

## CHAPTER ONE CONCEPTS OF TOUR GUIDING

### 1.1. Definitions and Terms

#### Who is a Tour guide?

A tour guide is an individual who, either as an employee or affiliate of a duly licensed travel and tour agency, guide, tourists, both foreign and domestic, for a fee, commission or any other form of lawful remuneration on sightseeing tours and excursions. A tour guide is one who shows the way and is the tourists' hired conductor. He requires having the broad knowledge of the places to be visited.

- ✎ He acts as the “unofficial ambassador of his own country”.
- ✎ A tour guide/a tourist guide/ provides assistance, information, historical and contemporary heritage interpretation to people on organized tours, individual clients, educational establishments, at religious and historical sites and at venues of other significant interest. They (normally) have a recognized national or regional tourist guide qualifications.
- ✎ The CEN (European Committee for Standardization) defined tourist guide as “a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area, which the person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognized by the appropriate authority.

#### A Tourist Guide, Tour Manager and Tour Operator

People often confuse the terms tourist guide, tour manager, tour operator and inbound tour operator- and although there are opportunities for overlap, they also have quite distinct responsibilities.

Tourist guides-accompany visitors on local tours and services and guide within a specific country, region, area, city or site. They provide special information on matters relating to such things as history, archeology, monuments and works of art, the environment, the culture, and any general matter of interest to the visitor. The guide's main role is to interpret and deliver localized information in the language of the visitor. A tour manager-is usually responsible for the operational aspects of managing the tour, and is sometimes known as the tour organizer, tour director, tour conductor, tour leader, or tour escort.

The tour manager is the overall coordinator as the tour progresses, especially for an extended tour. The tour manager is also the on-site representative of the tour company and is responsible for organizing and coordinating the tour. A tour manager will often accompany an inbound tour group and in these situations they are often called a tour leader. Tour operator-their role focuses on the promotion, planning and other logistical details of making a tour happen (they provide a package for the visitor by bringing together a range of related tourism services and products-accommodation, transport, attractions, etc.). A tour operator will usually be responsible for managing several tour managers and/or tourist guides, who are responsible for leading and /or managing the actual tour experience.

## **1.2. Historical development of tour guiding**

The origins of tour guiding roles can be traced at least as far back as ancient Greece. At that time, guides fell into two categories: the *exegetai* (explainer) and *periegetai* (leaders around). Herodotus, writing around 490BC, noted the gullibility (innocence) of travelers and their exploitation by many clearly less than professional guides.

## **1.3. What a Tour Guide should know: Facts, Figures and Anecdotes**

A tour guide is expected to know three things: facts, figures and anecdotes. In tour guiding, (1) *facts* means knowledge of a particular area, which has a basis to talk about, based on different aspects. (2) *Figures* are facts that are expressed in numbers. (3) *Anecdotes* are stories that come out of your land as legends or tales.

### **WILDLIFE**

The Wildlife today becomes an important attraction to tourists throughout the world. The world is rich in biodiversity. Biodiversity means the variety of living things available on the face of our planet. Due to man's greedy nature, a lot of wildlife has vanished. The major reasons for vanishing are loss of habitat, predation by other animals, disease, unknown causes, and exploitation by man, destruction of forests, wars, pollutants, poaching and encroachment on habitat land. Ethiopia is a global hotspot of Biodiversity. Surprisingly, unknown to all of us, it also happens to be the biggest area of biodiversity in Africa. As a Tour Guide you should know the names of all the wild animals that occur in Ethiopia.

**2. Description:** The Tour Guide should be well aware of what is the description of the animal so as to explain it to the tourist.

**3. Similar species** – You should be aware of any similar animal which just looks like that as there are possibilities of questions from a similar looking animal which they had seen earlier.

**4. Habitat:** Habitat is a place where the animal is found most of the time. In simple terms it is the place where the animal lives most of the time and is characterized by its typical weather, terrain and forest cover. It also refers to the place where the animals breed.

**5. Endangered:** An animal or a plant is said to be endangered when their number is big but they are being lost on a big scale. E.g. in the year 2005 if there were 200,000 African Elephants in the whole of Africa and in the year 2006 only 190,000 left then we can say that the African Elephant is endangered.

✓ **Threatened:** These are animals which have crossed the endangered stage and are now surviving in few numbers.

✓ **Extinct:** This is the last stage in survival for an animal in the wild. It occurs when the animal is lost forever and no animal exists today in nature.

### **8. Organizations working for the Conservation and Protection of Wild Life**

- ❖ IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature
- ❖ CITES – Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. (Through this convention import and export of endangered animals is strictly illegal)
- ❖ UNEP – United Nations Environmental Program.

### **International Travel Formalities**

The tour guide should have a firsthand knowledge of all the international formalities as he has to be with the tourist and assist them in all this formalities if asked for.

**Formalities** are certain government regulations which a traveler or a tourist has to abide by before the journey, during the journey and after the journey.

Some of the International Travel documentation which is used for international travel formalities is as follows.

- I. **Passport:** should always accompany the foreign tourist as it may be demanded by any authorities anytime.
- II. **Visa:** All foreign tourists should hold a valid and appropriate visa and if the visa is to expire in midst of the tour, measures should be taken by the tour guide to help extend the visa from the concerned immigration authorities at the earliest.

- III. **Insurance:** insurance is the foremost requirement and you will find that before they depart from their country they would have a series of insurances done. Some of the Insurance policies which the tourist can have are:
- ✓ Medical care
  - ✓ Personal accident insurance
  - ✓ Delayed departure insurance
- IV. **FOREX (Foreign Exchange)** - The tour guide should harbor adequate knowledge on the procedures which need to be carried out by the tourist in regards to money exchange.
- V. **Customs:** The customs regulate the unwanted illegal drugs, explosives, insect – infested fruits from entering into the country. They have check points at the port of entries where they regulate all sort of illegal transfer of goods to this country. This should be especially considered for Ethiopia for the reason that a lot of antiquities have been smuggled out of this country by traitors. The tourist guide should think that the antiquities are the cultural legacy of his country and that they can't be removed by anyone.
- VI. **Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, Health Certificate, Voter Registration Card.** Any document out of the above or all of them if possessed by the tourists helps them in processing of any travel documentation.
- VII. **Driving License:** To drive in another country an International Driving License is required which is possible to be obtained at the place of residence or the destination.

### ANECDOTES

Anecdotes are tales, legends, fables and stories which a tour guide uses to supplement his/her tour guiding technique. Anecdotes give the tourist the taste of the land by listening to the ingredients of history and culture rooted into legends.

Anecdotes are instrumental in arousing the interest of the tourist. Hence anecdotes can be about

- ❖ **Tales of Heroism:** from History or local community, related to local tribes or to kings or Ministers or governments. Example: Tales related to Ethiopian emperors could be used.
- ❖ **Saddest Stories:** Like the occupation by the fascist Italians and some stories connected to them.
- ❖ **Assassination Stories:** If you look at the stories which are created if anyone has been assassinated are also taken by the tourists curiously. Example Assai nation of John F.

Kennedy. Abraham Lincoln or Mahatma Gandhi. In Ethiopia assassination of fascist General Grazianni during the time of occupation.

- ❖ **Proverbs/ Sayings:** The proverbs and sayings which are used by the local community are very much an integral part of its learned people. Proverbs and Sayings come handy in tour guiding especially when one finds that the tourists get bored with the monotonous commentary of the tour guide.

### **Archaeology**

Archaeology is the scientific study of the remains of past human cultures. This study is done by studying the objects which were used by the people of this culture. The objects which are excavated or found for studies are generally include Buildings, Artwork, Tools, Bones and Potteries.

Archaeological site is the place where all the archaeological evidence has been collected. Archaeologists are people who study Archaeology. Excavation is when an Archaeologist digs up an area on the ground for finding out remains of the past people.

### **Architecture**

Architecture is the art and profession of designing buildings. In historical terms it may refer to either the building style of a particular culture or to an artistic movement. The world famous architectures are:

- Mesopotamian Architecture – on the plains of Iraq. They used bricks and clay.
- Egyptian Architecture – This existed in present day Egypt and focused around the Kings. The Egyptians treated their Kings as Gods and a lot of monuments are dedicated to them like the tombs, sphinx and the pyramids.
- Chinese Architecture –includes buildings like that of a pagoda – which is a Buddhist Temple. So this architecture is influenced by Buddhism.
- Roman Architecture – perhaps the most famous of all. Today the largest numbers of world heritage sites belong to the Roman Architecture in Italy, some parts of Europe and some North African Countries. Sculptures and design were given a high preference and spectator based buildings came into existence in this period. The sandstone and other rocks were extensively used. The remains of the Roman Architecture are still surviving in their best conditions.

**Names:** Try to address everyone with prefixes such as Mr. Miss, Dr, President, Dean, Boss, etc. Do not call anyone by their name unless they have asked you to do so. E.g. Mr. Moges or Ms. Mekedes. Maintain the formalities till you are asked to break it and in most cases you will have to maintain it all throughout.

## 1.4. Types of Tours and TOURIST GUIDES

### A. Types of Tours

There are many types of tours including those that are based on a particular site, a special interest, or on a type of transport.

S.no	Types of Tours	Further classification	Examples
1	Site-based tours		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museums and galleries</li> <li>• Zoos &amp; wildlife parks</li> <li>• Indigenous sites</li> <li>• Waste transfer stations, dams, power stations and sewage plants</li> <li>• Historical houses and significant buildings</li> </ul>
2	Special- interest tours		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporting tours</li> <li>• Photography tours</li> <li>• Wildlife trips-for example bird watching, marine animal watching</li> <li>• Wine tours</li> <li>• Regional tours of rural areas</li> <li>• Scientific or educational based tours</li> <li>• Garden tours</li> </ul>
3	Transport -based tours	✓ Vehicle-based tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four wheel drive(4WD) tours</li> <li>• Aircraft tours- sea plane tours, land based scenic flight and helicopter tours</li> <li>• Car rallies</li> </ul>
		✓ Water based tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snorkeling and scuba diving</li> <li>• Canoeing</li> <li>• Marine mammal watching, bird watching and fishing tours</li> </ul>

### B. Types of Tourist Guides

**Based on areas:**

General Guides, Special interest tour guides (SIT), Museum Guides, Wildlife Guides, Trekking Guides, Monumental Guides, and Adventure Guides.

**Based on language:** Multi-lingual and Bilingual Guides

### **1.5. The Advantages of a Tour Accompanied With Tour Guide**

#### 1. Convenient, hassle free travel

Someone else takes care of a planning.

The word “Travel” actually related to the French word “Travailler”, meaning ‘to work’. For people with limited annual vacation time to relax from stress of today’s work environment, “Work” is last thing they want to do during their holidays.

Travelers feel free from the following specific concerns.

- a) Selection of the menu in a restaurant
- b) To understand a foreign language
- c) Payment method at shopping; Cash, Credit Card or Travelers Check

Safety maybe a cliché, but it is a cliché based on truth. Travel in a foreign city or the wilderness can be dangerous, sometimes even life-threatening for a solo-traveler.

#### 2. Knowledgeable Leader

Travelers who are confident for their tour guide’s knowledge will help them enjoy all the traditional sights.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BASIC REQUIREMENTS AND ROLES OF A TOUR GUIDE**

#### **2.1 Basic requirements**

##### **2.1.1 Educational backgrounds**

A thorough knowledge of history, both ancient and current, geography, geology, myths and legends, facts, fiction, etc are important. They must know the flora and fauna of the area. They must know the local language and they must be capable as a translator from that language in to other languages. They must know the locals and be away from them in terms of any act of favoritism.

##### **2.1.2 Personal Qualities**

Professional tour guides must have strong verbal communication and interpersonal skills. They must be able to retain historical facts, dates and anecdotes and relate that information to visitors in an interesting, informative way.

#### **Attributes and skills of a Tourist Guide**

Key skills and qualities of an ideal tour guide include:

- Enthusiasm
- Confidence in handling people
- Decision-making and problem-solving abilities
- Ability to tackle important responsibilities
- Patient, polite, friendly, outgoing and approachable nature and be able to put people at ease
- Helpful and perceptive of visitors' needs
- Able to relate to people from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds
- Good health

Tour guides should also enjoy having fun and helping their group members enjoy themselves. Another important trait is the ability to deal with unforeseen difficulties.

Finally, tour guides need to be willing and able to work long hours. During a tour, guides are never really off duty, and this can mean phone calls in the middle of the night to resolve any problem a guest is having.



## 2.1.3 Professional ethics in tour guiding

### What is ethics?

- Ethics studies human conduct; it is concerned with questions such as “When is an act right?”, “When is an act wrong?” and “What is the nature, or determining standard, of good and bad?”

The code of ethics for tour guides can go a long way in highlighting the need for displaying honesty and integrity, selflessness and objectivity in their dealings with tourists or customers.

Some of the ethical principles that tour guides should follow in their relationships with different stakeholders are discussed below:

#### ✎ Relationships with Fellow Guides

- Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- When taking visitors to crowded places, guides should be considerate with other guides and groups who are waiting to see a site.

#### ✎ Relationships with Employers

- Always appear neat and clean with proper uniform and badge.
- Maintain a business-like and socially acceptable demeanor/manner. Avoid foul language and excessive drinking.

#### ✎ Relationships with other Colleagues

- Attempt to learn more about other aspects of the industry.
- Always acknowledge a colleague’s excellent service by telling it to the individual concerned, the individual’s supervisor or the travelers who have benefited from it.
- If a problem arises, discuss it privately, without being heard by clients.

#### ✎ Relationships with Travelers

- Guides must treat all tour members with equal time, attention and dignity.
- Guides should give accurate and interesting information and strive to learn more.
- Guides should try to be very objective and diplomatic.

### Do’s and Don’ts of Tour Guiding

- ☞ Avoid guess work and propaganda/misinformation
- ☞ Be positive and patriotic
- ☞ Be sensitive in the operating environment
  - ✓ Encourage responsible and sensitive behavior from the clients/tourists
  - ✓ Establish rapport with the clients
  - ✓ Establish rapport with the suppliers
  - ✓ Never solicit or ask for tips
- ☞ Never initiate/promote patronization of souvenir shops and other places that practice “kickback” payments to the guide or drivers or abuse complimentary meal privilege offered by establishments.

- ☞ Treat each tour as a serious commitment and cancel only when absolutely necessary and with advance notice.

## **2.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A TOUR GUIDE**

### **2.2.1 Roles of a Tour Guide**

Tourist guides play a vital role in the tourism or visitor experience and are at the front line. They perform a wide variety of roles that can include interpreting, communicating, role modeling appropriate behavior, navigating, leading, managing the group, integrating the group, keeping good humor and morale, and entertaining group members.

The roles that guides play in tourism experience will depend on a number of factors, including the setting of the tour, the purpose of the tour, the motivation and experience of the tourists and the characteristics and motivation of the guides themselves, and the expectations of the tour company or employer. Some of the roles of tour guides are described below:

- ✓ The tour guide is a Leader/ responsible for control of the group.
- ✓ The tour guide is a watchdog/supervisory body for the Tour Operator.

**Social Facilitator:** More than other tourism workers, guides have the opportunity to interact at a more personal level with tour groups. Guides have an important social role within the group in which the guide is a social catalyst, encouraging interaction between group members, and generally facilitating a positive social setting for the tour experience.

**Problem solver:** Many problems may arise in the tour, for example tourists may quarrel each other or there may be attitude change. So, a tour guide should bring them and solve accordingly.

**Administrator:** A tour guide should manage or deal with all the above entire roles well and when s/he does this, the guide can be considered as administrator.

### **2.2.2. Responsibilities of tour guide**

**Mobility and health related to physical needs:** if tourists are handicapped or physically impaired (unable to hear, walk, see, etc.), a tourist guide should help them with their physical needs. **Time constraint:** whatever time constraint is there, as much as possible a tour guide should show them the sites which are included in the tour itinerary. **Religious beliefs (don't take sides):** a tour guide should not take side towards his/her own religion in any of the tour activity when delivering commentary to tourists, i.e. should remain neutral **Participants are treated with**

**care and respect:** the way you treat your guests should be in a professional way and with care and respect. In addition to this, all tourists must be treated equally regardless of sex, age, color and nationality. **Meet promises on promotional materials:** tour operators and travel agencies should put the services on their promotional materials that they can offer only and shouldn't promise what they can't offer. **Language consideration:** whatever language a tour guide can speak, it should be the choice of tourists to choose the language for communication, i.e., it shouldn't be the choice of the tour guide. **Considering socio-economic factors:** a tour guide before taking tourists to different accommodation establishments like hotels, entertainment areas night clubs, first s/he should consider the social, cultural and economic background of the tourists.

- ♥ **Opportunity to learn** (no one is too learned, not to learn): this means that a tour guide is expected to learn more so as to keep his/her knowledge up-to-date either formally or on-site from tourists' experience.

## Chapter Three

### Planning & Developing Tour Activities

#### 3.1. Tour Structures & Stages

Tours are extremely varied in terms of their structure, purpose, audience group and the locales in which they take place. One of the consequences of this diversity is that there is no standard way of delivering a tour. The following model is one approach for structuring tours which can be modified and adopted to suit most tour types. It follows the same structure as any good story, i.e., the tour has a beginning, middle and an end. And, like the building of any good story, it includes 3 phases:

##### 3.1.1 Planning & Designing the Tour

This stage is a stage of pre-tour preparation. There is absolutely no substitute for careful planning and preparation for the tour. Review the entire program. One mistake could develop into a major problem.

Pre-tour preparation is important for the following reasons:

- The tour manager's work begins long before s/he meets clients.
- Advance preparation of a guide is the key cornerstone upon which a successful tour is run

- The better the preparation, the most smoothly the tour is run.
- ✓ Have important information on where clients will stay (accommodation establishments); attraction sites within the city (e.g. Fishing sites); religious places (e.g. at what time they are open?); health centers and police stations; communication and recreation centers (e.g. swimming pools, dancing halls, etc.).

### **Activities in pre-tour preparation**

This stage includes all activities associated with the planning and preparation of the tour, and is discussed as follows:

#### **I. Reviewing the tour brief**

**Tour brief:** Prior to commencement of a tour, the Travel Director and staff will have a briefing with the Tour Designer and other office personnel directly connected with the tour. It can be provided in a face-to-face meeting, over the phone or in written form such as faxes and electronic copies. Its main purpose is to provide guides with the relevant information to plan and deliver their tour. This information can include:

- Procedures, itineraries and operation of logistics of the tour
- rational logistics of your tour (information on attractions, optional tours, accommodation, necessary documents, modes of transport, etc);
- VIPs' names and titles, with special handling requirements
- Any special requirements for that particular tour;

**Debriefing:** After conducting the tour, you might also be required to attend a debriefing session to assist with evaluating the tour. These reports can document:

- ❖ Compliments, complaints and/or any other feedback received by the guide;
- ❖ Mishaps or incidents;
- ❖ Deviations to scheduled itinerary and why these occurred;

#### **II. Developing tour objectives**

Tours are conducted for variety of reasons, and knowing what these reasons are provides essential information when planning activities. To focus your planning efforts, answer the following questions.

- ✓ Why are you running this tour?
- ✓ What is the aim of this tour?
- ✓ What do you want to achieve?

- ✓ How would you like your audience to be thinking, feeling, and behaving?
- ✓ What would you like your audience to take away from your tour?

The responses to these questions help to establish your objectives. Some of the benefits of working with objectives include the following:

- ♥ The objective provides a focus and direction of your tour planning and delivering efforts on what it is you want to say, and on what you expect your audience to gain from the tour
- ♥ They provide a benchmark for evaluating the tour
- ♥ They ensure you are developing the most effective theme and tour activities for the needs of your tour.
- ♥ They provide a focus for the practical, logistical and operational perspectives of your tour etc.
- ❖ *Operational objective*: to operate in a manner which is consistent with minimal impact practices

### III. Designing the tour

It is related to finding about your audience and building the commentary.

- ✓ **Finding out about your audience**: information about your audience might arrive through a briefing sheet or booking sheet, or it may involve quite extensive research. Whatever the degree of effort, you have to make sure that you find out as much as possible about the needs, expectations, motivations and interests of people within your audience.
- ✓ **Building the commentary**: this stage involves developing the commentary element of the tour which occurs during the middle stage of your tour. A commentary works in closely with your tour objectives and itinerary, and incorporates the variety of activities you plan for your audience. Considerations when developing your tour commentaries include the following:
  - ☞ Have you developed a theme for your activity-a single statement that encapsulates what the tour is about?
  - ☞ Why are you saying what you are saying?
  - ☞ Do you need to research any particular areas to improve your knowledge?
  - ☞ Will you be interspersing facts and statistics with stories, anecdotes and activities?

- ☞ What resources and/or equipment and/or props and/or reference material can you bring along on the tour?
- ☞ What guiding techniques will you employ?
- ☞ How will you be involving the group and encouraging interaction and participation?

The structure of an interpretive commentary should include:

- A focus on a particular topic ( focus on the **place**-landscape, buildings, vegetation; **people**-historical characteristics , social times in past, present and future; **events and processes** which have caused an area to change-colonial life, technology, indigenous culture, erosion, evolution, etc.
- A particular story-line(sequential development)
- Information that is clear, concise, accurate and interesting

#### IV. Researching and checking the activity route

This is when you are working with the environment and making sure the site is suitable for conducting your activity. This might involve liaising with relevant organizations responsible for managing the area(s) relevant to your tour route. Some of the questions you can ask include:

- ♥ What is the route for the activity?
- ♥ What are some of the significant features and characteristics of the site?
- ♥ What sites will you be visiting, and are they interesting, adequate and relevant?
- ♥ Is it suitable for the characteristics of your audience (their needs, expectations, interests, and for the number of people?)

#### V. The tour itinerary-incorporating activities into your tour

Itineraries are your tour 'blue print'. They provide the logistical and operational framework for your tour and include details such as timings, dates, routes, stops, and length of stops, information on the type of attractions and accommodation establishments. Make sure that all these details are correct, practical and relevant to your tour. The types of activities which you include in your itinerary should support your theme and tour objectives, and work in with your timings.

Ask yourself:

- ☞ What activities you have planned? Where will the stops take place?
- ☞ Can you mix up your transport options by including public transport with walking, or arranging for coaches to pick up at different destinations?

- ☞ What are some of the points of interest and highlights of the tour?
- ☞ What resources or equipment's and or props and or reference material can you bring along the tour which will help you for accomplishing the itinerary?

#### VI. Prepare and check logistical elements

If you receive a tour brief, then you should check that you understand all the information provided. You should also check that the information in the tour brief corresponds with that provided in any promotional materials, and that it is accurate and relevant to your tour (e.g. check the itinerary against that being provided to the visitor). You might also need to do the following:

- Reconfirm details of your tour
- Finalize some aspects of the tour
- Familiarize yourself with any optional tour
- Ensure whether you have relevant contact details and sources of assistance in case of emergencies
- Prepare contingency plan for the unexpected and spontaneous
- Check equipment's and props. Props can include spotlights for evening walks, reference books, old/new photos, anecdotes, poems/stories, magnifying glasses and artifacts
- Check weather map- especially for nature sensitive tourists

#### VII. Liaise with operators and other industry colleagues

Find out who else will be involved in your tour and undertake the proper liaison (e.g. coach captains, tour operators, attraction staff and other guides).

#### VIII. Rest, meal and picture stops

- ✓ **Rest stops:** a place where we choose for rest stop should be considered carefully. The topography/ landscape should render a breathtaking view. The overall cleanliness of the area could make clients feel at ease. It is also advisable to make the rest stop in a place where we could get lavatory (toilet) facilities.
- ✓ **Meal stop:** whenever you get the opportunity, make a confirmation call to a hotel (restaurant) where you stop for lunch. Even, we can order the menu to get ready ahead. On arrival to the restaurant, make sure it or not the waiters or waitresses is really ready to serve your clients' as soon as possible. If not, advise your clients to visit what is worth visiting

according to your opinion. Advise your clients to take quick service which helps them not to delay the next tour.

- ✓ **Picture stop:** it is advisable to give picture stops (a place which is worth picturing) where cultural, traditional and artistic properties are available. Areas rich in fascinating natural scenery are commendable for picture stop. Like bread and butter, tourists and cameras go together. There is a motto of tourists which says, 'leave nothing behind but your footprints, take nothing away but your photos'. It is to say that as tourism is smokeless industry, we should drop nothing that may pollute the area and tourists should not try to take treasures which are not allowed to cross border, except photographs.

### IX. **Wardrobe and packing**

It is an important part of your pre-tour preparation. It means selecting the material you use when you are on a tour. Factors to be considered for wardrobe and packing include:

1. Type of tour- safari tour, skiing, mountain climbing, religious tour, etc.
2. Climate
3. Restriction/limitation by carriers- air transportation, surface transportations, etc.

To look fresh and well groomed all time, select clothing that is easy to care keeps the shape and has light weight as much as possible.

**Wardrobes:** Wardrobe refers to the collection of clothing belonging to one person. It is about clothes and other materials that fit your tour and climate, considering color, weight and thicknesses. (For example, shoes with comfort, especially for taking rain coats and umbrella, toilet materials and medication materials, flight bags, etc.)

**Packing:** Tour managers become proficient packers. Experienced tour guides can:

- pack surprising amount of clothes in luggage's and flight bags
- Utilize every inch—packing socks inside shoes, rolling underwear, etc.

### X. **Special events requiring special preparation**

#### **Welcome party**

This is a party arranged by a tour operator to its clients to enhance the social side of the tour (relation between and among each and every member of the group). The purpose is for the members to get acquainted with each other and develop the sense of group. It also establishes a good mood for the group to have a pleasing journey filled with fun and relaxation. Two debatable aspects of the welcome party are:



- i. **Time and day-** the second day is the best day to conduct the welcome party because they feel tired on the first day.
- ii. **Cost overriding-** it should be in a way they may not affect our company's budget.

### **Procedures of welcome party**

1. Inform your clients that your company will conduct a welcome party, and tell the exact time and place. Give them enough time to get properly dressed.
2. Arrange or reserve a private place as much as possible.
3. To establish your leadership as a guide and to make sure that everything is ready, be at the place at least half an hour before the party begins.
4. As a tour manager, you are the official host (responsible person) and toast master at the party to start it. When the group gets assembled, welcome them on behalf of the company and yourself. Thank them for their cooperation and wish them to have a nice time.

 **Farewell party:** this is a party conducted at the end of the tour. The purpose of this party includes to:

- ✓ Create a sense of good feeling for clients (i.e. in case they are dissatisfied, this a good opportunity to ask excuses)
- ✓ Promote further tours (i.e. if they are satisfied with the farewell dinner party, they will promote your company when they go back to their country).
- ✓ Pave the way for your tourists to express their satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

 **Clients' occasions:** this refers to special occasions of tourists such as birthday party, marriage anniversary and other situations. In such a situation, it is advisable to prepare a simple preparation or gift to your clients. They will be surprised and happy with it. It is something simple but very crucial to create deep happiness within your clients.

### **Holidays**

- i. Plan carefully to celebrate major national holidays without the knowledge of the clients (surprise them).
- ii. Prepare a special dinner festival.
- iii. Make the arrangement beforehand and advice clients not to go beyond normal.
- iv. On X-mass and New Year's Eve, arrange cocktail party.

- v. As much as possible, try to get mingled; look smiling and participative for the overall fulfillment of their holidays. This will entitle you with the guide's ethics and responsibilities.

### 3.1.2 Conducting the Tour

#### 1. Beginning Stage

- ✓ **Pre-contact:** this is the time spent before tourists arrive. It provides you with an opportunity to warm up your vocal check your appearance and equipment and generally get yourself in to a relaxed state. Whenever possible, arrive at your activity site at least half an hour before the scheduled meeting time.
- ✓ **Meet-and-greet:** this period begins at the first moment of contact with any member of your audience and continues as you gather the group for the start of the tour (this later activity is often referred to as the staging of your group). This is the time for you and your audience to know each other. Your audience will be getting to know you, and assess your capabilities, attitudes and personality. Use the time to establish your credibility, to create a warm and friendly atmosphere, to put people at ease, and to set the scene for an enjoyable time.

Greet people as they arrive at the activity site. During this period, you might check people against a passenger/booking sheet to ensure that all people who have booked are present. You might also need to follow up on any missing persons.

It might be at this point that you need to speak to people if they are not suitably attired/wearing the necessary cloth and shoes. *It is an opportunity for both yourself and your audience to confirm necessary logistical information about the tour, and to consider the capabilities of your tour group.*

- ✓ **Welcome and start of the activity:** the welcome presentation component of your tour begins at the staging area. It is here that you gather people together and welcome them as a group. It is important that you start on time, even if you are still waiting for latecomers or if there has been a hitch in operation.

Let people know what is going on. For example, 'Hi everyone, it is 8:00 am which is the starting time for our activity. We are still waiting on a few people, so I hope you will be okay if we wait another five minutes before getting under way.' This way, you have at least acknowledged those people who did arrive on time. The practice of timeliness is even more important with extended

tours as you need to establish the habit early that being on time means being on time, and when you say be back to the bus by 2:00 pm that you mean 2:00 pm.

As part of welcome presentation, mention your name, and also that of any other person who might be working with you on the tour (e.g. Cooks/chefs, other guides and on-site staff). Give a brief background of yourself, i.e. how long you have been working in this profession and on that route/site. Outline how long the activity will take and when you are due back. You should also make a head count.

It is also important to continue putting people at ease and building rapport between yourself and the individuals, between yourself and the audience as a group, and among the individuals within the audience.

## 2. Middle Stage

The middle stage of your tour is when you focus on the significance of this particular tour. It occurs away from the starting point (welcome area). The middle stage of the tour has 3 periods – introduction, body and conclusion.

- ✓ **Introduction:** is when you begin to deliver your commentary and focus on the theme of your tour. *Whenever possible begin the tour away from, but still within the site of the staging area in case there are latecomers, and attempt to stop where there is an interesting and relevant object to share with the group.*
- ✓ **Body:** this period of the tour can provide some of the most challenging yet rewarding moments. *During the body of the tour, you promote the theme of your tour and deliver your key ideas and messages. You flesh out the tour with anecdotes and other stories, facts and relevant activities.*
- ✓ **Conclusion** – this occurs before arriving at the activity exit point. *Bring the commentary to a close and wrap up any points of significance, especially the theme and messages.* Highlight key concepts made during the tour with a series of points. Thank people for attending the activity. Provide initial closure for the activity.

## 3. End Stage

- ✓ Farewell and goodbyes – this occurs either back at the starting point or activity exit point. It is an opportunity to promote other activities and tours, answer questions, and thank people

for attending. Ask whether people enjoyed your activity and if so what specific elements they liked.

Generally, the end stage is the logistical wrap and final closure of the tour and includes your farewells, and assisting people with forward arrangements.

### **3.1.3 Evaluating the Tour**

Once the tour is completed, you might need to complete any tour report forms, check and store equipment, and undertake other logistical procedures. Information on the quality of the tour should be forwarded to relevant people as soon as possible, for example, any minor accidents, any complaints, potential hazards noted during the tour, suggestions for any improvements and any unusual incidents.

#### **Reasons for Evaluation**

Evaluation is useful for a range of activities including:

- ☞ Provides feedback that helps bring about improvements and maintain quality control;
- ☞ Improves consistency of the level of service and enhances above customer expectations;

#### **Areas to evaluate**

There can be a number of areas which can be evaluated including:

- ♥ Logistics surrounding the tour including bookings, liaison with audience and with colleagues;
- ♥ Audience response and impressions of the tour
- ♥ Guide's response and impression of the tour

#### **A. Hotel and accommodation facilities and services**

Hotels are one of the hospitality places where clients entertain. While taking services at the hotel, the tour manager should observe the following for evaluation purpose and to the well being of clients:

- ☞ Quality of rooms (type, appearance, location and condition);
- ☞ Cooperation of bell boys in handling luggage or taking proper care of them;
- ☞ Dining room, coffee shops, bars and other service areas- their cleanliness
- ☞ Customer contact employees' promptness of service towards the group, the tour manager, the tour leader and overall.

**B. Sightseeing trips and other facilities:** This may include:

- Conditions of sightseeing facilities (e.g. Availability of responsible figures to pay entrance fees and to get necessary information)

- Display and arrangement of attractions/artifacts and others (e.g. Sequenced arrangement in museum)
  - Attitude, cooperation, friendliness and punctuality of personnel at sightseeing places
- C. **Transportation:** refers to the vehicle which you use and the necessary facilities in it.
- ☞ The general overall mechanical condition of the car
  - ☞ Appearance of the vehicle-both inside and outside. Is it fitting for photographing or not/
  - ☞ Proper mechanical operation (air conditioning, heating system, comfort and neatness)
  - ☞ General appearance of the driver (attitude towards tourists, cooperation with the tour manager and ability to operate the vehicle and overall performance).
- C. **General efficiency of the tour operation:** This could easily be assessed based on the service rendered to clients by the tour operator since the arrival till the departure of clients at different places .e.g. is every service as per the promise made in the itinerary?
- D. **Additional remark:** This refers to things not included in the itinerary, but observed and suggested by the guide while on a tour. This may include:
- ♥ Any new hotel or recreation center
  - ♥ Any additional cost incurred by the tour guide (e.g. entrance fee which may be out of itinerary)
  - ♥ Any event that the guide faces with his/her group at different places.

### 1. Tour manager's time sheet

This is not actually effective in Ethiopia because guides are employed permanently, seasonally or as a freelancer. The concept of this sheet internationally helps the tour guide to calculate the service hours and per day salary. It is also important in international basis for group leaders who come for research and who are to be paid seasonally.

The itinerary clearly tells clients what services should be rendered for them on the tour. Unfortunately, because of the above factors, services may be missed. At this time, the guide as a professional should think of an equivalent service (attraction site) that could substitute the missed services. This could be done by holding discussions with the company and tourists.

### 2. Expense account report sheet

It is a form in which expenses associated to any tour are recorded. There are two kinds of expense account report sheets:

i. **Daily entry page:** - this is similar to incidental charges. We register expenses of telephone, fax, e-mail, etc. We register these expenses by forming categories

Example: Laundry Services

Communication Services

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Accident report sheet

It is a form when one of the clients or yourself sustains an accident (which occurs en route, at hotels, at attraction sites, etc.). When these occur:

- ◆ Take detailed part of each point, when an accident occurred, how it occurred and where it occurred.
- ◆ Obtain names and addresses of witnesses
- ◆ Get the names of investigator police/traffic policeman and his/her report
- ◆ Get the name and address of the medical person who examined the injured
- ◆ Include the report in your daily report sheet. This will be helpful to present the case to the embassy when Tour Company is questioned to explain how the individual got accident/ passed away.

**Evaluation can be in the form of:**

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Checklists
- Group feedback and discussion

## Chapter 4

### Basic Tour Managing Procedures

#### 4.1. Meeting upon arrival/ information provision

The tour manager's work begins long before s/he meets clients and s/he is required to understand their special needs, interests and motivations that push them to depart from their home and visit the destination sites. Upon the guests' arrival, by any modes of transportation, a tour manager is responsible to meet and welcome them (either in the airport, railway station, and bus station or sea port) in a hospitable manner. As much as possible, the tour manager is required to arrive well in advance in the transportation terminal to avoid the possible ups and downs of your clients before they meet you. As the tour company's representative, introduce yourself and welcome them compassionately. Offer the required information about your tour company to the tourists either verbally or with the help of a piece of promotional material. Let them get in to the arranged vehicle by the tour company for transfer service and take them to the pre-arranged accommodation center to take rest and relax.

#### 4.2 Hotel procedures

In the course of a normal tour, you will stay at several different hotels. Depending up on the tour, some will be big, inner city types, some will be resort hotels, and some may be motels. Regardless of the type or location of the hotel, the basic operation of the tour guide as far as the hotel procedure is concerned is similar. Your main concern with the hotel's management will be:

- ◆ Evening announcement
- ◆ Checking in for tourists
- ◆ Checking out for the tourists
- ◆ When handling the incidental charges

##### 1. Evening announcement

Approximately 45 minutes before arrival at the hotel where you spend the night, you should begin your final announcement of the day. The announcement should include the following:

- ◆ A summary of the day's tour (e.g. about the positive and negative sides of the tour and to improve the weak sides during the coming days).
- ◆ Briefly review the itinerary for the next day adding information that might influence the tour. (Dressing style, shoes, where and at what time to have lunch, picture stop and rest

stop.) E.g. tomorrow we will be having long journeys before lunch. This helps tourists to make them ready in advance by having takeaways with them. It is good to tell them about the general condition of the road and total feature of the area.

- ◆ Tell them about any special needs (things) necessary for the coming day e.g. binocular
- ◆ As you make the announcement, make an informed visit in the bus to solve misunderstanding and identify how the tourists enjoyed the day's tour.
- ◆ As you get closer to the hotel, point out places tourists may enjoy visiting after dinner.
- ◆ Be clear and precise and repeat vital information several times.

## 2. Arriving at the Hotel (Check-in)

The arrival at a hotel presents a dilemma. Should tourists remain on the bus while the tour leader obtains the keys, or should they disembark, gather in the lobby, and receive their room assignments there? There is no perfect answer. Each choice has certain advantages and drawbacks. If the group stays on the bus, the tour manager can work out potential problems with the front desk calmly and without distractions. You will not need to herd the group together in the lobby to call out names and pass out keys- an undignified practice often associated with everything that is wrong with touring. The controlled environment of the bus is certainly a more suitable place to announce room assignments.

The disadvantages are also several. The bus may be monopolizing important parking space. Tourists may become anxious watching their luggage being unloaded, no matter what precautions are taken. Most of all, they will be immensely restless and want to move.

If you prefer this system/alternative (letting tourists stay in the bus), activities to be carried out include:

- ♣ Leave the group aboard the bus.
- ♣ Go to the receptionist alone.
- ♣ As you enter the lobby having list of names and types of room, ask the captain (bellboy) and give him the luggage count. You may ask him the luggage unloads while you are registering or filling the form.
- ♣ Inform the bellboy about the time when he should collect the luggage for departure in the next morning.
- ♣ Collect the individual keys and arrange for the wake up calls for the next morning, i.e., tell the receptionist to wake up an hour before the departure time.



- ♣ When you come back to the bus where tourists are, you:
  - ✓ Tell them about the time of meals and wakeup.
  - ✓ Tell them about the luggage ready time.
  - ✓ Announce the departure time.
- ♣ Call the names and pass keys by using your list.
- ♣ Tell tourists that you will stay around the lobby (where the receptionist is) for half an hour if there are problems.
- ♣ Express your wish to spend a nice evening.
- ♣ When they drop off, stay standing around the door of the bus to give help, especially for elders.
- ♣ When all dropped off, check for any object left in the bus.

### 3. Hotel Checkout

It is a procedure in which a tour guide clears (the payment) and leaves the hotel. Checking out is perhaps more frantic/frightening than checking in, since a departure deadline is involved. Careful time management is a must.

The day before departure, the tour conductor should carefully go over departure morning procedures with tour members. Review with them what time the wakeup call will take place; at what time luggage must be ready for pickup; how breakfast will be handled; and what documents will be needed. Also remind them to pay all incidentals that night, as the cashier will be busy in the morning.

The evening before retiring, the tour manager must reconfirm everything necessary with those people who are responsible to handle your departure such as the bellboy and front desk. The next morning, you should start the check-out process some 30 minutes before or earlier than the rest of the group. Ask the cashier to prepare the tour bill for you. Try to have breakfast a few minutes before the group, if possible. Following breakfast, complete the checkout procedure with the cashier and present the voucher. During breakfast, checkout the dining area. Are any clients noticeably absent? You may have to call their rooms. Greet every member of the tour as they arrive in the lobby. Count and check the bags with the bellboy and have them locked. You can lead the bags till your clients eat breakfast. At departure time, help the clients get onto the bus,

take or have a head count in warily to check whether or not someone is missing. Make sure all keys are returned before the bus starts its journey.

#### **4. Incidental charge**

Incidentals are the small extra charges, such as those for telephone calls, laundry, etc that are added to a client's bill. These are non-tour costs that guests should be charged. Incidental charges:

- ✧ Are registered on a separate account and presented to the tour manager along with the master tour bill.
- ✧ Should be done after seeing the cashier. It is good to talk to the cashier when tourists desire to get service that incurs extra charge.
- ✧ Take a written document from the cashier stating that all incidental charges are cleared. Attach a copy of it to the master bill.

#### **4.3. Aboard the tour bus**

##### ***Advantage of the tour bus:***

- The bus becomes the group's private world.
- It is in the bus that the tour leader or tour guide develops the feeling of group avoiding individualism.
- In the bus, communication can be delivered without attracting the attention of outsiders.

##### **What are we supposed to do to make the tour bus enjoyable?**

- Check the air condition of the bus.
- Check the public address system (the microphone).
- Cleanliness of windows and under seats.

**Seat Rotation:** clients are terribly territorial. Given the chance, they will latch on a bus seat for an entire trip, staking out their claim with sweaters, bags, and whatever else they can drape across the seat when leaving the vehicle. Group members will surely begin to argue among themselves or complain to you, because for every tourist who gets a good seat, another client will not. Therefore, a fair seat rotation system is necessary, especially for intermodal tours that make heavy use of vehicles or for purely vehicle trips.

##### **Fair way of doing seat rotation**

- ✓ On the first day, let everybody chooses his/ her own seat.
- ✓ On the first ride, announce that seat rotation is the company's regulation.

- ✓ Inform the group the time interval that seat rotation will take place.
- ✓ There is no single way of making seat rotation. A guide can use as many ways as possible. Below are some of them:
- ✓ Track the number of seat rotations on your seating chart, especially if you don't use the name stickers system. This helps you to correctly allocate seats in case tourists are confused as where to seat.

### **Advantages of seat rotation**

- + To give clients additional opportunity to meet and chat with everyone on the tour so that they exchange ideas and views.
- + To give everyone a view from both sides of the bus.
- + To share any side effect of the bus such as sitting on a wheel, sun side and dust, if any.

### **The driver and the tour manager**

One of the most important relations on the bus is the relationship between the guide and the driver. The driver is responsible for the safe and smooth operation of the vehicle. The guide and the driver are working partners. As a guide, go over the itinerary with the driver before you meet (pick up) tourists. If there is a difference in opinion between you, try to solve through discussions and share experience. If there is a major difference, discuss with your company's manager. Your assistance to the driver includes:

- ↻ Be thoroughly familiar with the general safety rules and regulations.
- ↻ Be familiar with the location and use of first aid kit on each bus.
- ↻ Going for assistance at all costs is good while the driver tries to protect the vehicle and the tourists from danger.
- ↻ Dismount from the bus when the vehicle approaches difficult place to cross and lead your driver on how best he could cross.
- ↻ Try to keep your driver away from unnecessary conversation, especially a conversation which may lead him to annoyance.
- ↻ In general, be alert at all time, look out for general safety of the passengers throughout the whole course of the tour.

### **4.4. Meeting group and individual needs**

As tourists do possess diversified interest, it is common to face group and individual needs. But what is important here is which one outweighs. As much as possible, it is good to try to fulfill

both group and individual needs. Otherwise, it is fair to be abided by the group's needs. There is a principle "the majority suppresses the minority". We do not have to suppress the needs and interests of a group for the sake of a single person. With regard to the individual, we can approach him/her politely and convince him/her with excuse.

#### **4.4.1 High expectations**

Tour participants bring with them high expectations. To purchase a tour is a decision of great consequence in the average person's life. The dollars spent and decisions made lead vacationers to expect a good time and value. Brochure descriptions, media advertisements and their friends' positive experiences all serve to increase expectations. If the tourist has been on a previous tour, s/he will expect this trip and your performance to be as good as or better than what they have experienced before. Tourists dream that every meal on their tour will be perfect, every flight on time and every hotel an ideal home-away-from-home. This will be true even on a budget tour. And what do tour members expect their tour manager to be? A supremely knowledgeable, infinitely talented miracle worker, of course!

#### **4.4.2 The flock factor**

Tour participants quickly adapt to group thinking as they seek cues to correct behavior from people around them. Peer pressure becomes a very real factor. If the complaint is not reasonable, then you may have still to respond- up to a point. *In managing a tour, there is what you call "a rule-of-three" strategy:* the first time a tourist complains it may be justified; the second time may be a warning signal; the third time probably indicates the problem is in the person, not in the tour. What should you do with a chronic complainer? You must draw the line, and quickly. You will have to be diplomatic but firm, explaining in a private and discreet moment that you have done all that you can do and that the person will just have to accept the way things are. Some people, after all, want to be told 'no'.

### **4.5 Provide information en route and onsite: the tour commentary**

A commentary is information that you provide during the tour which supports the theme of the tour and which highlights the message/s you are trying to promote.

#### **4.5.1 Structure of your commentary**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the commentary occurs within the middle section/stage of your tour and builds on the credibility, rapport and audience interaction which you would have established during the start of the tour. The middle stage of your tour has three segments: the

introduction, the body and the conclusion- with the commentary providing a unifying thread throughout each segment.

### **The introduction**

- ♥ Captures audience attention;
- ♥ Outlines the theme of the commentary and the tour;
- ♥ Provides your audience with direction and an idea of what is coming up.

### **The body**

- ♠ Fleshes out the theme of your tour;
- ♠ Introduces a chosen list of key ideas and messages and extends them.

**The conclusion:** wraps up the main points.

### **4.5.2 Building your commentary**

*Building a commentary is like cooking a meal by following a recipe. You first decide what type of food you would like, you gather the necessary ingredients, you prepare and cook the ingredients to your chosen recipe, you eat the meal and then you reminisce/ recall on how it tasted. The structure of an interpretive commentary should include a focus on a particular topic; a theme; a message; a particular story-line (that is, sequential development); information and activities which are relevant to your audience; information that is clear, concise, accurate and interesting; and opportunities to reveal, provoke and evoke.*

#### **A. Considerations in building your commentaries**

The following are some of the contextual elements which you might consider when framing and building your commentary:

- Length of the tour and itineraries: there is a close relationship between itineraries, timings and your commentary.
- Audience characteristics-what they find interesting, useful and valuable (what would I want to know if I were a member of the audience?)
- Number of people and their mobility, educational levels, needs and interests
- Purpose of the tour
- Physical, social and environmental opportunities and constraints

#### **B. Deciding on the commentary topic**

The initial step in building your commentary is to decide on the topic of your tour. Topics are broad subject areas which provide an initial focus for the tour and which answer the simple

question: what the tour is about? *Topics can focus on the place (physical characteristics), people, and processes.*

### C. Deciding on the commentary theme

The theme is the story-line and unifying thread for the tour. It is the theme which frames your activity, and which organizes and connects the various elements of your tour. *The theme reveals the overall purpose of the tour.* It reveals what is unique and special about a particular site and/or event. The theme packages the messages you want to promote to your audience, and it is these messages which people take away. You plan on these message being positive and hope that your audience will share them with other people and/or apply them to other situations at later times. In this way, a theme should be able to answer the question “What sense of meaning do you want your audience to gain from coming along on your tour?”

By taking the time to think through your commentary and construct a theme-based approach, you are demonstrating your commitment to ensuring people have a great time, and that what you have to say is worth thinking about.

**Theme statements:** themes are best expressed through theme statements. As an example, let us say you are planning a tour of Aksum. You decide the topic to be “The Aksumite History”. To arrive at your theme, you now ask “So what about the Aksumite history?” This could generate various possible themes, one of which can be stated as follows:

*The magnificent stelae, tombs and inscriptions for the significant periods of Aksumite history*

**Selecting your theme:** you can base the selection of your themes on a variety of criteria including the following:

- ♥ Assess and determine the significance of the area, and then decide on a theme which would best highlight/promote this.
- ♥ Choose an area of special interest.
- ♥ Conduct a tour which remains true to any relevant promotional material.
- ♥ What information would your audience find interesting, relevant and useful?

When building your commentary, the skill is in extracting information and focusing on that information relevant to your tour, while leaving some opportunity for people to discover things for themselves. The best guides are not those who are the most knowledgeable but rather those who can bring the tour to life with a skillful- use of communication and group management techniques.

#### D. *Thinking sequentially*

Having sequence and logical flow to a commentary allows you to refer to previous elements, while providing progression from one key point to the next. It makes it easier for people to store, remember, process and organize information. This increases the potential for keeping people's interest- the more you can ensure people's understanding, the more chance you have that they will enjoy your commentary and find the information interesting. You could develop your tour from:

- ☞ A chronological viewpoint- past to present to future, future to present to past, or movement through time periods such as seasons, months, days or ours.
- ☞ Raw material to finished product.
  
- ☞ Simple to complex
- ☞ Spatial- near too far, narrow to wide, national to regional to local to site specific.
- ☞ Cause to effect.
- ☞ General to specific.

#### E. *The beginning and end of your commentary*

The beginning and end of your commentary should be concise and serve to emphasize the main points made in the body of your commentary. While the ending is a summation of the main points, the introduction would provide a glimpse of what is in store. Try to be poetic and creative when writing your introduction and conclusion.

#### **4.5.3 Delivery of your commentary**

In delivering a commentary, ensure the following:

- ☞ The information is accurate, relevant and takes in to account cultural and social sensitivities.
- ☞ You use appropriate language.
- ☞ Your non-verbal's support your presentation. This includes your grooming, facial expressions, movements and other body language.
- ☞ There is variety in your delivery a styles and vocal techniques.
- ☞ You are enthusiastic, friendly and professional.
- ☞ You are natural and relaxed in your delivery.

#### 4.5.4 Enriching your commentary

Whenever possible, strive to enrich your commentary by incorporating a variety of techniques and approaches. This is essential within all interpretive activities as you seek to capture, engage and involve your audience. It is best to try to avoid your commentary becoming a ‘gawk and talk’ session, in which you rattle off a string of information while expecting the audience to politely take it all in. Seeking and maintaining the involvement of your audience can be related to the adage: ‘Don’t sell, create a desire to buy’.

Some of the ways you can create this desire include:

- ☞ Capturing the attention of your audience;
- ☞ Delivering information in a variety of forms;
- ☞ Making your tour interesting, relevant and meaningful for your audience;
- ☞ Incorporating props.

#### A. Capturing the attention of your Audience

To capture attention, you can incorporate subject matter which has some of the following characteristics:

- ♣ It is topical, has novelty value and includes provocative information.
- ♣ It focuses on social information and human interest.
- ♣ It includes mystery, suspense, drama and perhaps a shock element.
- ♣ It relates to something that works, something that your audience can observe in action.
- ♣ It is fascinating and/or unusual and/or challenges myths. For example, how long it took an artist to paint a particular painting and how much paint was used, and the fact that swifts fly for nine months without landing. In Ethiopia, there are many manuscripts where a lot of skin has been used for their preparation.
- ♣ It is entertaining, which does not necessarily mean it has to involve jokes.
- ♣ It is interactive, for example asking questions, involving people in holding an object while you are demonstrating how it works, or encouraging people to ‘have a go’ such as using binoculars or playing a simple game or trying an activity.

You can also capture the attention of your audience by demonstrating a genuine and honest interest in their wellbeing, in their interests, in satisfying their needs, and in providing exceptional customer service.



## **B. Means of delivering information**

Information can be delivered in a variety of forms including those listed below. The more information you can incorporate information spices and variety in to your tours, the greater the opportunity to capture and maintain the involvement of your audience, and assist their understanding of what it is you are going to communicate.

- ◆ Anecdotes and stories: anecdotes should be used as appropriate and not overused as too many can overwhelm your audience. Include also personal experiences, oral histories, myths and legends, and humorous tales.
- ◆ Ask questions and/or pose a problem.
- ◆ Dispersing facts and statistics and analogies and metaphors throughout your commentary.
- ◆ Mix up the ‘what’ elements within your presentation with descriptive words and active phrasings, expressive verbs, short and long sentences, and varying adjectives and adverbs.
- ◆ Mix up the senses-use as many senses as possible. The more you can engage the senses of your audience, the more information you can work into your tour as a resource.
- ◆ Demonstrations: show people how things actually work.
- ◆ Example, illustrations and case studies.
- ◆ Games and quizzes: this can require you to ask people questions.

## **C. Incorporating props in to your commentary**

Props are a great resource to enrich your commentary. They provide additional delivery strategy which increases the chances of appealing to people with different learning styles. Props can include:

- ♠ Other speakers and guides/specialist speakers
- ♠ Blindfolds (a blindfold is a cloth used to cover the eyes)
- ♠ Magnifying glasses
- ♠ Booklets and reference materials such as field guides
- ♠ Telescopes (telescope is used as a magnifier of images of distant objects)
- ♠ Audiovisuals (e.g. audiovisual presentations in museums)
- ♠ Dioramas (diorama is a picture (or series of pictures) representing a continuous view)
- ♠ Maps and diagrams
- ♠ Music

♠ Worksheets

♠ Experiments

#### **4.5.5 Evaluation of your commentary**

It is important that you spend time evaluating your commentary. Note any question which people ask, especially those you could not answer. Every time you don't know an answer, treat it as a learning opportunity. Be objective in your appraisal of how it went. Ask yourself:

- ❗ Could you have incorporated any other props?
- ❗ Was your delivery clear?
- ❗ Was the commentary presented in a logical and sequential order?
- ❗ Did your audience, know your theme and take-home message?

## Chapter Five

### Dealing with people and difficult situations

#### 5.1 Dealing with people

##### 5.1.1 Remembering People's Names

A tour is a social activity. And a central element within any social activity is getting to know people.

##### Remembering People's Names

Tourists arrive with a range of needs, expectations, interests, motivations. They also arrive on your activity with a name. Most people love to have their name remembered during a conversation and whenever they are the focus of attention, for example, after asking a question: 'Thanks for that question, Yohannes'. For those who did not hear, Yohannes just asked a question about the Jesuits in Ethiopia. 'Remembering names also help when you need to call, instruct, and gather people. It's an art – blend of skill and needs and attitude. Remembering peoples name also helps you to build the capabilities of your memory.

**Attitude and rewarding your memory:** Attitude is very vital –you need to want to remember a person's name as using your memory often involves work. You also need to reward your memory when it does remember rather than give it a roasting when it forgets. It is simple to reward your memory- simply praise it each time you remember something. Follow and practice the following techniques to remember names:

- ✚ **Focus-** makes a point of wanting to remember a person's name.
- ✚ **Repeat their name-** when you hear the person's name, repeat it aloud and then repeat it to yourself. E.g. Someone introduces himself as Paul. Your response:
  - Said aloud – 'Hi, Paul, thanks for coming along'
  - Silent – Paul is a biggish guy with big eyebrows
- ✚ **SEAM technique-** in summary is as follows:
  - *Seek a feature* – search for his/her interesting or unique or unusual physical features. Paul eyebrows, ears, hair style, etc.

- *Exaggerate the feature*—now exaggerate one or more of these features. Paul’s big eyebrows. You can exaggerate color, shape, size, composition, and texture.
- *Add movement* – this helps your memory in its task. E.g. Paul’s eyebrows growing around his head and every time it reaches up to his face.
- *Make a link in some way to the person’s name*– e.g. Paul sounds like bell. Paul -Ball

### **Difficult names**

Some names are difficult to pronounce let alone to remember. These suggestions help you remember difficult names:

1. Break the name into phonetic groupings
2. Ask the person to repeat his or her name – if you are not sure
3. Do not become condescending

*NB: Practice is a key skill/ element.*

### **5.1.2 Dealing with individual tourists, groups and different people**

#### **I. Dealing with Students**

- ↗ Number of educational tours is increasing and several schools incorporate tours to their curricula;
- ↗ Guide must be skillful in asking questions and use creative techniques like games, activities or quizzes;
- ↗ *Must know the interests of young people to give an effective tour;*
- ↗ *Caring and act brotherly or fatherly to the members of the group as to give more advices and instructions;*

#### **II. Dealing with Senior Citizens**

- ↗ Difficulty in hearing or walking is certainly greater as age increases;
- ↗ All senses decline in the aging process;
- ↗ Generally appreciative, curious, interested, attentive, eager for experience and willing to contribute their own life experience;
- ↗ Allow extra time for the tour as many activities will take longer, such as getting on and off a motor coach, eating and walking;
- ↗ Guides should not underestimate older people since most of them are incredibly wise and guides can learn from them.

### III. Dealing with Business Groups

- ↪ Sightseeing is secondary to these people;
- ↪ Most of the time, tours are conducted in a formal way;
- ↪ Give the overview rather than the in-depths of the tour; do not give too much commentaries;

### IV. Dealing with Family Travelers

- ↪ When conducting tours with parents and infants or toddlers, interpretation should be directed towards the adults;
- ↪ Guides give commentaries to the family, interact with them, ask them questions, and encourage them to talk about what they know and what they want to know about the area.

### V. Dealing with Foreign Tourists

- ↪ Must know the traits and culture of the group/individual;
  - ↪ Must show greater hospitality and encouragement for site visits;
  - ↪ Expect questions
- ❖ Basic Guidelines for those working with different cultures and languages:
- ☞ Speak slowly and distinctly until the level of understanding is established.
  - ☞ Pay attention to voice volume.
  - ☞ Encourage listeners to question what they do not understand, or interrupt if they need to have something repeated.
  - ☞ Speak in terms of positives rather than negatives.
  - ☞ In case an interpreter is present, talk to the listener and not to the interpreter.

### Types of Behavior

There are **three** main categories of behavior when dealing with difficult situations:

**1) Assertive Behavior:** it is preferred to submissive or aggressive behavior. Whenever you are dealing with difficult situations, it's important that you remain in an assertive frame of mind.

This ensures that you do the following:

- Demonstrate a respect for your rights while respecting the rights of others.
- Provide others an opportunity to respect your rights.
- Say, think and feel without hesitations what the other person says, thinks and feels.
- Communicate and behave in a manner of responsibility.

**2) Submissive Behavior-** submissive people:

- Show lack of respect for their rights, sacrifice their thoughts and wants in favor of others
- Are often timid and reluctant to express their views
- Give permission for others to violate their ‘personal space’
- Meet the rights of others at own expense

**3) Aggressive Behavior-** aggressive people:

- Show little regards to the rights of others, i.e. their rights are more important than those of others.
- Express feelings and concerns at others’ expense.
- Often display rude, loud and abusive statements.
- Blame others for how they feel.

**Steps in dealing/working with different behaviors in managing difficult situations**

**1. Ensure you are in an appropriate state.**

- ✓ Remain courteous, calm, impartial and sensitive.
- ✓ Use a clear voice and attentive body language.
- ✓ Do not become personally involved- often the conflict is not to do with you.
- ✓ Do not become emotionally involved, do not argue.
- ✓ Remain balanced & assertive.

**2. Focus on the other person:** This stage is concerned with building rapport and empathy with the other person. Focus on, and addresses any feelings being expressed within, the situation. Let the other person blow off steam-this often calms the person down. Reflect and acknowledge the feelings and emotions of the person. You might need to pause and let things come back into the context and focus. Throughout this stage, reassure the other person, but don’t patronize. Use the 4 Fs-be frank, be firm, be friendly, be flexible. Never interrupt at inappropriate times.

**3. Clarify the issue:** As you continue to listen to the other person, make an assessment of what you believe to be the nature, details and cause of the issue. *Clarify the details of the situation by asking: when, what, who, where and how. Summarize in your own words your understanding and assessment of the situation.* Listen beyond the emotive state to the objective cause-what is motivating this person(s) to act in this way. Remember to always

focus on the reasoning behind an argument and never on the conclusion of an argument.

Clarify details of the situation by asking:

- ♠ What happened?
- ♠ When did it happen?
- ♠ Who did it?

4. **Make an assessment and decision:** *Once you have gathered thoughts, ideas and other information, you need to make a relevant assessment of the situation and decide on the course of action. If you/your company have made a genuine mistake, and you are in an appropriate position to do so, then apologize. We can't always be perfect and mistakes are inevitable-most people accept this, especially if you take prompt action to do something about it.*

### **Managing difficult situations – a wrap**

When managing difficult situations (to handle tourists' problems), ensure you do the following:

- ✓ Go for the issue and not the person
- ✓ Remain calm and not aggressive
- ✓ Remain impartial and do not become emotionally involved
- ✓ Remain open minded on all sides of the issue
- ✓ Never criticize, attack or comment in a negative manner about a person's identity, always focus on behavior.

#### **5.1.3 Dealing with difficult people**

**The chronically late:** never cater to individuals who are repeatedly tardy. Otherwise the whole group will resent the fact that their tour's smooth structure is crumbling before them. Tourists who are tardy must be given an ultimatum: be on time or we will leave you and you will have to find your own way to the next destination. This essential rule can often be told to the entire group in a humorous way: "please return from your rest stop by noon. If you return at 12:30 and the bus is not here, don't worry. We have another tour going through here next week at the same time and they will be glad to pick you up". Your point has been made.

But what if the chronically late continues to be tardy? Then you may have to make good on your promise. After waiting twenty minutes or so (if you work for a tour operator, there may be an official time limit), have your on-time group members note the precise time (so the late/tardy tourists can't claim that your watch was fast) and leave.

## 5.2 Dealing with Difficult Situations

Difficult situations can be considered to be a form of conflict. It is when there is a disagreement between two or more parties (and where parties could include individuals, a group of people or an organization). Difficult situations, customer complaints and conflicts are all normal within any tour operation. What is important is how they are managed.

### 5.2.1 Types of Difficult Situations

Difficult situations can occur while managing a tour or liaising with colleagues or at any time in your working/personal life.

★ **With a tour group** – Difficult situations can occur with a group when:

- ✓ A person is dissatisfied with the quality of service or product
- ✓ A person is dissatisfied with accommodation, meals and other arrangements
- ✓ Tour runs late
- ✓ Tour is full
- ✓ Tour might have to be cancelled
- ✓ People might not have the appropriate equipment for a tour and/or associated activities
- ✓ A 'group' becomes rowdy and self-indulgent without concern for the rest of the tour group
- ✓ A person is told one thing by one industry colleague and another (usually conflicting) thing by another colleague

★ **With Colleagues-** occurs when:

- deciding on shifts
- sharing equipment's
- discussing operational procedures

**Universal-** (with colleagues or customers)

- ♠ offensive body language, expressions and other non-verbals;
- ♠ culturally insensitive language-racist and sexist remarks and jokes in poor taste;
- ♠ racial and discriminating behavior
- ♠ inappropriate levels of formality and respect
- ♠ clash of opinions, values and beliefs
- ♠ lack of empathy and respect
- ♠ need for attention



**In all situations, people become:**

- Angry/rude/overly demanding of time
  - Verbose/talkative
  - Negative and pessimistic
  - Unhappy/anxious
- ♠ The most common situations guides encounter are complaints about some aspects of the tour – the hotel room is too small or the food is inadequate or schedule is too hectic.
  - ♠ Handling complaints requires patience and diplomacy. Since guides are mostly hired by tour operators, they must speak on behalf of the company. Since majority of the companies follow the saying “the customer is always right”, it is the guide’s duty to show genuine concern to the visitor while at the same time defending the company.
  - ♠ In case of tourist complaints, guides should ask themselves these questions:
    - ☞ What exactly is the complaint?
    - ☞ Is the guest’s complaint valid?
    - ☞ Can the reason be resolved easily? If so, how?

**5.2.2 Dealing with difficult questions**

In general, the more experienced a guide is, the more likely s/he is to welcome questions, especially challenging ones. New tour guides often fear questions or are caught off guard by them. However, there are questions that are difficult for guides. These include:

**1) Questions for which a guide does not have an answer**

For many guides, particularly new guides, the most feared situation is being asked a question they cannot answer. Several guides measure their success by how much information they have. Thus, not knowing the answer to a question lessens their sense of professionalism. As every guide eventually learns, there will always be questions that one cannot readily answer. Many of the successful guides regard questions they cannot answer as an encouragement to learn something new. The appropriate answer to the question that a guide has no answer is “I don’t know but I’ll find out.” The guide can then use his/her free time to look up the answer or consult

someone else. Another solution is to say “I don’t know. Does anyone else know?” This will give a chance for others to participate.

## **2) Questions whose answers are controversial**

Guides are often asked questions about politics, religion, local scandals or pending criminal cases. As much as possible, guides should avoid topics about politics and religion since one can never be sure of the political view or affiliation of each individual in the group. In democratic societies, everyone is entitled to his or her opinion; thus, guides can share their own views, provided they make clear that their statements are their own opinion and are open to the opinions of others. Guests usually appreciate a guide’s **openness**.

The suitable responses to controversial questions include: “That’s being debated here. Some feel.... And others believe....” Another tactic is to return the question: “What do you think?” Often this will end the discussion. If not, it will at least serve to invite other opinions, and people generally enjoy giving their opinions. In cases where local scandals have become national news, an individual or group will continuously ask for the guide’s personal view.

In addition, a guide may say: “I don’t discuss my political views.” This statement will provide an easy exit. Guides are not obliged to answer questions or to adopt the points of view of each of their groups.

## **3) Questions that are too personal**

There are questions that are very personal that no one should be asking and no one is obliged to answer. Examples are “How much money do you make” or “Why don’t you have any children?”

Sometimes a question which the guide perceives as “too personal” maybe intended as a gesture of concern or friendliness. Children often ask very personal questions. Certain questions are considered “too personal” in one culture but “not too personal” in another culture.

One solution to personal questions is to respond with a depersonalized answer. For example, questions regarding salary and working conditions, the appropriate answer may be “The salary

range for guides in Ethiopia is from x to y while in Aksum, with high demand and high cost of living, the scale is on the higher end”.

Another suitable answer to a personal question is “I prefer not to answer that,” and move on.

#### **4) Questions that shed an unfavorable light on the guide or some aspect of the region**

Very often, people ask questions just to see how a guide will respond. Guides are not frequently given due credit for their commitments to their role of public relations’ representatives for their regions. Local governments and businesses would be pleased to see the extent to which many guides defend their region and attempt to present it in the most favorable way possible.

When a guide is asked a difficult question, s/he should not ignore the question but instead acknowledge it and stress the positive points. For example, when asked how they can tolerate the high humidity of a certain region, some guides will point the lush and green environment of the region and add that they would not want to live anywhere else.

#### **5) Complicated questions**

In the case of a complicated question or one that is not interesting to everyone, it is best to divert the question to a later time. The guide may say, “May be we can spare a few minutes later to talk about that.”

The following factors are helpful in answering questions:

- ☞ Welcome questions.
- ☞ Be gracious/polite, even when the question is “difficult.”
- ☞ Never regard a question as stupid or trivial.
- ☞ Never feel obliged to answer personal questions.
- ☞ Acknowledge a controversial question, and then move on to more positive points.
- ☞ Use humor when appropriate.

#### **5.2.3 How to help tourists to avoid problems**

Two general types of mishaps can spoil tourists’ vacation experience: theft and sickness. Yet, both can be averted if a tour member takes certain precautions. As a tour manager, it is your duty to inform your group how to avoid such problems.

*In addition to these, below are some tips to minimizing the occurrence of difficult situations:*

- ✓ Establish rapport and positive relationship.
- ✓ Make aware of your expectations, relevant rules, regulations and procedures.
- ✓ Confirm arrangements to ensure that what's expected will be delivered.
- ✓ Find out as much as possible about your audience so you can prepare for specific and cultural interests to avoid any misunderstanding.
- ✓ Observe and remain sensitive to the behavior of people on your group, and check situations before they go out of hand.
- ✓ Set yourself up as the leader- empathetic, fair and committed to the interests of all.
- ✓ Be well prepared

#### **5.2.4 What to do when things go awry: managing difficult situations**

An ounce of prevention may be worth a pound of cure, but when a group has a problem, it is time for the tour manager to come up with a well-guided solution. The following is a general review of things that go awry/wrong and what you should do. Remember that your tour company may have firm, precise steps that you must take in certain situations. And don't forget that by rising to a challenge, you prove your true professionalism as a tour leader.

##### **1. Theft and Losses**

No greater nightmare/terrible can be imagined: someone steals your wallet or purse and with it you lose your credit cards, driver's license, passport, cash, traveler's cheques, and all other things that are necessary when you are away from home. Each item stolen or lost must be treated differently.

**A. Cash:** money stolen is money gone. If the tourist still has credit cards and/or cheque books, s/he may be able to get a cash advance from an ATM, a bank or the hotel. If cards and cheques were stolen, the tourist can have family or friends wire new funds, if needed. You may need to advance a little company or personal money to help out in the meantime-probably the only situation in which lending money to a tourist is justified.

**B. Credit cards:** a person who loses a credit card is usually liable for up to \$50 for fraudulent use. But you must have the tourist call the issuing institution as soon as possible. Certain credit card companies have local offices that can issue a temporary card within few hours. Most companies, though, will not be able to get your tour member a new card until s/he arrives home.

**C. Traveler's Cheques:** help tourists contact the issuing company immediately. Many operate round-the-clock refund centers that can be reached by telephone. If the tourist has kept the purchase receipt with serial numbers separate from the cheques (as the issuing company's directions advised), the company's nearest refund location may be able to replace some or all of the cheques on the spot. If the serial numbers have been lost, it may take up to a few days to trace down the original purchase. These refund locations can also help contact issuing companies.

**D. Passport:** loss or theft of a passport occurs more often than you might think. When someone loses his/her passport, inform the local police immediately (a useful procedure for all stolen valuables) and contact the issuing country's embassy/consulate. The consular officer may request a copy of the police report, ask for proof of citizenship or at least some form of identification, and require that new passport photos be taken.

*What if all identifying documents have been lost?* Then the consular officials will contact the home country to verify the tourist's identity. They may trust the traveler and issue a passport before receiving an answer. But it is more likely that there will be a delay of hours or even a day or two.

If the person has to leave the tour to visit the relevant consulate, that person is usually responsible for all expenses. This might vary between tours but check with your tour operator. As the guide, assist that person with travel arrangements and leave contact details so s/he can rejoin the group.

**E. Driver's license:** on a domestic tour, the tourist may need a driver's license. Instruct the tourist to call the office issuing the license, which may then send a telegram verifying that the person holds a valid license or may express mail a temporary license.

**F. Airline Tickets:** when a ticket is lost, the airline has usually the tourist fill out a **Lost Ticket Refund application**. It then usually requires the tourist to buy a new, full-fare ticket (often via credit card or cheque). If the ticket is found later or if it is not used by someone else, within a certain period of time, say 60 days, the airline will refund the cost of the new ticket. If it has been used by someone else, then the tourist must report it to his/her insurance company to receive reimbursement. For example, tickets of Ethiopian airlines have refundable value only when submitted **within one year** after the expiry date.

**G. Lost Baggage:** Most of the time, it happens during flight (although it can happen en route to hotels). So follow normal airline procedures. The person might need to buy ancillary items while waiting for baggage, especially if the wait will be extended. In these cases, you might need to assist the person liaise with the relevant airline for some form of compensation.

**H. Company Valuables:** since they are professionals, tour managers are not expected to lose briefcases, company credit cards, vouchers, tickets and similar items. However, no one is perfect. If such a catastrophe happens to you, follow the above procedures and contact your company immediately. To avoid such a problem, in the first place, put all company valuables in a hotel safe when they are not in use.

## **2. Transportation Delays and Cancellations**

Delayed or cancelled flights have become an all-too-common feature of the world's air traffic system. Weather, overbooking, late arriving flight crews, mechanical problems, overburdened traffic controllers-all can change your group's flight plan. Calmness with your tourists, patience in the face of factors that can't be controlled, and knowledge of your passengers' rights are your best weapons against the problems of delays and cancellations.

If the flight is delayed for any reason, communicate it for the tourists, and advise them to stay cool, showing them that you and airline people are doing your best. In addition, if possible, negotiate with employees of the airline to provide tourists something to enjoy and relax with, such as a free drink service till flight starts. What if the delay turns into an outright flight cancellation? The air carrier must try to find space for tourists on an alternative flight (including those of other airlines). If a next-day flight is the only option, it may offer rooms, meals and transfer costs. However, an airline may also offer nothing. Usually, it is company, not government, policy that determines what can be offered. In this case, you must be assertive: ask for a supervisor and make it clear that you expect the airline to absorb all delay costs. If it refuses, call your company immediately to find out what it can do to pressure the airline or whether it is willing to pick up the costs.

## **3. One of the tourists becomes ill**

What if a medical emergency occurs? It is also important to ask whether there is anyone in the group with medical training. As a first aid, you may apply your own medical knowledge, provided you are certified in first aid techniques. If the situation is serious, contact local police: they will in turn lead you to a doctor, or you can find it yourself. Don't use the bus to transport

the patient to a medical facility unless there is no other choice. Follow up by alerting your company, filling out a company accident/illness report form. If that person can't continue with the tour, make the necessary arrangements regarding forward bookings. You might need to supply the person with a letter or other signed correspondence stating the relevant circumstances. Any hospital and hotel bookings should be in the name of the person concerned and not in your name or in the name of the company you are working for.

If a hospital stay is required, you will need to pack the sick person's belongings (in the presence of the driver, hotel staff or relevant personnel). Check whether the person had any belongings in the hotel safety box. You might need storage of the belongings if not required at the hospital. If the person is seriously ill, you might also need to contact the relevant consulate and notify next of kin. It is best to be guided by the situation and the relevant medical staff.

#### **4. Death**

No occurrence can be more disturbing to tour manager and tourist alike-than the death of a tourist. It happens rarely, but when it does, the tour conductor must take the following steps:

- ♣ Notify the local police immediately.
- ♣ Remain with the deceased until police or consular reports have been completed and authorities have taken responsibility for the body. The tour may have to continue without you for a half day or so, under the leadership of the driver or the step-on guide. Make sure to be extra sensitive and sympathetic to the deceased's travelling companions.
- ♣ Call the tour company so it can inform the tourist's relatives and friends, and follow up with a letter of sympathy.
- ♣ Do everything you can to comfort the rest of the group and get their minds back on the vacation.

#### **Risk Management**

In essence, a tour is a contract between two or more parties – a tour provider (tour operator/tour guide/tour leader), the audience (client/visitor/customer) and/or an attraction, site or other organizations. This contract can be written or verbal and consists of stated and implied obligations to ensure the following:

- ↻ Safety and well-being of all parties is protected.
- ↻ The tour delivers what it promises to deliver.
- ↻ The tour is conducted within a legal and ethical framework.

- ✈ All tour conditions which are stated in any operational and/or legal documents are adhered to.
- ✈ All people involved with the tour behave responsibly – it is important for your audience to realize that they also have an obligation to themselves, to others, to you and your organization.

**The obligations of the tour provider include:**

- ✓ Manage occupational health and safety issues.
- ✓ Liaise with relevant organizations to obtain appropriate approvals and operating frameworks.
- ✓ Implement a duty of care which includes adopting risk management procedures.
- ✓ Manage liabilities which includes:
  - Make audience aware of terms and conditions
  - Ensure that there are no hidden extras
  - Fulfill expectations
  - Manage any unexpected incidents within the stated terms and conditions.

**Contingency Plans**

Tour operators have an obligation to deliver what they promise to deliver and guides play a significant role in meeting this obligation. However, despite the best and most admirable efforts, things can go astray. In such times, guides are in one of the most challenging positions as they often need to manage the situation and this can be solved by having a contingency plan.

Contingency Plans can include the following details:

- Whom to contact in case of emergency;
- Emergency procedures relevant to the locale you will be operating in;
- Outline of operating procedures for different areas;

**Guides' roles and responsibilities in risk management**

***A. General safety***

- ♥ Briefings on all aspects of safety.
- ♥ Safety equipment: helmets, lifejackets, gloves, climbing gear, etc.
- ♥ Avoiding disease, pathogens, dangerous plants and animals.
- ♥ Safe travel skills: avoiding slips, falls, etc.
- ♥ Cultural safety skills: how to behave appropriately in different societies.



***B. Client supervision***

- ♥ Watching for exhaustion, discouragement
- ♥ Watching for sunstroke, overheating, hypothermia
- ♥ Watching for incipient/early or initial illness, minor injury
- ♥ Watching for unfriendly interactions between clients
- ♥ Checking clients have adequate skills for conditions
- ♥ Deciding when clients need to rest, camp, eat, drink, etc.

***C. First aid and medical***

- ♠ Arranging medical evacuation procedures
- ♠ Checking for client allergies, medications, disabilities
- ♠ Re-stocking and carrying first-aid or wilderness medical kits

## Chapter Six

### Improvisation and Communication

#### The Communication Process:

- ✓ Within any environment, an enormous wealth of information competes for your intellectual and emotional attention. In any one day, you can be exposed to thousands of commercials, events and interpersonal and social experiences. Experience and process of mass of information creates many meanings through your unique frames of reference.
- ✓ The frames have many labels including paradigms; mindsets, perceptions and viewpoints – and they are unique in the way you interact with the environment. No two people will ever see a tree in the same way, hear the same sound or touch the same manner.
- ✓ The aim of communication is to provide the opportunity for people to share the unique meanings they create of the world.

#### When is Communication Skills Required?

- ❖ Guides require communication skills throughout all aspects of their tour activities. They liaise with the following industry colleagues:
  - *Tour operators and other Guides*
  - *Coach captains and bus drivers*
  - *Tourist Information Officers*
  - *Staff from relevant government organizations*
  - *Hospitality staff working at cafés and restaurants*
  - *Airport staff*
- ❖ The liaison activities might be to:
  - *Confirm operational and logistical details*
  - *Ensure the promised level of service and product qualities*
  - *Facilitate the management of any mishaps*
  - *Receive any updated and/or local information not provided in the tour briefing.*
- ❖ Guides service their audience by:
  - *Liaising with clients, visitors or customers*
  - *Providing commentaries relevant to the tour*

It is necessary for the professional tour guide to understand the importance of developing basic communication skills. When tour guides act as hosts for their country, they are, in fact, opening

the door to their home. The guests (customers or clients) certainly will not feel welcome if they are received by a host who fails to talk, listen, look them in the eye, or prepare themselves for their arrival.

### **Effective Communication**

Oral Communication is the dominant form of communication undertaken by Guides. Effective Communication can be hard work but it can also be extremely rewarding. As a Guide, you are working with people and help meet their needs, interests and expectations and assist them to have a great time. Effective communication maximizes the opportunities in assisting people to achieve these goals. When talking with two people, be sure to include both of them in the discussion even though you may receive feedback from only one. Deal with couples extremely carefully. Never flirt with tour members of the opposite sex.

There are **two** forms (types) of communications: verbal and non-verbal.

### **Verbal communication**

It is communication in the form of words, words which are spoken. Some tips in verbal communication include

- ☞ Use tact (Consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offense).
- ☞ Be precise.
- ☞ Speak clearly.
- ☞ Be enthusiastic.
- ☞ Provide sufficient information to back up your statements.
- ☞ Consider the listener's background.

### ***NonVerbal Communication***

- It is stated in research that when delivering a presentation by guides, 55% is non-verbal; 38% is vocal; and 7% is content. So, **how you communicate** is far more important than **what you communicate**. Within the guiding field, there is a tremendous temptation to spend a disproportionate amount of time focusing on the '**what component**'– on researching facts and figures and on getting the content perfectly. But guides need also to spend much time on the '**how component of communication**' i.e., on the process of communicating the content to their audience.

### **I. Eye Contact**

- ✓ Most engaging aspect of non-verbal communication
- ✓ Should be relaxed, friendly, soft and non-threatening – never use eye contact to stare down someone.
- ✓ Encourage to look at the entire audience, although some cultures like indigenous Australians and Asians keep their eyes lowered to show respect- but it doesn't mean that they are not listening.

### **II. Movement, Gestures and Mannerisms**

Gesture is about motion of hands or body to emphasize or help to express a thought or feeling. It is related to the use of movements (especially of the hands) to communicate. Mannerism refers to deliberate pretense or exaggerated display.

- ✓ Can enhance your messages or painful distractions for the audience
- ✓ Appropriate actions for the situation
- ✓ How often do you move? Repetitive/movement patterns/posture/energetic
- ✓ Should be as natural and relaxed

### **III. Good Grooming**

Grooming refers to the activity of getting dressed; putting on clothes, and care for one's external appearance.

- ✓ Cleanliness and attention to personal hygiene
- ✓ Well-shaven or well-trimmed facial hair
- ✓ Clean and well-presented hair
- ✓ Neat and tidy clothing
- ✓ Frequent washing
- ✓ Appropriate use of deodorants or perfumes
- ✓ Fresh breath and either neutral or pleasant body odors
- ✓ Clean and trimmed fingernails.

### **Positive Non Verbal Expressions include:**

- ✓ Facing the individual and group squarely;
- ✓ Adopting a relaxed, attentive and open stance/standing posture;
- ✓ Having friendly mannerisms with a relaxed smile and expressive facial features;
- ✓ Avoiding destructive and annoying habits.

### **Negative Non Verbal Expressions**

- ✓ Tightly crossing arms
- ✓ Chewing gum or smoking
- ✓ Continually rubbing face, eyes, hair and other areas of the body
- ✓ Looking repeatedly at your watch when talking with a group and/or individuals
- ✓ Shaking hands in a cold and weak manner
- ✓ Pacing back and forth
- ✓ Having hands on hips with legs placed spread-eagled
- ✓ Crossing lower legs at the ankles;

### **Listening –Pathway to Understanding**

Effective listening requires that you remain alert and sensitive to all the elements taking place in the communication process. Listening and hearing are quite different. Hearing is the physiological process by which sound vibrates our auditory sensory organs, while listening is the process of seeking meaning within the communication process.

### **Principles of Effective Listening**

- Listen without interrupting the other person (unless to clarify certain points).
- Remain focused on the other person and on what it is you are talking about.
- Engage your non-verbal to demonstrate encouragement, sincerity and interest.
- Respect personal space and other cultural considerations.
- Listen with focus and empathy – picking the fluff from your clothes while listening to someone does not demonstrate empathy and focus
- Avoid distracting mannerisms and gestures, for example, flicking your hair, cleaning your nails, looking at other people and answering your mobile phone.
- Allow silences (if relevant and appropriate)
- Encourage the other person by asking open-ended questions which can promote conversation and providing vocal utterances (ahh-ahh, hmmm) and encouraging phrases such as “That’s amazing”, “You’re kidding me” and “You did what”?
- When appropriate, check in with the other person to make sure you are both on the same track of the conversation.

### Working with Questions

- The process of listening often involves questions. Questions are a great tool you can use to build empathy with your audience and to understand both the stated and implied (unstated) needs of your audience.

### Why Ask Questions

- We ask questions:
  - To motivate people by gaining their attention and interest;
  - To find out more information about a particular person, situation or event;
  - To get people thinking about a particular topic;
  - To bring focus to a conversation and/or presentation, especially when people are talking in generalities;
  - To clarify and verify different perspectives; and
  - To ensure we comprehend a situation.

### When Asking Questions

- Questions should be carefully worded. They should be:
  - Simple and direct – avoid any ambiguous, trick, obscure or complex questions or at least break them down so they become simple and clear;
  - Asked one at a time;
  - Well-defined – especially when dealing with diverse cultural groups, avoid ambiguity;
  - Reasonable and respectful;
  - Relevant to the situation;
  - Shared with the rest of the group, but if only relevant and appropriate.

### Fear-dampening strategies

In some ways, guide speaks (tour commentary or narration) is a very different way of public oration, one that is less fear provoking than traditional speaking. Below are certain proven strategies to combat nervousness, and may be useful to you as a guide, as a tour director, or in just about any situation where you must communicate to a group of people.

- 👉 **Focus on one person:** good speakers often pick out one individual in the audience who seems sympathetic. They talk to that person, then expand their attention to others so as not to seem obvious to everyone else. Other common strategies-especially if having everyone

looking at you at once bothers you- are to unfocus your eyes, look at an area just above your audience's head, or *even imagine your audience in their underwear*.

- 👉 ***Accept an audience's desire to like you:*** people almost never take a tour in order to hate a guide- they are on vacation to have a good time. Explore that good will. Know that they will be happy even with a modestly successful performance.
- 👉 ***View nervousness as an ally:*** adrenalin may make you nervous, but it also energizes you, makes you alert, and helps sharpen your commentary. Furthermore, the people who surround you at a site or inside a bus will probably be totally unaware of the nervousness that looms so large in your consciousness.
- 👉 ***Know that experience lessens fear:*** most guides and tour managers' report that fear diminishes dramatically after one or two tours and that after a week or two, it disappears altogether.
- 👉 ***Take the strength in the fact that you know more than your audience:*** fear of public speaking is usually based on a dread of saying something wrong or stupid. Yet a guide almost always knows more than the tourists to whom s/he is speaking. Why else would they be there? Study and organize the points you want to make, the facts you wish to convey, and the anecdotes you want to relate. Once that is done, there will be no valid reason for fear. If someone should ask a question for which you don't have the answer, simply say so and promise to look it up.