related company or organization for us to do our practical training especially involving administration and management.

Consequently, I have chosen three different organizations that I really interested with. I chose Miri as my first and second choice to do my practical training and Kuching as my third choice.

Then, I got Miri and Meritz Hotel is the company that I will go for my practical training. This company is one of the famous hotels in the heart of Miri which offering people a place of contemporary elegance with unforgettable hospitality and inspirational environment, catering both business and leisure travelers.

Throughout my eight weeks doing my practical training at Meritz Hotel, I have learnt a lot of new skills and gained so much knowledge. Been assigned to be in two different departments really gave me numerous experiences that makes I am ready to working in the various field of

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works in the future despite of focusing on administration and management only. After the practical training session ended, I am supposedly to make a report and ready to do give presentation at the end of the semester. Therefore, here are all the written report about the experiences that I have gained within this eight weeks of internship. Throughout the internship too, I learnt to live independent, confident, respectful, courage and strong, faithfully, and managing time wisely.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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I place my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Noni Harianti binti Junaidi, my supervisor and my host supervisors, Mdm Loly binti Marit (Account Officer) and Mr Robert Billy Watt (Front Office Assistant Manager) and all the staffs from Meritz Hotel for the support and guidance during my days at the company especially those in Finance Department and Front Office Department. Thank you for helping me.

In the same time, I would like to thank all of the faculty members, the lecturers and all of my friends for their encouragement and willingness to help me directly or indirectly.

Last but not least, I also extend my heartfelt thanks to my family for the understanding, wisdom, patience, enthusiasm, monetary support and for pushing me farther than I thought I could go all this time.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION OF THE ORGANIZATION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of five sections. Firstly, it is determining the Meritz Hotel background history. Then, the chapter determines the vision and mission of the hotel as well as explaining on the core business and activities. Lastly under this chapter, it also includes about the hotel's organization structure and conclusion for Chapter 1.

1.2 Background History

First of all, Meritz Hotel was officially declared open on 20th March 2013 by The Right Honorable Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarwak. Meritz Hotel is one of the companies which wholly owned by Miri Housing Properties Sdn. Bhd. It was one of the mega projects initiated by Dato' Lau Siu Wai, the chairman of Miri Housing Group of Companies.

Meritz Hotel is located at 1657, Jalan Miri-Pujut, Bintang Jaya, 98000 Miri, Sarawak. Any general info can be made through email info@meritzhotel.com or directly call the staff through phone call by telephone or hotline number which are 085-417888 or 085-411432 respectively. Any walk-in guests are also preferable as well and for any booking inquiries can directly be fax to the hotel at 085-418666.

The main management office is located at Level 4 is quite big in size and they have one filing room for keeping all the documents, one medium-sized meeting room and five rooms for the staffs with higher position. They are twenty-two staffs in the management office excluding four staffs with higher position and trainees.

This hotel has 17 levels in total. At the Ground Floor, the guests can get the direct access to Bintang Megamall, one of the most well-known shopping in Miri since they are attached to each other. Bintang Megamall also one of the project under Miri Housing Properties Group of Companies. As Bintang Megamall sits adjacent to Meritz Hotel, it provides the guests hassle free access to over 200 retail stores, a lifestyle departmental store like Parkson, various dining and entertainment outlets such as cinema, bowling alley, karaoke and gaming centre. At the Ground also, they have the M Bar Lobby Lounge whereby the guests as well as other people come and enjoy the deliciousness of their servings and meet-up with business associates, friends or simply for a change of scenery for the tired mind.

Their rooms are located at Level 8 until Level 15. They are offering four types of rooms which are Superior Rooms, Deluxe Rooms, Grand Deluxe Rooms and Family Rooms. All these rooms are being facilitated with other in-room facilities such as television, IDD phones, mini bar and tea and coffee making facilities, in-room safe box, ironing facilities, air-conditioner, laundry services and 24 hours CCTV surveillance at all floors.

Meanwhile at Level 7, they have their ballrooms and function rooms. Being the largest indoor pillar less ballroom in Northern Sarawak, M Ballroom is capable to cater 2,500 guests in theater style or 1,440 guests for banquet seating. It provides the people the flexibility to host wedding banquet, parties, conferences, exhibitions, media gala events, theatre and high fashion catwalk shows with ease. Equipped with the latest audio and visual equipment, M Ballroom is undoubtedly equipped with M.I.C.E capability. Their ballrooms are being called based on the flowers that exist in Malaysia which are Rafflesia, Bougainvillea, Periwinkle, Jasmine, Orchid, Heliconia, Hibiscus and Tulip. Other than these, this hotel also having other ballrooms called M Ballroom, Ballroom A and Ballroom B. Not only that, for those whom come in order to enjoy Chinese cuisine, they are can have it at The Fortune Modern Chinese Restaurant at this level. The people can discover an extensive stretch of authentic Chinese cuisine while being seated among beautiful ancient Chinese inspired decoration. They are privileged to enjoy dining in style with the finest dishes prepared only by the hotel team of dedicated chefs.

At Level 8 is where their swimming pool being located and it is being authorized for the in-house guests only. The guests also have the priority to enjoy the hotel's gymnasium which also being located at this level. The gymnasium is spacious and fully equipped with modern workout facilities for the guests' daily gym routine.

At the highest level of this hotel, they have their very own The Grand Old Lady All Day Dining Restaurant which renamed after the first oil drilled well at Canada Hills in Miri. It is is an all day dining signature restaurant that offers a cosmopolitan blend of local, Western and Oriental

cuisines with live cooking stations. It also has vibrant ambiance and spectacular view overlooking the entire city from the top completes the warm and inviting dining experience. Apart from that, for those prefer to the breathtaking sunsets to panorama views over delicate finger food and beverages, they can go to the Sky Garden Outdoor Dining which is next to The Grand Old Lady All Day Dining Restaurant.

1.3 Vision and Mission

Similar to the other organizations, Meritz Hotel also have their own vision and mission to be achieved as discussed below.

1.3.1 Vision

Meritz Hotel's vision is to be a preferred hotel in this region and Malaysia as a whole. They provide their customers with personalized service which is part of their branding. They are striving to assist their customers in achieving business goals and enjoyment of leisure time by providing unique and unparalleled experience tailored to individual tastes from blissful food and pampering to dynamic business services.

1.3.2 Mission

The mission of this hotel to their guest is "We are committed to meet and to exceed the expectations of our guests through our unremitting dedication and perfection in the form of service." Meanwhile for their people, they are upholding the mission of "We are committed to the growth, development and welfare of our people, whom we rely on to make this happen."

Their mission for their distinctiveness and shareholder are “Together we shall become the benchmark of hospitality” and “As a result, we will create extraordinary value for our shareholders” respectively.

1.4 Core Business and Activities

Meritz Hotel is one of the projects established by Miri Housing Group of Companies besides other projects such as dwelling house, shophouses, Bintang Megamall shopping complex and school. This hotel mainly offering hospitality and tourism management field which providing you a place of contemporary elegance with unforgettable hospitality and inspirational surroundings, catering for both business and leisure travelers.

1.5 Organizational Structure

Meritz Hotel is managing by a few of people that have their own roles and responsibilities. It is important for these people to know exactly their roles in order to keep the successful of this business growth from times to time. Hence, the Table 1.1 shows the role of each and every one of them;

Table 1.1. Roles and responsibilities of each managers in Meritz Hotel

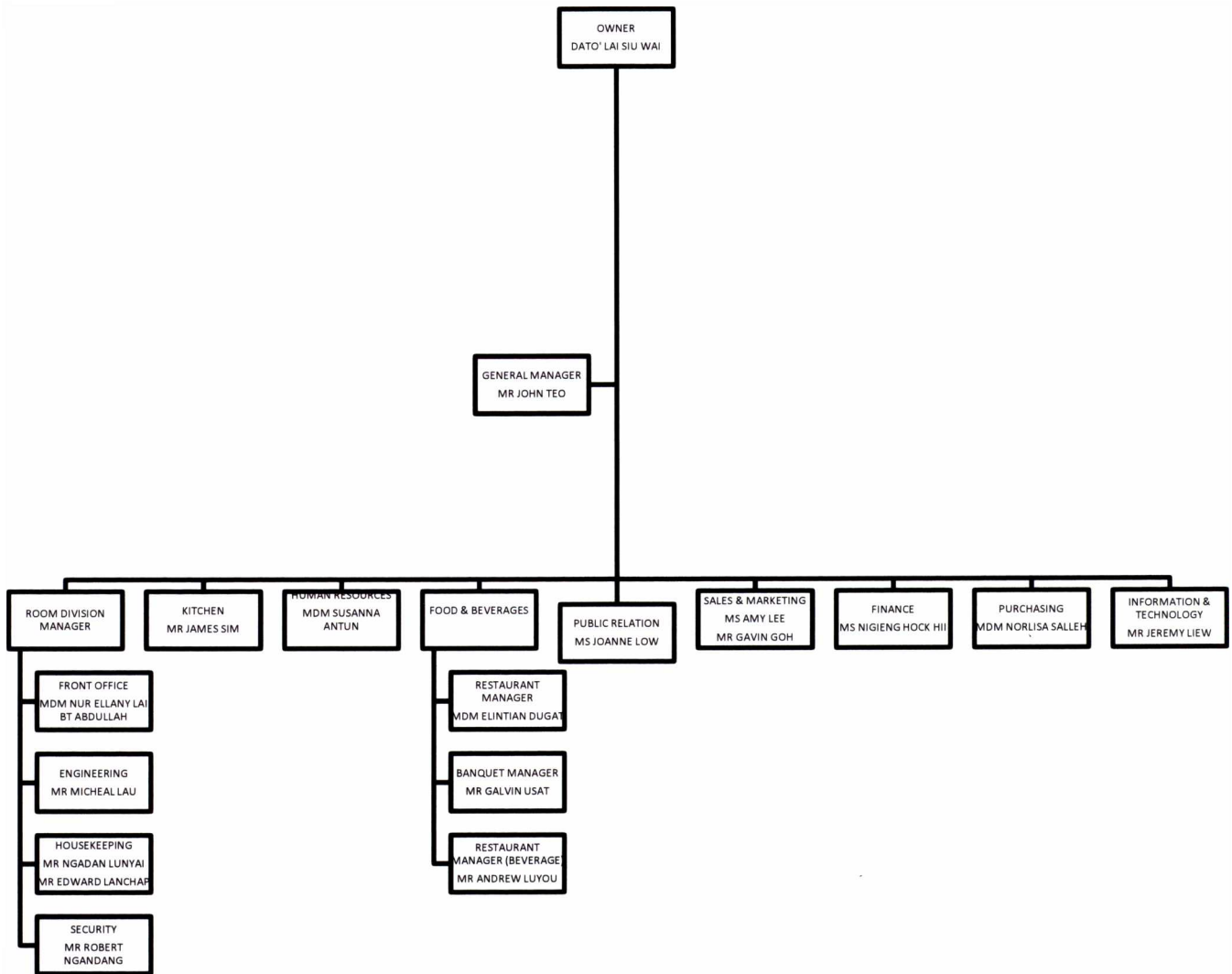
POSITION/DEPARTMENT	PERSON IN-CHARGE	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Chairman	Dato' Lau Siu Wai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The owner of the company. - Act as the managing director for the company, which give him authorities throughout all departments.
General Manager	Mr John Teo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversee the operations functions of the hotel, as per the Organizational

		<p>chart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold regular briefings and meetings with all head of departments. - Ensuring full compliance to Hotel operating controls, SOP's, policies, procedures and service standards.
Front Office Manager	Mdm Nur Ellany Lai bt Abdullah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the front desk provides a professional and friendly service for guests. - Dealing with guests. - Arranging staff scheduling. - Acting as liaison between General Manager and staffs
Engineering Manager	Mr Micheal Lau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring ensure the smooth daily operation and guest appeal of the hotel. - Directing the maintenance staffs on small repairs such as patching drywalls, fixing faulty wiring or unclogging toilets.
Housekeeping Assistant Manager	Mr Ngadan Lunyai Mr Edward Lanchap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervising supervise housekeepers in their duties and ensure that they perform to the prescribed hotel standards. - Preparing the daily work schedule and assigns housekeepers to different tasks depending on the hotel requirements for the day. - Fostering team spirit among the housekeepers and directs them toward achieving guest satisfaction.
Security Manager	Mr Robert Ngandang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety and security of guests, workers and hotel buildings - Crime prevention and investigation - Security systems including security patrols, surveillance systems, door locking mechanisms, control of restricted areas, monitoring of master keys and so on. - Initiating or maintaining policies and procedures for general safety and security - Training of staff for emergency procedures

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doing inspections relating to hotel security - Regular security meetings and supervising the security team effectively.
Kitchen	Mr James Sim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for the overall operations for the back of house and kitchen area of a restaurant. - Hiring staff, purchase food and stock, and make sure everyone is trained on proper food preparation and kitchen safety techniques. - Ensuring that the hotel standards are upheld: the food looks good and is cooked properly, the proportions are correct, and it is cooked and served quickly. - Ensuring the kitchen is properly cleaned on a regular schedule, food is disposed of properly and the kitchen meets all sanitary standards.
Human Resources	Mdm Susanna Antun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible in all company and staffs matters as well as dealing with conflict in the organization and also out of the organization. - Hiring and giving monthly or yearly training to all the staffs. - Providing the job assignation and description to all staffs.
Food & Beverages	Mdm Elintian Dugat Mr Galvin Usat Mr Andrew Luyou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for overall operation for the restaurant, food and beverages. - Hiring staff, purchasing food and stock. - Ensuring every staffs are well trained on proper food preparation. - Ensuring proper and legal alcoholic beverage services. - Ensuring all the staffs updated on the kitchen safety techniques and understand the health standards.
Public Relations	Ms Joanne Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating with media to provide them with required information. - Assisting in media planning. - Ensuring proper media placement.
Sales & Marketing	Ms Amy Lee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting and marketing the

	Mr Gavin Goh	<p>company's products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dealing with travel agencies, hotels, transportation, product promotions and site inspection in order to achieve higher sales. - Updating tours and creating new packages.
Finance	Ms Ngieng Hock Hii	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible in hotel's financial matter. - Storing and keeping all the financial statements, billings and vouchers.
Purchasing	Mdm Norlisa Salleh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buying products or stock for hotel purposes. - Evaluating suppliers, negotiating contracts, reviewing product quality. - Supervising purchasing agents and buyers. - Acting as the agent or buyer.
Information & Technology	Mr Jeremy Liew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for the day-to-day support of all IT systems, business systems, office systems, computer networks, and telephony systems throughout the hotel.

Figure 1.1 below describe the organizational structure of Meritz Hotel



(Source: Meritz Hotel Miri, 2018)

1.6 Conclusion

During the practical training, I have learned and gained knowledge whereby I learn on how to build a good sense of teamwork with other colleagues, dealing with the guests and surely enhancing my communication skills with the public. Through this industrial training, I can confirmed that knowledge learned in campus can be practiced alone or theory.

Other than that, university student also can see the needs of the organization and enables the, to adapt what they learned in the lecture hall. In addition, practical training helped in identifying the strengths and weaknesses on the students themselves. This certainly sharpen and enhance their skills as well as develop their sense of understanding about the real working environment.

Besides, there were many experiences I have obtained during this practical training progress. It included the exposure to the real face-off with the guests at the front counter, ability to communicate and deliver information through phone call, compiling all the guest folios and logged in into system for guests' data inspection and records.

CHAPTER 2

SCHEDULE OF PRACTICAL TRAINING

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will cover the tasks that have been done to the student during practical training. Each section will cover all the task done by the student weekly based on the log book that the student filled in during the whole duration of eight week of practical training.

2.2 Practical Training Schedule

Table 2.1 Schedule of my practical training

Department	Start	End
Finance	29 th January 2018	24 th February 2018
Front Office	25 th February 2018	23 rd March 2018

I was assigned into two different departments throughout my eight weeks of practical training. Table 2.1 showing clearly my schedule for eight weeks. I was allocated to be at Finance Department and Front Office although at the first place, I was requested to be assigned at Human Resource Department. However, as they were having enough number of staffs at the Human Resource Department, then the Junior Human Resource Officer was allocating me at these two departments after reviewing our courses of study which actually involved the management of finance and customer service. As I was training in the hotel industry, therefore my working hour will be from Monday until Saturday.

2.2.1 Week 1: Finance Department (29th January 2018 – 03rd February 2018)

During the first week of my practical training, I was being introduced by the Junior Human Resource Officer to the Finance Department's staffs. She also taught and explained to me on my job description as well as information on my allocation of allowance and leaves. Not only that, I was being introduced to the Opera system. The system are being used for the hotel staffs to keep and review their data regarding their daily operation. During my first week of training, I was being asked to recheck the journal vouchers. I was responsible to ensure the accuracy of the data in the printed documents with the ones in the system. Any dissimilarities in both data, I must informed the Finance Executive. She then will inspected the data. It is important to be recheck several as the data consists of all the crucial data, records and details of guests, transactions, history and so forth.

I also being taught about the organization of tax invoices which I must arranged them according to the running numbers. These tax invoices were from the previous purchases and sales of the sales whereby they kept them in a bundle of files. This is crucial as it will be easier for them to look up upon the tax invoices when it needed for end year inspection. After that, I was being taught on the management of tourism taxes (TTX) in billing. Tourism tax was officially being enforced by our government on 1st September 2017. Malaysians and permanent residents will be exempted from paying the tax while foreign tourist will be charged a flat rate of RM10 per room per night for all hotel classifications. Besides, the tax will not applicable to homestays and kampong stays registered with the Ministry, premises maintained by the religious

institutions for non-commercial purposes, premises operated by federal and state government for non-commercial purposes and premises with four or lesser than four rooms.

As it was my first week, I was also being taught on how to operate the fax machine correctly. I was asked to fax several documents to respective companies. The Finance Executive even asked me to do the checking on the journal vouchers. It is very crucial for me to ensure on the accuracy of the check and balance in the journal vouchers. Other than that, I also was being asked to photocopy all the necessary documents such as receipts, passports and tax invoices for compilation of guest folios. Guest accounts are the statement of the financial transactions that occur between a guest and the hotel. It was created after the guests guaranteed their reservations or when they registered at the front desk meanwhile guest folios are the statement of transactions either credit or debit affecting the balance of the single account. When account was created, it was assigned a guest folio with a starting balance of zero. Meanwhile for the card credits, Meritz Hotel certainly received financial transaction through card credit. There were basically three main banks that usually used which were Master Card, Visa and American Express. For the foreign tourists, the photocopy of their passports were needed and a must as required by the current policy of Tourism Tax. Failure to do will cause me to refund the amount of tourism tax that had to be paid by the guests. My supervisor for the Finance Department, Mdm Loly bt Marit was the one whom taught me all the matters regarding the management of guest folios starting from the introduction to use the Opera system until transfer of the details into the account of hotel.

2.2.2 Week 2: Finance Department (05th February 2018 – 10th February 2018)

On the second week of my training days in Meritz Hotel, my main job was managing the compilation of the guest folios. At first, it took times for me to memorize and adapt to the system especially when it comes to the rechecking of the date of departure of the guests and transferring the right amount of city ledgers and credit cards. According to the hotel industry, city ledgers are the collection or compilation of accounts belonging to the non-registered guests. I did mistakes several times but luckily, my supervisor was so patient and willingly to explain me one by one very well. I then managed to understand every of her explanation. After a few trials and errors, I was managed to grasp the information and able to carry out the job all by myself. As compilation of guest folios were being done daily, therefore I must complete the compilation before went home.

Besides, as additional tasks, I was given the chance to do the filing of voucher payments. Voucher payments are the documents that being used as proof that monetary transaction has happened between two parties. The vouchers usually prepared after a vendor's invoice has been matched with the company's purchase order and receiving report. Compilation of these voucher payments will be audited by the end of the year so I must make sure that the numbering and arrangement of the voucher payments correctly done. In order to make things went perfectly, I was told to recheck through the system called Q3 Financial. Q3 Financial system used to keep all the payment voucher's records. I also did some checking on the cheques and wrote down the series numbers in the filing record. However, due to my status as a trainee, I did not have the access to the system. Then I could not continue further the work and finally I submitted the work to the other colleagues. Next day, I was told to bundle all the voucher payments recorded by Hazel in files according to the month of purchasing and stored all of them in the store room. To

make things easier, I printed the cover of the files and labelled them based on the month by using Microsoft Word.

2.2.3 Week 3: Finance Department (12th February 2018 – 15th February 2018)

During my third of practical training, I managed to complete the compilation of the guest folios without even any helps. I was capable to make sure that I made copies of every necessary information such as passport for the foreign tourists for Tourism Tax, card credits and tax invoices and receipts. On the 12th February 2018, I joined the staff party and birthday celebration. I was able to mingle around with other staffs from another departments. I was being introduced as one of the new trainees there and they were welcomed me warmly. It showed to me on the importance of staff recognition and appreciation as they were being celebrated during their birthdays. It was the small gesture of appreciation from the company that actually playing the most crucial and huge role in creating a positive working environment. As the third week was the week for public holiday which was Chinese New Year celebration, therefore I was on holidays. Before I off for holidays, I was able to finish all my works. I was asked to shredder all the unnecessary papers by using shredder machine. This is a must so that there will be no overlapping documents in the records. Besides, it also showed the hotel was into the 5S concept as they were recycling those shredded papers. After ensuring everything was settled, then only I felt good to enjoy my public holidays.

2.2.4 Week 4: Finance Department (19th February 2018 – 24th February 2018)

As I was coming back from holidays, I struggled to compile all the guest folios from the previous days. I received a full box of them. This was due to the Chinese New Year celebration and number of guests were totally hiking up. As I was doing the compilation, I managed to make sure I made copies for all the necessary information like before. I rechecked if the Front Office assistants attached the copies of passport for the foreign tourists, all the tax invoices completed and correct amount of payments being made. Any dissimilarities in the system with the one the receipts, I directly informed my supervisor. As the works were so many, I did some mistakes in compiling the receipts for the card credit settlements. I combined all of them into one whereby I supposedly combined them according to the dates. As the result, I was being admonished and corrected by the Chief Cashier, Mdm Jennifer. I was apologised for my mistakes. Before week 4 ended, I finalised my compilation of guest folios before handed the rest to other trainee in charge. For coming week, I was being transferred to the other department in the hotel which was Front Office department.

2.2.5 Week 5: Front Office Department (27th February 2018 – 04th March 2018)

First day entered the Front Office department and I had an ice breaking session with all of the staffs there. I was given uniform that being used by the trainees. I did not have to wear those formal random attire anymore. I got to introduce myself briefly and the Front Office Manager, Mdm Jenny Lai introduced me to everyone in the department. For the first two weeks, I was on duty as the Call Centre Agent (CCA) and I was assigned to join the morning shift. The staffs have their own schedule and were being divided into shifts. Everyday there will be briefing before they starting their shift. They were discussing and making announcement in one day

operation such as the total arrival number of guests, complaints and requests from the guest and so forth. As it was my first day, I was asked to read and understand all the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) regarding the basic manner of answering guests, proper intonation in communicating, connecting a call from external and internal call and many more. I also learnt how to operate the telephone by CCA, Miss Babita. She taught me on how to operate and use the Opera System like before but this time from the Front Office system. It involved the system for reservation, front desk and miscellaneous system. Other than that, she taught me the main daily duty of CCA which included updating the notice board in the front office department, updating the CCA filing reports, downtime report, housekeeping report, inspection on the general and hunting lines for the hotel, wash-down calls and lastly the releasing lines for other department when necessary.

For the CCA daily reports, it included the updates on the complaints and requests from the guests, bar line form, hunting lines and lost and found form. These were all that I have to do every day as CCA. Meanwhile, for the housekeeping reports, I logged in into the system and went to the arrival page. Then I print-screened the page and pasted it in the Microsoft Word. This have to be done every one hour. For the wash-down report, I updated the guest-in-house, guest trail balance, vacant rooms, arrival of the guests as well as the departure of the guests. This also required me to log in in the system. It must be done every two hours. Next, for the hunting lines, I called the list of numbers given by the manager to check its availability. I have to check this before 8 o'clock in the morning. Same goest to the releasing lines, I was required to release line for other department in the hotel only when it was necessary and asked for. Therefore, I must be extra alert about that. However, for the reservation department, I must release their lines every morning according to their working hours starting from 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock and 11 o'clock

respectively. On the other hand, before reaching noon, it was my responsibility to carry out the wash-down calls. It was when I must call the guest-in-house that going to check out on that particular day to confirm their real timing of departure. If the guest requested to check out later than the required time, I must inform the front desk assistants by posting alert in the system as soon as possible. I must also inform the guest on the extra charges that may be charged upon them due to their late departure. For the first three hours of the required time which is 12 o'clock in the afternoon, the extra charge is RM32. Later than that, the guest will be charged according to the rate of the room they stayed in.

It was quite a number of information and details that I have to learn in a short period of time but I managed to tackle all of them but still I made some minor mistakes and under the supervision of my supervisor, Mr Robert Billy. He and other assistant managers were so kind-hearted and helping me in carrying out my duty. The other colleagues also had been such a helping hand to me. I did all the required reports excellently and did not miss any of them.

2.2.6 Week 6: Front Office Department (05th March 2018 – 10th March 2018)

As I was entering the sixth week of my practical, I was supposedly being assigned to the Front Desk but then I was asked to be the CCA as one of the CCAs was on leave. Therefore, I had to cover her place instead of being assigned to the Front Desk as scheduled. As usual, we were having our daily morning briefing. I jotted down all the necessary details during the briefing in order to update the notice board such as the date, total arrival and departure of the guests, total occupancy and total profit earned in the previous day. This job can be illustrated as a secretary in a meeting whereby it was the secretary's responsibility to write down the minutes of the meeting. This week, I faced a new challenge as a CCA when I was asked to do the wake-up call. Wake-up call is

like an alarm for the guest whom requested for the CCA or Front Desk assistants to call them. I was being taught to set the wake-up call in the system called Wake-Up Call System in the computer. I must ensure I set up the right time and right room so that no mistakes were made. It is very important to handle wake-up call accurately and promptly for guests in hotel CCA or Front Desk operations. If I failed to do so, I may cause the guest to be late for his or her important occasion on that day such as missing the flight, late for crucial events or guest dissatisfaction. It was being done by setting in two ways, automated mode by the computer and manually by the CCA or Front Desk assistants. Basically, it will be done automatically by the computer. In most of the hotels guests can set wakeup call from their room telephone, hotel mobile application or in-room entertainment system such as television. Proper instructions must be displayed on the telephone instrument, television screen or on a tent card next to the telephone or in-room entertainment system. The procedure of setting the wake-up call from the room must be well aware to all front desk staff, in case the guest asks for the same then the staff should be able to give clear instruction. Once the guest enter the wakeup call from his room the information will be updated to the Wake-Up Call system and also to the front desk property management system. Even if guest had set the wakeup call on his own from the in room telephone, the front desk or guest service staff should always give the guest a reminder call manually. As in the manual process, the guest can also give the wakeup call request directly to the front office staff at the reception or calling from the room. For my case, I had to make a manual wake-up call as the guest did not react to the system within the required time. At first, I greeted the guest in proper manner. After the call was ended, I took down all the details on the wake-up call form. I managed to update all the necessary reports such as housekeeping report and downtime report with ease without any help. I released the required lines such as for the

reservation department in time and did the hunting lines. Every complaints and enquiries from the guests, I wrote them down in the CCA daily report. This week was one of the toughest week for me as I encountered such a grumpy and ill-mannered guest. It happened when I was doing the wash-down call for the guests that supposedly checked out that day. The guest's details popped up in the system. However, the guest angrily saying that he was going to check out the next day. As he was trying to argue and making a report to the general manager, all the management team managed to control the situation and found out that it was the guest's middlemen whom make a mistake in delivering the details of their booking for their event that week. I was apologized to my supervisor as well as my team for the mistake although it was not my mistake as I was doing my job right. In return, I received advices from my assistant manager on how to greet and communicate with the guest in proper manner and language. I received the advices with an open heart and lesson for future reference.

2.2.7 Week 7: Front Office Department (12th March 2018 – 17th March 2018)

For the last two weeks of practical training, I was being transferred to the other sub-department in the Front Office Department which was Front Desk or Reception. My shift still be assigned to be in the morning shift which was from 6 o' clock in the morning until 3 o'clock in the evening. On my first day at the front desk, this was my very first encounter with the guests face to face. Before this, I only got to be in contact with the guest through calls. I was being taught on how to check in and check out the guests. As usual, we were starting our shift with short briefing to know the latest update of occupancy gained by our hotels as well as the other hotels. During the briefing, there will be handover cash float from the midnight shift. Cash float is the term for the total amount of checks in between the time when the check is written and taken off the books of

the payer. For the front desk, there will be RM2000 cash float in total. Therefore, I must calculate the cash float once it was being handover to me and jotted down the amount in the logbook. Then, I must checked all the emails received by the hotel, the total number of guests' arrival and departure, billing and traces and the credit settlements as well as the stationeries.

Upon the checking in the guests, I was being taught to greet them with proper salutations, gestures and body gestures. Smiling is a must. After that, I have to ask for their identification details such as identity card for the Malaysians and passport for the foreigners. Settled with that, I responsible to fill in all the details in the system directly. Speed is the key concern here as the front desk workers of the hotel, I must capable to deliver services as efficient as I could. The details involved the name of the guest, the address of the guest, the telephone numbers, type of accommodation the guest wants and type of payment. If the guest made a booking through online, then I checked on the traces and alerts in order to ensure every details made by the guest was being served by me on that moment. I also being taught to use the card credit terminal for the credit transaction. During this time, I must ensure I entered the right amount of payment needed to be paid by the guest as it dealt with the bank institutions. As a trainee, when I was about to received payment from the guest, other colleagues and the assistant manager on duty will observed me so that no error or mistakes were being made. Once everything was settled, then only I can check in the guest by assigning the room and registering the room cards and printed all the receipts and folios to be signed beforehand.

Upon the departure of the guest, I need to ensure that I have collected the room card before asking the guest to sign the folio. Not only that, I would finalized the checking of all the details especially the payment before the guest leaves the counter. During closing, I must checked the closure journals in the system. I ensure the folios were being checked out, the

transactions made were posted correctly as well as the card credit settlements. Before handing over the cash float to the afternoon shift front desk assistants, I first must calculated the amount cash payment I received from the guest and jotted down the amount at the front page of the envelope. I also printed out the journals closure, cash closure and card credit closure before putting all that in the room whereby all the cash transactions being accumulated. This was being done under the supervision of the assistant manager on duty.

2.2.8 Week 8: Front Office Department (19th March 2018 – 23rd March 2018)

During my last week of practical training, I was working as both CCA and Front Desk as they were short of staffs. As Front Desk assistant, as usual, I will started my job by calculating the cash float given to me and wrote down the amount the logbook. After checking all the emails, traces, card settlements and forth, I will entertained the guests whom going to check out that day. By this week, I was able to do that with ease and less help from my colleagues. I also managed to check in the guest without any errors. I ensured I filled in the right details in the system, took the right amount of payment and checked all the necessary information or request from the guest before checking them in. Meanwhile during my day as a CCA, I will make sure I updated the notice board, reports and lines in time without having problems. As my practical training was ended, during the briefing, I was given the change to give an appreciation speech to all of them.

2.3 Conclusion

As a conclusion to this chapter, the logbook contains all the activities, tasks and works that I have to do in Meritz Hotel. It is an evidence that I was responsible when it comes to the tasks assigned to me. All the activities that I have carried out were being monitored not only by my

respective supervisors, Mdm Loly bt Marit and Mr Robert Billy Will but also the whole departments in the hotel. By then, I could do my tasks in the right way and full of confidence.

CHAPTER 3

TASK ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter emphasizes on one main particular task that I had done the most during my practical training which is handling counter service. It will explain both the theoretical and practical terms of the task that I have chosen. Hence, this chapter will explain on the definition, components of service blueprint and Servuction Model.

3.2 Definition of counter service

Counter service is defined as the frontline service which is crucial to the public organization as well as the private organization (Muhammad Sarji, 1992). In today's world, the efficiency and effectiveness of the counter service of one organization is highly needed in order to meet and exceed the customer's expectation especially in public organization meanwhile for the private sector like Meritz Hotel, as they are more into profit-oriented, their ultimate focus is in improving and enhancing their service quality so that they can serve people at their best. This is because the poor quality at counter service will leads to customer dissatisfaction and reflects a bad image of the organization. The hospitality industry is a part of service industry which is rapidly growing. As the evidence, hospitality is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. In hotel industry, the consistency of service is a big matter but it is hard to maintain because services are interactive in nature. Therefore, the employers and employees in the hotel industry must behave differently whereby this situation is being called as moment of truth. Moments of truth are described as critical encounters between customers and firms that

significantly impact customers' impressions of the firm and consumption (Beaujean, Davidson, & Madge, 2006). It basically happen when the customer directly meet the organization for their services which gives the customer opportunity in forming an impression towards the organization. Like in Meritz Hotel, the moment of truth happens during the interaction between the guests and front desk assistants at the counter.

3.3 Components of service blueprint

Service blueprinting is a customer-focused approach for service innovation and service improvement. It allows the firms to visualize the service processes, point of customer contact and the physical evidences. Not only that, it also used to illuminate and connect the underlying support processes throughout the organization that drive and support customer-focused service execution. There are several main theoretical components of service blueprinting that I am going to relate to my practical training in counter service. The components are customer actions, onstage employee action, backstage employee action, support processes and physical evidence.

For the first component which is customer actions, in its theoretical term, it includes the steps, choices, activities and interactions that customer performs in the process of purchasing, consuming and evaluating service. Meaning to say, it is the early stage of getting services by the customer as they are approaching the counter.

In practical terms, in Meritz Hotel, the guests are free to ask any inquiries or make their booking either through Meritz Hotel website, travel agents or walk-in. For online booking, before confirming the booking, the guest must ensure the date of their stay is available as well the grand total price for the stay meanwhile for the walk-in, the guest can simply approach the front desk assistants at the counter. They will be the one who explaining all the required details.

Secondly, onstage employee actions. It means the stages and activities that the contact employees perform that are visible to the customer. During this component, the real, first interaction between the customer and the frontline staffs begins. The customer gets to know every detail of the services as it is done visibly in front of them.

In practical terms, in Meritz Hotel, as the guest is coming to the counter or reception desk, the Front Desk Assistant will help them with all their enquiries. The guest with online booking may come to the counter and can ask for the bellman's assistance to bring their luggage and stuffs. They just have to present their confirmation booking number and identification documents like identity card and passport (for the foreigners). Then, the front desk assistant will check their confirmation booking number in the system before checking them in. Not only that, they also must ensure the payment is correctly done. On the other hand, for those who prefer to walk-in, they can directly deal with the front desk assistant. They will help in checking the availability of the rooms as well as the price. If the preferable room by the guest is unavailable, the front desk assistant will offer them other room options.

Next component is backstage employee actions which are steps and activities that occur behind the scene to support onstage activities. It involves employees that work behind the counter such as the manager, the assistant manager and other backstage staffs. Backstage actions taken by employees that are not visible to the customer. Actions here are separated from onstage service delivery by the line of visibility. Everything above the line of visibility is seen by the customer while everything below it is invisible.

In practical terms, these actions include taking the booking by the Reservation Department and Call Centre Agent (CCA). For the Reservation Department, the in-charge employees will be the one who directly receives the call for making a booking from the guests.

The booking may be done in terms of booking of room, conference rooms, hall function an etc. Usually, when the booking is made for other purpose like event, appreciation dinner or seminar, the Reservation Department will pass the booking to the Sales Department as they are the one who in-charge of it. Meanwhile, for the CCA, the agent will never be seen by the guest but every calls made from either internal or external will be connected to the CCA first. She is responsible in taking orders, requests and complaints from the guests as well as the other departments.

Then, support processes used throughout the service delivery. The fourth critical component of a service blueprint is the support processes that customer contact employees rely on to effectively interact with the customer. These processes are all the activities contributed by employees within the company who typically do not contact customers.

In practical terms, support processes usually involves the registration process during the arrival and departure of the guests through particular system. In Meritz Hotel, they are using the Opera System to register their guests. It helps in ensuring every details of the checked-in guests are being kept well and as a record for future reference. When there is dissimilarity in the guest's detail, they can simply check through the system. For example, their nationality and total grand of the payment. Not only that, the system also helps the Front Office Department and the Finance Department to review their transactions and check and balance.

The last component of service blueprint is the physical evidence of the service. Finally, for each customer moment of truth the physical evidence of the service delivery at each point of customer contact is recorded at the top of the blueprint. During this stage, the guests will experience the real services and free to give their comment about it. Their level of satisfaction will be decided during this stage.

In relation to practical terms in Meritz Hotel, as the guests can book for their stay online, they can simply leave a comment or rate in the websites or travel agents. This will be the indicator for the hotel to evaluate their efficiency of their services. The Front Office Department will review the rating daily during their briefing. Some corrective actions will be taken immediately when serious grievances being pointed out.

3.4 Servuction Model

The servuction model is basically used to illustrate factors that influence service experience, including those that are visible and invisible to the consumer (Hoffman & Bateson, 2002). The invisible component consists of invisible organizations as well as the systems meanwhile for the visible component, it consists of three ultimate parts which are inanimate environment, the contact employees and other customers. When a servuction model is done on any given business, it is important to know the four factors of it. The four main factors of this model are servicescape, contact personnel/service providers, other customers and organizations and systems.

The first factor is servicescape. Servicescape is basically the physical evidence or all nonliving features that are used to design the service environments. The bottom line is to think of anything that is plainly visible to the consumer and anything that consists of ambient conditions, inanimate objects, and other physical evidence. While working under Front Office Department, this can be seen through the way of decoration of the hotel from the interior and exterior. It is their responsibility to pay attention to what servicescape they have to provide. It is because the level of satisfaction of the guests will be affected by the quality of the servicescape and even the time that the guests are going to spend for the hotel service. Moreover, it is undeniably that the

guests' decision to use the service provided by the hotel again is also affected by the servicescape. So if the hotel has provided a high quality servicescape, it will be a main factor to gain success in the industry, by positive word of mouth of the customers and repeat purchase. For instance, in Meritz Hotel, at the reception desk, all the necessary information such as the booklet of available restaurant menus, latest brochure of room rate and legal certificate should be displayed so that it is easy for the guests to check upon them. Then, the waiting area for the guests also must be provided so that they do not have to line up and standing while waiting to be check in by the front desk assistant. They also provides free drinks and newspaper for the guests at the waiting area.

The second factor is contact personnel/service providers. These group of people are actually two areas that can affect the service experience bundled up into one category. Contact personnel are the employees other than the primary service provider who briefly interact with the customer. Service providers are the primary providers of a core service, such as a waiter or waitress, dentist, physician, or college instructor. In Meritz Hotel, the contact personnel involved the Front Office Department whereby they are the main frontline of the hotel in delivering service to the guests. They consists of the CCA, Reservation Department, front desk assistants and bellmen. They are responsible in dealing face-to-face with the guests daily. On the other hand, for the service provider, the hotel will cooperating with their main suppliers for the restaurants, office stationeries, security and maintenance, official uniforms and of course the hotel facilities.

The third factor is other customers. Other customers are basically those that receive the service alongside yourself perhaps through a bundle of benefits created through service experience. Meaning to say, as there are other guests in the hotel, thus the level of one's

experience will be impacted by these guests. In Meritz Hotel, although the hotel has succeeded in getting the nice decoration and perfect process, but the guests are freely to give their rate when they are staying there either in their booking travel agents or manually at the counter. When one feels satisfied with the services given by the hotel, he or she may rate the hotel by giving full five stars with some additional compliments.

Lastly, the organizations and systems. Organizations and systems here means the invisible part of the model that reflects the rules, regulations, and processes upon which the organization is based. When it comes to the rules, there are certain policy that being implemented by the government on September 1st, 2017 which is the Tourism Tax or TTX. TTX is a tax levied on the foreigners that staying at any hotels or accommodation premises made available by the operator at the rate fixed by the Minister. The rate for tourism tax charged is fixed at a flat rate of RM10.00 per room per night. All Malaysians are excluded from being charged under this tax. In Meritz Hotel, this implementation actually does affect them as it is still newly created and implemented. Therefore, some of the front desk assistant still make mistakes in charging the guests as they must collect and make a photocopy of the guests' passport as an evidence of their nationality. Some of them forgot to check the passport, some forgot to collect the payment of TTX and some forgot to make a photocopy of the passports. As the result, they have to pay the amount of the TTX charged upon the guests by themselves.

3.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion, I have explained the definition of the counter service, components of service blueprint and the Servuction Model whereby particularly related to the task given to me during my practical training in Meritz Hotel. Nevertheless, I have relate all of them both in theoretical

and practical terms based on the courses that I have studied before which is the Service Management subject. By doing this, I can actually applying what have I learned in my real practical training. Not only that, this also will helps me to practice the same thing in the future.

CHAPTER 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights on the strengths and weaknesses of the task that I have elaborate in the previous chapter which is counter service. Thus, I will emphasize in detail the strengths and weaknesses of the specific task based on the organization I joined for the practical training, Meritz Hotel. In addition to that, I will include some of recommendations according my own point of view.

4.2 Strength and weaknesses of counter service

Counter service is the front lines of one organization and they are the one responsible for the sustainability of their organization's image for the best first impression (Yap L.L., 2006). That means counter service also can be understood as a type of hospitality strategy that being delivered by the providers to their customers which involve interaction between of them. During the process of counter service, certainly some strength and weaknesses could be sense especially in the attempt of the service providers to meet and exceed the expectation of their customer. I will discuss on the three main strengths that can be identified in the counter service.

The first prime strength in counter service is communication skills. As a good service provider, one able to become a good listener to their customers. By listening, the service provider can communicate well with their customer as they are able to understand what their problem is

and can suggest better options to solve the problem. It conveys the sense of empathy between both parties. Not only that, through listening, they are able to obtain clear and right messages from their customers so that there is no misunderstanding and less mistake during the service delivery. Other than that, one with good communication skills also good in convincing their customers to trust their services as they are full of confidence. Being open-minded also an extra point there for the service provider as they respect each point of views and different understanding from their customers.

Secondly is teamwork. The service provider's value of teamwork must be strong enough so that they deliver a good service to the people whereby they have each other back. When one faces difficulties, the other will cheer him up. Group members demonstrates support for each other as they achieve their main goals. All in the team exemplify the sense of team loyalty. Besides, all the members in the team must able to mediate problems among themselves so that the problems can be solved in shortest period of time. Most importantly, they do not see each other as their competitors in order to avoid rivalry in workplace.

The last strength of counter service is personality. Personality reflects the value of the service providers. A good service provider will be able to tackle the heart of their customers easily without the necessary to being of fake. The customers can sense if the service provider really sincere in delivering service to them. The service provider will never overwhelm their customers with their personal opinions or fast talking over them. Smiling and appropriate choice of words are their ultimate weapon in dealing with people especially with the grumpy, difficult one. Other than that, they will be patient in confronting customers without showing of their anger or stress.

Contradicts to the perception of the strengths in counter service, surely there must weaknesses being discovered along the way. I will explaining on three main weaknesses found in the counter service.

The first main weaknesses mitigation of risks or problems. This is due to the fact that the service providers are lack of knowledge. As a service provider, one must able to predict every shortcomings that might be happening in the future. By doing so, they can prepare every possible solutions beforehand. It shows their spirit in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of their services. When one cannot solve the problem in prompt, it reflects a negative imagine not only to the service provider but to the whole organization as well. People will have this reluctance in using the same service in the future. It costs the organization big loss as they unable to preserve their customers.

The second one is argumentative personality. Dealing with different people with different point of views certainly not a piece of cake but as some of the service provider tends to be offensive when they are interacting with their customers. As they are thinking that they are right, they refuse to accept and tolerate with their customers. In fact, some of them are trying to defend themselves with pointless facts. When this happens, it will gives a bad first impression of the people not only to the service provider but their quality of work too. What makes it worst, this also can leads to huge misunderstanding among the customers as the service provider tells them false statement.

The third weaknesses is incompetent personnel. This related to the statement whereby one is unable to do a job to a satisfactory standard. If the service provider fails to deliver their service in required time, meaning to say he or she is considered incompetent. Indicators of incompetence include always being late to work, work with errors or requiring help form other

frequently and lazy. On the other hand, some of them may find it is very hard to face-to-face with the customers as they are too scared of making mistakes. Therefore, they prefer to pass the work to others.

Every organization has their own strengths and weaknesses in their counter service. So do my practical place. During my practical training in Meritz Hotel, I experienced many kinds of situations in dealing with guests. Different guests come with different attitudes and behaviors. There are two fundamental strengths of counter service that I have discovered in the Front Office Department that I am going to discuss further.

The first strength is their teamwork. It is undeniably that their teamwork is so strong that everyone is working together very well. They are able to back up each other whenever there is a problem arises. When they are dealing with hard-to-deal-with guests, the front desk assistants will seek for advice from their Assistant Manager on duty. They will not simply make a decision on their own. After that, the Assistant Manager on duty will report those problems to the Manager immediately. As they were having their briefing every shift either morning or afternoon, all the arisen problems will be presented by the Assistant Manager on duty and they will discuss on that matter together. For the report, the CCA then will take note of every detail and jot it down in the Front Office Form. Not only that, CCA and front desk assistant also being the helping hand for Reservation Department for night shift as they were working according to office hours.

The second strength that I want to highlight is their discipline in working. Every month the Assistant Manager will reschedule the Front Office Department's working timetable. Therefore, each of them will be aware of their own schedule without having any overlapping works and being late for work. What mesmerized me the most is they are aware of each of their

member's schedule. By then, they can remind each other from time to time. Not only that, in order to emphasize the sense of punctuality in their working time, for those who are late for work, they are required to pay RM1 as their punishment. All the accumulated fines will be used for year-end party for themselves.

In contrast of the strengths of counter service in the Front Office Department of Meritz Hotel that I have been discussed beforehand, there are also some weaknesses of it that I can pointed out.

The first weaknesses is lack of staffs. At the first place, I was supposedly to be the front desk assistants but due to the fact that, they CCA, therefore I have to cover my task as CCA for two weeks. There are only two staffs appointed to be the CCA and both of them are very young. They have to take turn in having their off day as no one can cover their task. The required tasks of CCA including updating the reports, releasing lines for each departments, hunting lines, updating the notice board of Front Office Department, answering calls from both internal and external and making wash-down for the guests that supposedly check out that particular day. When it involves so many works to be done by one person, it is really tiring. What makes it worst, when it is a peak season whereby the hotel is fully booked, both CCA are unable to have their off day but have to work overtime instead.

The second weaknesses is communication skills. Meritz Hotel regularly getting very low rating in their websites and online travel agents due to their Front Office Department's poor communication skills. Some of them are unable to speak fluently in English. When this happens, it leads to ineffective interaction between them with the guests as they are unable to understand and convey the right message to the guests. At one point, it causes misunderstanding among themselves and the guests are getting irritated. When the guests try to make report about that

matter, they sometimes being defensive and insulting the guests by using their mother tongue. It shows their unprofessionalism in dealing with the guests.

4.3 Recommendations

As I was enlisted the weaknesses of the Front Office Department earlier which are lack of staffs and poor communication skills, I have come out with two recommendations that I personally think relevant in order to cater the weaknesses.

Primarily, I highly recommended the hotel to recruit and select more competent staffs in order to cater the lack of staffs. The Human Resource Department members must arrange for the job interview and have adequate knowledge in recruiting and selecting the right candidates to be listed down. They must carefully observe every applications so that they do not have to waste money and energy redoing the same thing in the future.

Secondly, I think it is necessary for the hotel to send their Front Office staffs for intensive training and seminar in order for them to enhance their confidence and ability to communicate well. Some role play may be given to them during the training and seminar so that they can apply the simulation of the role play into their real working environment. By practicing that, they can boost their confidence and deliver service at their best.

4.4 Conclusion

Every organizations certainly have their own strengths in business as well as their weaknesses for them to stay motivated to do better in the future. Every strengths and weaknesses that I pointed out in this chapter wholly from my own experience during my practical training days. Same goes with the recommendations, all are coming from my very own observation and point of view.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

I personally have chosen Meritz Hotel as my practical training place as I want to be out of my comfort zone in delivering services to the people. Many people suggested me to apply for the public sector agency as my place for practical training as it is more relaxed and less hectic. With this kind of mindset, I challenged myself to apply for the private sector and finally made decision to go for the hospitality industry. It encourages me, telling me there is nothing impossible for me to be out of my comfort zone and succeed in delivering services to the people through this industry. As long as there are determination, willingness, and optimistic attitude, everything is possible.

During eight weeks of my industrial training underneath Meritz Hotel, I have been able to grasp a better understanding of the trends, challenges, work flow, size and potential of the hospitality industry particularly in my own hometown, Miri. The company's willingness to accept me and their abundant assistance, supports, guidance and encouragement for me as apprentice in the industry not only helped me to grab a clear and practical definition of the hospitality industry but also helped me to identified relevant industry associated as well as helped me to boost up my self-esteem for better adaption towards service delivery in hospitality industry.

Overall, I had a very positive practicum experience. I found it to be both enjoyable and educational. I learnt a lot from both positive impact and negative impact around me during my days of internship. I would recommend Meritz Hotel as a placement site for future students, but

only those who are very independent, highly self-motivated, and flexible. It would be an ideal placement for students who want to grasp better understanding about the industry. It would be important that the student have both the time and mind set to accommodate setbacks and the flexibility to add or remove activities from the practicum as the situation dictates.

Having limited supervision did present some struggles, such as maintaining a high level of personal motivation each day. My interactions with the guests and other related agents presented further struggles, but also taught me much about how to blend well in the people in the industry.

At Meritz Hotel, the offices are run efficiently and communication between the offices and with others is good. However, there are still some conflicts occurred within the employees or within the departments. People are emotional and passionate. The deliverance of service is changing every time and it is difficult to satisfy everybody. Yet, I learned to expect all levels of professionalism and efficiency and to be flexible, persistent, and to adapt when necessary.

With obtained valuable experiences from this industrial training, it will become a remarkable stepping-stone for me to pursue my career in administration and management field and I hope to bring better development not only for myself but also towards the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in the future.

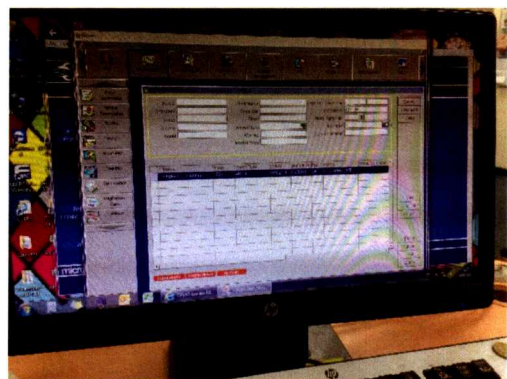
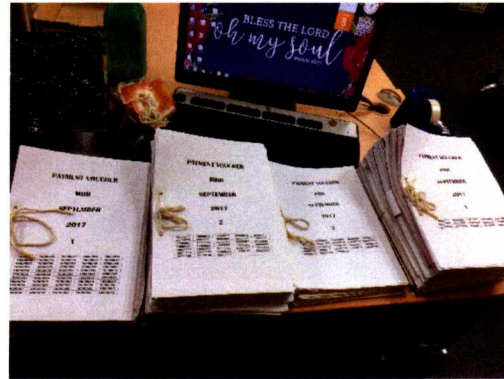
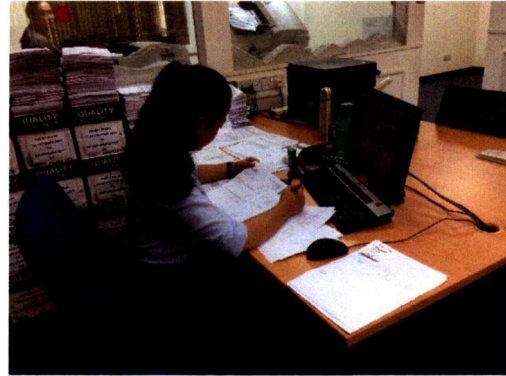
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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Picture 1.1 Activities at Finance Department



APPENDIX C

Picture 1.3 Activities at Front Office Department (Front Desk Assistant)

