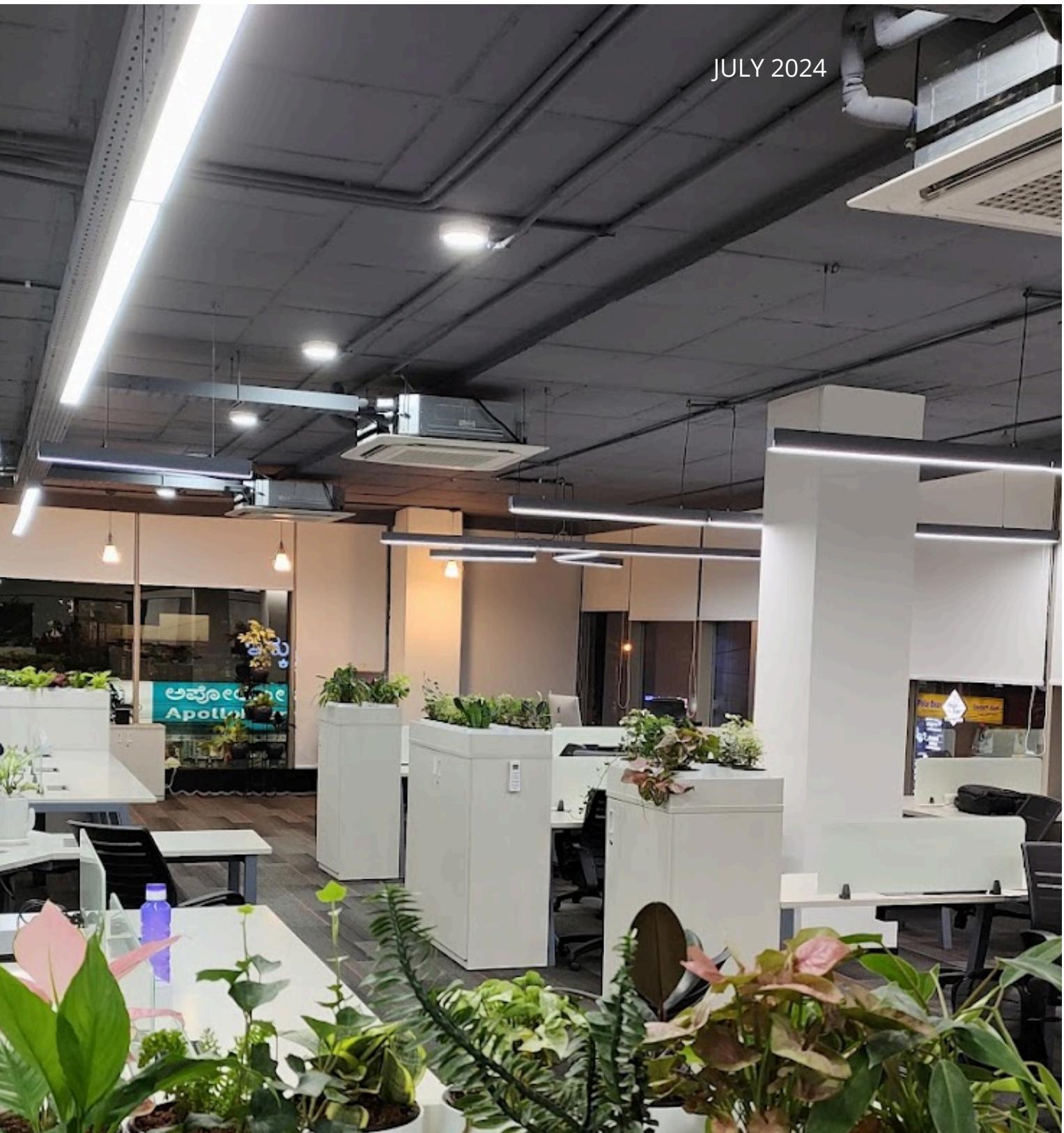


JULY 2024



Training Needs Analysis

hudini

Prepared by: mindfultalk

INTRODUCTION



Hudini is the leader in digital transformation solutions for the hospitality sector. It is **the only platform** that unites data integration and governance to deliver a seamless guest and staff journey experience with its **API first architecture, data integration and governance, mobile first guest experience, multi-device staff experience with 100+ integrations with hospitality vendors.**

It strives to support its clients, provide the best guest experience through smart automations and intelligent interactions,

In a short span of 5 years, Hudini has acquired marquee hospitality brands as its clients and looks forward to expand its footprint globally. The senior leadership wants **delivery teams to support this vision by delivering software on-time, every time.** Towards this, the discussion was to identify training needs for the team to ensure the above.

We set out to understand the training needs through discussions with the key team members on June 25, 26, 2024.

This report lists the recommendations for both the training and the process improvements that will help the teams function better for enhanced operations.



THE OBJECTIVE & THE APPROACH

The main objective is to **identify the reasons for the delayed delivery of software** that causes the company to lose credibility in the eyes of the customer. The management surmise is (a) the team lacks accountability, (b) they have overstated their skills or (c) they lack communication skills to speak up when they know they cannot deliver.

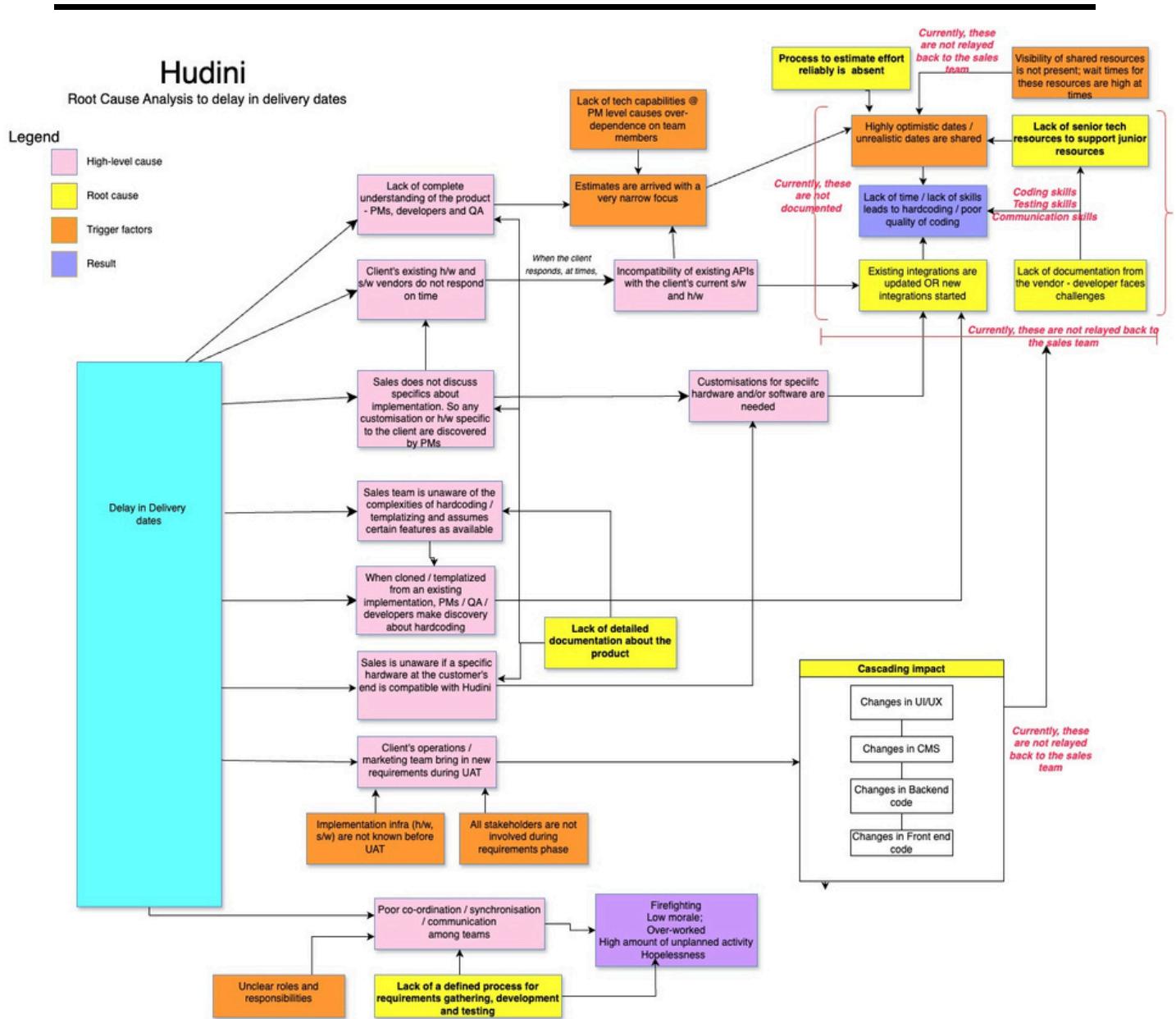
We **adopted a systems thinking approach** to understand possible reasons, the conditions that caused the issue, the patterns of behaviour, the underlying structures that lend themselves to such patterns, the assumptions, beliefs and values of the people involved.

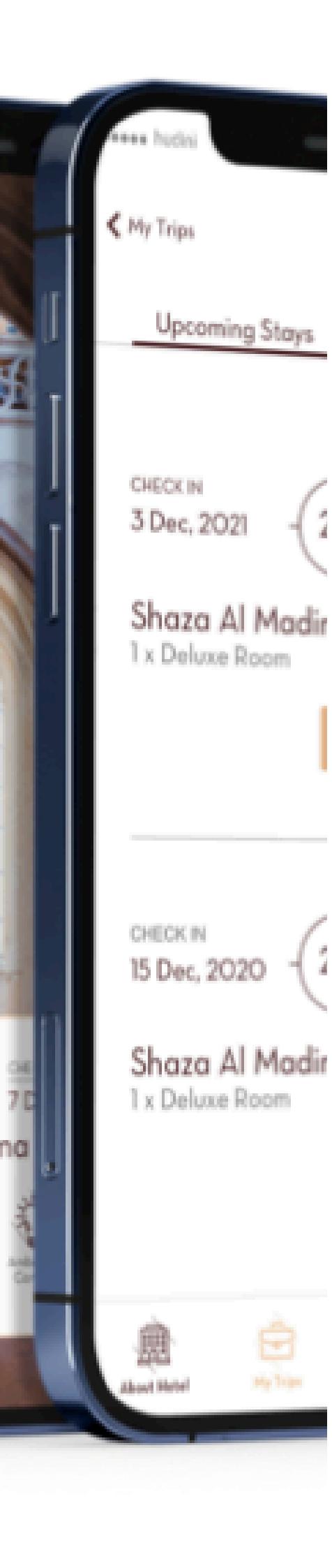
We facilitated 1-1 discussions with a sample of employees of Hudini across the board to get their views. We spoke to Ajay (CIO), Raj (Head-Finance), Sarath (Head-IT Infra), Amit Karthik (Engineering Manager), Sandesh (Head, QA), Sreejith (Head, UI/UX), Vijender, Amit Gupta, Naveen (all Project managers), Praveen Balaji and Paulson (developers).

The findings were eye-opening; all of them were able to clearly articulate the reasons for the delay, their ideas and thoughts on how the organisation can deliver the products on-time and what needs be improved.

Based on the discussion, we created the **Root Cause Analysis (RCA) for the deliverables delay along with the recommendations for the training program and the processes** that needed to be enhanced / created for the teams to function as a unit and for the organisation to meet its goals.

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS (RCA)





OBSERVATIONS

Confidence in the product

Everyone is proud of the product and is convinced about its capabilities and relevance in the hospitality industry.

Accountability

Seven out of the 10 people mentioned that accountability was not an issue. The developers and testers do not slack but rather figure out how to perform their job well in the given situation. People are willing to stretch, if there is a need.

Friendly culture

Almost everyone mentioned that people are friendly and welcoming; they received help whenever they needed to understand the product or technology.

Open to change

The team is young and open to change. They shared ideas and suggestions on how their work can be planned better to achieve quality in the deliverables that would also result in better work-life balance.

TEAM INTERACTIONS

Process improvements

There is a lack of structured processes for development and delivery.

Lack of processes prevents the seamless flow of information from Sales to project teams - UI/UX, backend and the front end development. This **causes confusion and reduces trust and co-operation among teams.**

Is the development of a feature, in **a product mode or a project mode?** When does a customer requirement enter the product codebase? Which code-base should they clone for a client? These are unclear to the teams.

At least five people reported feeling **frustrated and demotivated** due to the increased amount of unplanned tasks that fills up their day.

Given that a number of developers are very new to the industry, structured processes will help them **deliver quality software** due to early identification of bugs and hence fixes.

Lack of process also results in unverified software to be delivered to the client. This increases the **support teams' work, escalations from the client and loss of credibility for the team.**

Customer requirements are not signed-off; there is no discussion around the fact that when there are external dependencies (e.g. clients' vendors), the interaction time too has to be included in the time estimates. In reality, this causes significant delays but is rarely discussed openly.

There is also a lack of process to reliably estimate the time for implementation considering various factors.

QA team is unable to set up a test bed of reservations and automate test cases. This increases **the product testing time and costs.**

Lack of a sandbox internally for the product **increases dependency on the customer and hence delays** when bugs are found during UAT that could have been identified during unit or integration testing.

TEAM INTERACTIONS

Product Knowledge

Lack of product knowledge is a serious impediment.

Only a handful of people in the company are aware of the product features and its benefits. This lack of product understanding causes many issues:

Sales team is **unaware of the details of the specific integrations** while discussing with the client; this is discovered by the PMs during delivery.

PMs commit on deadlines based on recommendations from team members - all of them have only a limited understanding of the product and this also causes them to **share incorrect estimates for implementation**.

The development (dev) team and the testing team, with their limited knowledge, are unable to test completely and this causes **buggy software** to be delivered.

Transparency about the product should be present - which modules are ready, which are fully configurable, how many days does it take for integration etc. **Everyone should be aware about the product.**

Product Documentation

There is no single version of truth.

Lack of reviewed product documentation OR a single version of truth that is available on-demand - causes bottlenecks; **there is no common ground** to agree whether a specific requirement is configurable in the product or is a change request.

When new employees join, they rely on their colleagues to help them understand the product. This is **very inefficient**.

Change request or a bug: Good product documentation will help onboard new employees, help in testing features and provide confidence to the teams when they present the software to clients.

Reliable Product Documentation will help developers and testers to **increase their work efficiency**; Sales teams also will be aware of what features are completely configurable and this will **reduce false commitments** to the clients.

Good Release notes lists the **features of the release** to all the teams; no one has to second-guess about the product features.

TEAM INTERACTIONS

Lack of senior tech resources

Seniors mentor and guide the team in tech and non-tech areas.

Lack of senior tech resources to support the freshers for bug fixes, understanding how to implement a feature, how to test it etc. While tech training will alleviate the issue to a certain extent, there should be a healthy mix of senior and junior tech resources to produce quality software.

Lack of domain understanding

The team members lack understanding of the hospitality domain and the clients' challenges.

Ignorance of the luxury hospitality domain and an appreciation of the clients' issues is prevalent. The freshers need understanding of the domain.

Lack of strategic action

At least five people mentioned that they were unable to think strategically due to regular fire-fighting. They were resentful of being reactive rather than proactive.

Teams should have the mind space and bandwidth to plan strategically up-skilling, product related upgrades and call for ideas to improve product quality and design. This also means relying processes and not on people.

Lack of communication skills

The team members hesitate to speak up even when they know better.

There is reluctance among the juniors to speak up / disagree with their seniors due to lack of assertiveness or when they have to deliver unpleasant news.



RECOMMENDATIONS

TRAINING NEEDS - SOFT SKILLS

Client Handling for Project teams

- Setting expectations, being assertive and objection handling
- Confirm your understanding by paraphrasing / summarising
- Staying connected
- Find common ground / Empathise with their situation
- Learn about requirement urgency and support your customer

Team Building & Collaboration

- Collaborate with other teams
- Use of sensible humour [if possible]
- Keeping calm and keep communication channel open
- Givers gain
- How to seek and give help to colleagues

Clear Communication

- Being assertive
- Writing clear emails
- Speaking up
- Conducting productive meetings [clear agenda, goals, duration]
- Change communication details based on the audience

Decision making

- Being agile and adaptable
- Impact analysis and managing risks
- Influencing stakeholders
- Conflict resolution
- Leading from the front

TIME MANAGEMENT & DELEGATION

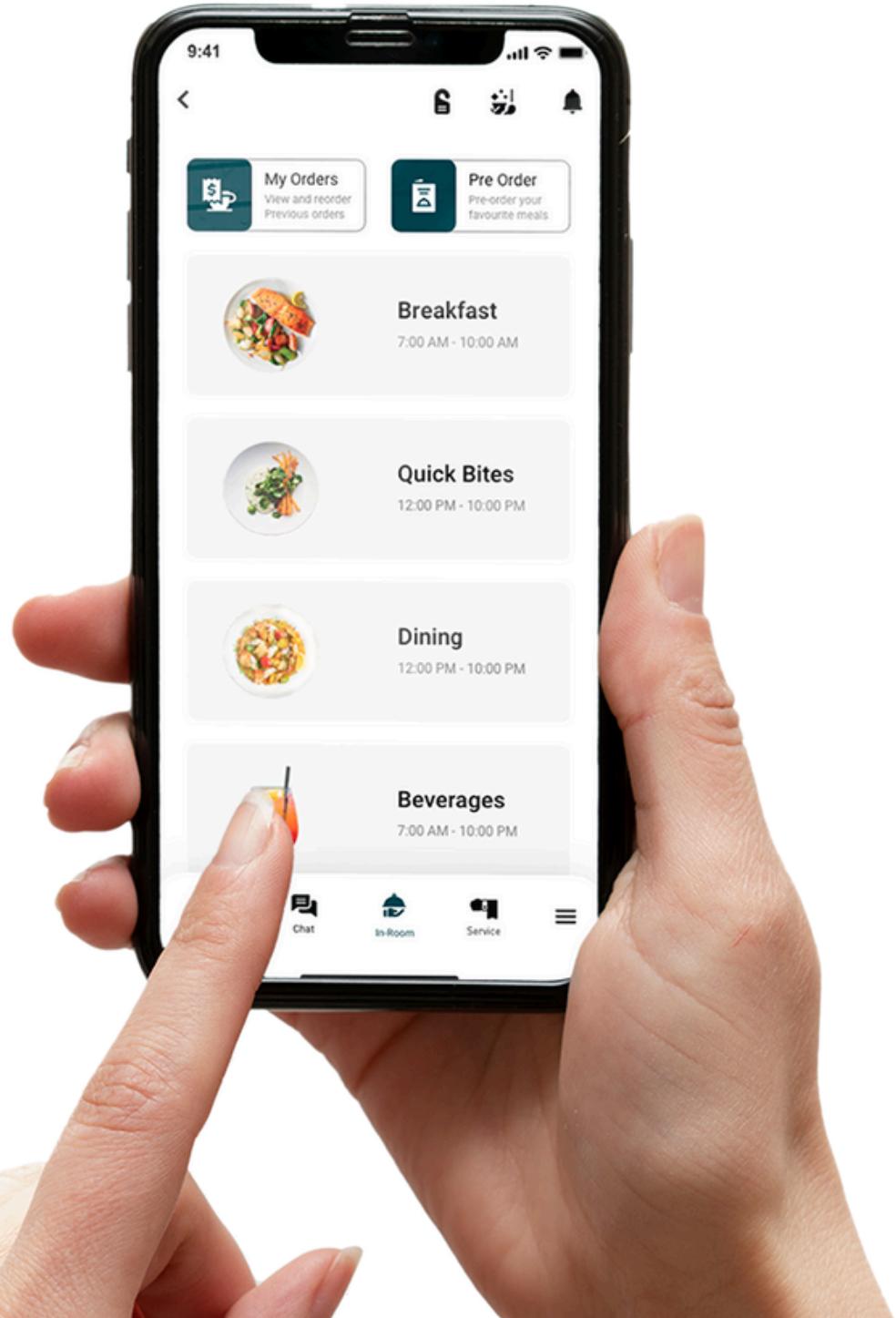
- Understand the difference between Urgent and Important
- How do you delegate?
- Multi-tasking - Perils
- Art of monkey management (unplanned demands on your time)

PROCESS DEFINITION AND ROLLOUT

There is a need to create structured processes for product development, quality interaction with the customers, faster delivery and enhanced customer satisfaction.

TRAINING NEEDS - PRODUCT RELATED [TOP PRIORITY]

- Understand the product and its features
- Know the domain related terminology
- Product and process related trainings for employees
- Process flow - within the product development cycle
- Effort estimation



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