



Placement Case Study

CIT Department: Tourism & Hospitality

Partner: Hayfield Manor Hotel

Type of Engagement: Placement

Solution: Hospitality Management Year 1 and 3

"I must acknowledge the importance of placements both as a former student and an employer. The opportunity of organised placements as part of their college programme within the hospitality industry ensures a solid foundation to their future career."



Seamus Crotty,
Deputy GM,
Hayfield Manor
Hotel.

Well placed—hotels and hospitality management students

Over a 7-year period Seamus Crotty (Deputy GM Hayfield Manor Hotel) has experienced CIT's Tourism and Hospitality Departments' placement programme from both a student and employer perspective. Here he gives his insights into this learning experience

Integral to the Bachelor of Business Studies in Hospitality Management is the workplace learning. This involves a three month credited placement in Year 1 and a five month placement in Year 3. Seamus actively advocates the value of workplace learning by facilitating placements and providing mentoring to CIT students at the Hayfield Manor Hotel.

The Need

Defining and clarifying placement requirements is an important first step to solidify the process between all stakeholders—student, industry and college. In his own first year placement, Seamus found that placement activities and duties consolidated his learning at CIT. "It gave me the opportunity to develop my skills and enhance my CV and employment prospects after college".

Industry's primary needs are: to be involved in the recruitment and training of students to a particular and consistent level that reflects and responds to their requirements /advancements.

CIT's primary needs are to: establish and reinforce learning relationships with industry,

which help to support curriculum relevance; applying learning to the workplace and the development of technical and soft skills.

The Solution

Seamus recalls the placement steps as a student. His initial undertaking was a one-to-one interview with his course coordinator, who enquired about his willingness to travel, previous experience, requirements and desired outcomes from placement. He was delighted to discover placement possibilities in a wide variety of roles, establishments and locations.

Following the one-to-one, a department evaluation was undertaken, providing feedback on students' demonstrated technical and interpersonal skills. "My next step was to have an interview with my chosen hotel which was relatively informal and great preparation for later job interviews".



Seamus found identifying 10 learning outcomes, prior to commencing his placement, a very useful exercise in setting objectives and refining his expectations. "I was then given a work place reflective journal to record my placement journey. This was essential to the learning and evaluation process."

Critical Success Factors

Seamus found the coordinator's on-site meetings with both he and his mentor to be valuable and supportive, "it made the whole process transparent". Placement assessment is based equally on the mentor's evaluation as well as the college work completed by the student.

First year students are assisted in developing a career plan and Seamus found that this helped to give him a focus for the placement. His learning on-campus transferred easily to the workplace due to CIT's close relationship with industry and continuous course development.

Adrian Gregan, Head of Tourism & Hospitality Department stresses "achieving synergy between the student and hotel is key and is determined by our process of identifying and matching skillsets to requirements across disciplines".

Student and industry mentor supports during placement reinforce all parties' commitment to the process.

Challenges

Managing the expectations of all involved and ensuring placement is acknowledged as a core course component can be challenging at times.

Benefits

Seamus sees his first year placement as a catalyst for the career opportunities that ensued. "My workplace mentor and the staff were influential role models for me and gave me direction. I learned the importance of working as part of a team. Without this experience I would not be Deputy Manager in a 5 Star establishment."



"Placement gives the college the opportunity to interface with our stakeholders who in turn give us excellent feedback and direction for the future. Placement allows the student to develop their skills and competencies in the working environment. Learning through doing is a core element of the academic programmes in the Tourism and Hospitality Department."

Adrian Gregan, Head of the Department of Tourism & Hospitality

Who's Who

Hospitality Industry Stakeholders 2012

Galway Bay Hotel, Castlemartyr Resort, Dromoland Castle & Country Estate, Imperial Hotel Cork, Fota Island Resort, Hayfield Manor, Inchdoney Lodge & Spa, River Lee Hotel, O'Donoghue Ring Hotels, Park Hotel Kenmare, Radisson Hotels, Sheen Falls Lodge, Cliff House Ardmore, Killarney Park, Maryborough House Hotel, Europe Hotel Resort, Destination Killarney Group, Clarion Hotels, Rochestown Park, Celtic Ross Hotel, Dunloe Castle, Ballykisteon Hotel & Golf Resort, Marriott Hotel Group, Westin Hotel Group, Jurys Inn, West Cork Hotel, Monart, Middleton Park Hotel and Castle Hotel Macroom. Gleneagle Group Killarney.

Bachelor of Business Studies in Hospitality Management

There is a strong focus on student centred

learning and teaching methods include formal lectures, tutorials, and practical operations classes which equip the student with the core skills necessary for a career in the Hospitality sector. Many classes combine both individual and team project work and they are supported by a range of visiting speakers, industry visits, and field trips.

Work Placement

Between first and second year, there is an organised work placement (minimum of 12 weeks) in a quality hospitality establishment.

Placement Coordinators:

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