

7. Characteristics of a Good Tour Guide



SELECTIONS FROM:
INTERPRETING FOR CONSERVATION
A MANUAL FOR TRAINING
LOCAL NATURE GUIDES

TWENTY CHARICTARISTICS OF A GOOD GUIDE

A GOOD GUIDE:

1. Speaks Loudly and Clearly
2. Uses Non-Verbal Communication
 - a) Smiles
 - b) Makes eye contact
 - c) Uses body language
3. Acts Professionally
 - a) Is punctual
 - b) Greets tourists
 - c) Is courteous and attentive
 - d) Dresses well
4. Prepares in Advance
 - a) Completes a site inventory
 - b) Researches
 - c) Practices
5. Provides Necessary Information for Tourists
 - a) Informs visitors of the location, time, and length of tour
 - b) Informs visitors what they will need to bring and wear
 - c) Informs visitors of park rules and special considerations
6. Is a Good Naturalist
 - a) Uses binoculars
 - b) Uses field guides
 - c) Can identify examples of all common species in the region
 - d) Takes advantage of teachable moments
 - e) Knows the difference between a bird tour and a thematic tour
*Refer to "Bird Watching Guide Characteristics"
7. Knows the Audience
 - a) Learns about visitors between stops
 - b) Uses visitor and universally relevant information to make examples more personal
8. Helps the Tourists Learn by Themselves (Asks Questions)
 - a) Asks questions
 - b) Engages tourists in "Guided Discovery" (asks questions and gives hints to help tourists figure things out on their own)
9. Has a "Message" for Every Tour
 - a) Simple full-sentence "message"
 - b) Message is original
10. Prepares a Structure for Every Tour
 - a) Uses an introduction, stops, and a conclusion
 - b) Writes an outline
 - c) Stops exhibit attractive natural resources/appropriate examples of message
11. Has a POW at the Beginning of Every Tour
12. Makes the Tour Dynamic
 - a) Uses games, activities, or demonstrations

- b) Uses sense activities besides vision
 - c) Uses natural objects or other props
13. Uses Interesting Language
- a) Uses interesting language
 - b) Relays natural history stories appropriate to the message
14. Manages the Group
- a) Makes sure everyone can see and hear well
 - b) Assures visitors safe passage
 - c) Handles unexpected situations
 - d) Chooses comfortable locations for stops
15. Knows First-Aid and Carries Appropriate Equipment
- a) Assembles and carries a First-aid kit
 - b) Attends to the injured
 - c) Carries appropriate comfort equipment
16. Relays Accurate Information and Handles Difficult Questions
- a) Relays only accurate information
 - b) Is honest (“I don’t know”)
 - c) Writes down visitor questions and follows up with answers (contact info)
 - d) Is able to act as a nature detective, suggesting possible answers
17. Suggests a Relevant Conservation Action
- a) Illustrates environmental and conservation problems
 - b) Suggests an action that tourists can undertake to help protect the area
 - c) Helps visitors to care for the site during their visit
18. Makes Smooth Transitions Between Stops
- a) Asks questions or provides an activity to maintain tourist interest between stops
 - b) Talks to tourists between stops
19. Evaluates the Tour
- a) Asks questions at the end—conducts a “check for learning”
 - b) Does a self-evaluation
 - c) Distributes and collects a tourist survey
20. Continues to Learn and Improve the Tour