

Parcel Yard Experience — Full Scope

Role: Front-of-House / Bar Support / Deputy Manager Candidate

Company: The Parcel Yard, Fuller's

Location: King's Cross Station, London

Period: February 2026 – Present

What I Entered the Role To Do

- Joined The Parcel Yard to learn hospitality from the ground upward.
 - Chose frontline work intentionally, not from lack of higher-level capability.
 - Entered the business with previous experience in:
 - customer service
 - recruitment
 - account management
 - sales
 - leadership
 - stakeholder management
 - business development
 - human dynamics
 - communication
 - systems thinking
 - Used the role as a practical immersion into hospitality operations.
 - Observed the business from both staff and customer perspectives.
 - Treated the role as a live case study in:
 - operational flow
 - staff welfare
 - customer experience
 - management pressure
 - service standards
 - risk prevention
 - commercial leakage
 - team behaviour
 - business structure
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Areas I Covered

- Dining Carriage.
- Snug.
- Atrium.
- Downstairs bar.

- Function rooms.
 - Dirty lift.
 - Pass support.
 - Stock room.
 - Cellar-related support where needed.
 - Laundry and stock-related areas.
 - Customer-facing floor sections.
 - Bar support.
 - Food running.
 - Table service.
 - Clearing and cleaning.
 - General operational support across the building.
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What I Delivered on Shift

- Covered floor and bar where needed.
 - Supported other stations when my own area was under control.
 - Helped with food running, clearing, cleaning, resetting, and customer reassurance.
 - Supported practical issues instead of standing idle.
 - Assisted with toilets, stock issues, dirty lift, and wider operational pressure points.
 - Maintained calm during busy periods.
 - Helped reduce pressure on colleagues by stepping in wherever useful.
 - Took responsibility for making my contribution felt.
 - Worked with the mindset that if I am being paid, my work should actively support the business.
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Process Improvements I Contributed To

Dirty Lift Organisation

- Helped improve dirty lift separation.
- Supported labelled boxes for:
 - cutlery
 - mugs
 - plates
 - food residue
 - rubbish / napkins / paper
- Reinforced the standard with the team.
- Reduced mess and confusion between floor and kitchen.
- Helped make it easier for kitchen staff to process items quickly.
- Identified dirty lift management as a shared floor/kitchen responsibility, not just a cleaning task.

Glass Sorting

- Improved bar flow by grouping dirty glasses by type before redistribution.
- Helped reduce unnecessary movement across bar stations.
- Made it easier for staff to reset glassware more quickly.
- Encouraged the team to see the full set of glasses instead of treating each glass as a separate task.
- Received positive feedback from staff that this made setup easier and quicker.

Stock and Communal Spaces

- Tidied communal spaces such as the stock room.
 - Encouraged shared responsibility for keeping operational areas functional.
 - Identified that messy shared spaces create unnecessary pressure later.
 - Saw stock organisation as part of operational flow, not just cleanliness.
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Risks and Inconsistencies I Noticed

- Broken or unstable tables affecting customer comfort.
 - Wobbly tables needing practical solutions such as wedges or stabilisers.
 - Contradictory menus on the floor with different hours or offerings.
 - Customer confusion caused by unclear menu wording.
 - Unclear ordering methods in certain areas.
 - QR code availability not always clear to customers.
 - Inconsistent table service expectations depending on room, time, and staffing.
 - Dirty lift pressure affecting both floor and kitchen.
 - Kitchen communication gaps around notes not always showing clearly.
 - Security checks creating pressure when carried by already stretched managers.
 - Room readiness issues, especially around functions and closing.
 - Closed or underused sections representing either protected cost or unrealised potential.
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Customer Experience Observations

- Observed that from the customer perspective, the business mostly works.
- Noted that customers often do not see the pressure happening behind the scenes.
- Saw that the location, atmosphere, and building carry a lot of the business.
- Recognised that customers are mostly fine unless affected by:
 - delays
 - out-of-stock items
 - mistakes
 - unclear menus
 - confusing ordering methods

- unstable tables
 - lack of visible staff
 - mismatched expectations
 - Observed that hospitality can look easy to customers because staff absorb the hidden cost.
 - Recognised that the business does not need to change to make money, but it would need stronger standards to make bigger, cleaner, more protected money.
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Customer Complaint Handling

- Handled complaints calmly and constructively.
 - Reassured customers without escalating unnecessarily.
 - Understood that customers often want reassurance before authority.
 - Example: handled a customer concern around steak frites and chips by recognising the wording confusion, reassuring the customer, and only involving management for the refund because of system access.
 - Identified that many complaints can be prevented through clearer wording, better menu descriptions, and quicker empowered resolution.
 - Recognised that unclear menus force staff to defend what the menu did not explain.
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Menu and Product Clarity Observations

- Noticed menu wording can create customer “mis-expectations.”
 - Example: customer expected a full muffin or two halves when the menu said “muffin,” but received half of an oversized muffin.
 - Identified that menu wording should reflect what customers actually receive.
 - Suggested that photos or clearer descriptions could reduce confusion.
 - Noted that customers should not need inside knowledge to understand what they are ordering.
 - Recognised that menu clarity protects staff from preventable complaints.
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Food Pass and Service Flow Observations

- Identified that food service should begin when food appears on the pass screen, not only when it reaches the table.
- Suggested that staff should prepare the table with cutlery as soon as food appears on the pass.
- Suggested checking sauce needs when delivering cutlery.
- Suggested bringing salt, pepper, vinegar, or relevant condiments earlier where appropriate.

- Recognised that sauces should be ready for collection to reduce delays.
 - Saw food running as preparation of the customer to receive food properly, not only movement from pass to table.
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Kitchen Communication Observations

- Noted that kitchen often says notes do not show clearly on their screens.
 - Recognised that free-text notes can be unreliable.
 - Identified that the business already has some buttons/codes.
 - Suggested expanding the existing button/code system based on recurring pass issues.
 - Proposed tracking:
 - what staff type manually
 - what kitchen misses
 - what causes remakes
 - what causes customer complaints
 - what appears often enough to deserve a button
 - Suggested laminated code definitions at:
 - pass
 - bar
 - kitchen
 - floor stations
 - manager station
 - Understood the pass as the point where customer expectation, floor communication, kitchen execution, and business cost meet.
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Staff Welfare and Morale Observations

- Observed that staff carry the hidden cost of the current structure.
- Noted that customers may be fine while staff absorb the pressure.
- Identified morale issues linked to:
 - understaffing
 - feeling unheard
 - unclear standards
 - contradictory information
 - feeling replaceable
 - assumptions instead of visible rules
 - reduced support
 - managers being stretched
- Recognised that unsupported staff eventually affect atmosphere.
- Saw staff welfare as part of commercial performance, not separate from it.
- Understood staff as the carriers of:
 - pace

- service
 - emotional labour
 - customer recovery
 - cleanliness
 - atmosphere
 - business reputation
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Management Pressure I Observed

- Saw managers handling too many responsibilities at once.
 - Observed management being pulled between:
 - customer complaints
 - refunds
 - special codes
 - security checks
 - staff questions
 - kitchen communication
 - floor support
 - food running
 - bar support
 - office tasks
 - function preparation
 - breaks
 - closing expectations
 - Recognised that managers become reactive when too many permissions and tasks sit with too few people.
 - Identified that stronger supervisor/deputy support could reduce unnecessary escalation.
 - Saw that managers need structure around them as much as staff do.
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Security and Risk Observations

- Recognised that Parcel Yard is not a normal standalone pub because it operates inside King's Cross Station.
- Identified security responsibility as higher because of the station environment.
- Noted that managers handling security checks alongside everything else may reduce focus.
- Suggested that a dedicated security person or stronger security structure could protect:
 - staff
 - customers
 - managers
 - the public

- the business
 - Recognised that repeated checks can become ritual if not kept conscious.
 - Saw security as a structural responsibility, not just an individual task.
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Training and Standards Observations

- Noted that online training exists, but floor training depends heavily on who is available.
 - Observed that different staff train others through their own habits and standards.
 - Recognised that new starters may inherit inconsistent versions of the role.
 - Identified the need for one visible, transferable business standard.
 - Proposed room-specific run sheets.
 - Proposed a living standards folder.
 - Proposed clear task and standards sheets.
 - Recognised that accountability becomes unfair when the standard is not visible first.
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Run Sheet Proposal

- Proposed creating run sheets for each area of the business.
 - Suggested each run sheet should include:
 - room purpose
 - service style
 - opening checks
 - during-shift maintenance
 - quiet-time tasks
 - restocking expectations
 - customer-flow guidance
 - escalation rules
 - cleaning expectations
 - closing checks
 - what “good” looks like in that area
 - Identified run sheets as a way to:
 - train new starters
 - support managers
 - reduce assumptions
 - improve consistency
 - protect standards
 - reduce micromanagement
 - make accountability fairer
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Living Standards / Rules Folder Proposal

- Suggested creating a central reference folder for rules and standards.
 - Identified WhatsApp as useful for communication but not suitable as the rulebook.
 - Proposed including:
 - staff food rules
 - fridge-cleaning expectations
 - opening and closing standards
 - area standards
 - allergen procedures
 - menu knowledge
 - service language
 - security expectations
 - function room reset standards
 - escalation procedures
 - what to do when unsure
 - Recognised that staff cannot be expected to remember everything from scattered verbal instructions or old group messages.
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Manager Handover Proposal

- Proposed structured manager handover sheets.
 - Suggested they be started before the end of shift.
 - Proposed including:
 - outstanding customer issues
 - function requirements
 - staff issues
 - absences
 - stock issues
 - security concerns
 - maintenance issues
 - incomplete tasks
 - complaints/refunds
 - priorities for the next shift
 - Saw handover as continuity of responsibility, not admin for the sake of admin.
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Team Allocation and Pattern Tracking

- Suggested tracking team allocation over time.
- Proposed analysing which staff combinations lead to:
 - smoother closes
 - faster service

- fewer complaints
 - fewer food mistakes
 - better morale
 - less management intervention
 - more support between stations
 - Recognised that the rota should not only show who was present.
 - Believed the rota should eventually help management understand what each presence contributes.
 - Saw value in tracking impact per person per shift without turning it into unfair blame.
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Leadership Lessons

- Learned that leadership must regulate the emotional temperature of the shift.
 - Observed that if management becomes visibly dysregulated, the floor absorbs or mirrors it.
 - Recognised that if leadership loses stability, the team carries both the shift and the leader.
 - Believed leadership should solve issues where possible instead of expanding them emotionally.
 - Saw micromanagement as an emergency tool, not the operating system.
 - Understood that direction can move downward, but responsibility must be held upward.
 - Recognised that floor staff can be responsible for tasks, but management is responsible for clarity, training, tools, structure, and accountability.
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Deputy Manager Understanding

- Came to understand the Deputy Manager as the glue between:
 - business
 - General Manager
 - other managers
 - supervisors
 - floor staff
 - bar staff
 - kitchen
 - customers
 - boardroom expectations
- Understood that a Deputy Manager does not directly manage customers.
- Understood that a Deputy Manager manages the customer experience.
- Recognised that the customer receives the result of how well staff, managers, kitchen, bar, floor, and business structure work together.
- Saw the role as a bridge between strategy and daily execution.
- Saw the role as responsibility, not title.

What I Would Bring as Deputy Manager

- Structure.
- Standards.
- Run sheets.
- Staff understanding.
- Stronger area allocation.
- Better customer experience.
- Better communication between floor and kitchen.
- Better support for the General Manager.
- Reduced pressure on managers.
- Clearer accountability.
- Stronger training references.
- Better visible standards.
- Emotional regulation.
- Business-flow thinking.
- Customer-experience awareness.
- Commercial awareness.
- Faster identification of risk and leakage.
- Ability to learn the business quickly by documenting and interviewing the people who already know each area.
- Ability to turn gaps into structure.

What I Learned About My Own Value

- I can enter an unfamiliar industry and quickly understand its structure.
- I can learn from the ground while still thinking strategically.
- I can see patterns others may miss because they are used to the environment.
- I can connect staff experience to customer experience and business profit.
- I can translate daily problems into operational solutions.
- I can spot where standards are missing, assumed, or inconsistent.
- I can bring corporate, managerial, psychological, and human-dynamics experience into hospitality.
- I can contribute beyond my job title.
- I can see the difference between a business that functions and a business that is fully optimised.
- I do not need to be limited to one business if that business cannot recognise the value of my mind.

Overall Summary

- Parcel Yard gave me a full ground-level immersion into hospitality.
- I gave Parcel Yard labour, care, standards, insight, customer support, operational suggestions, and business-level analysis.
- I saw how the business works.
- I saw where it leaks.
- I saw where staff carry hidden pressure.
- I saw where customers are protected from seeing the pressure.
- I saw where managers are stretched.
- I saw where standards need to become visible.
- I saw where experience has become habit.
- I saw where structure could create more wealth, not just daily revenue.
- I saw that hospitality does not need to be complicated to make money, but it needs stronger standards to make bigger, cleaner, longer-term money.

Closing Line

Parcel Yard gave me hospitality from the ground up.

I gave Parcel Yard standards, care, work ethic, operational insight, and a business lens that goes far beyond the floor.