

REQUIREMENTS FOR GUIDES WHO WORK IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Abstract: As a registered tourist guide, you'll need to have the right qualifications and training, abide by the code of conduct, and have first aid training. The safety of our visitors is important to us. Travelling with a registered tourist guide will ensure their well-being and give them the best experience possible

Keywords: Guide, Tourism, Tourists Excursion, Tours.

Introduction. A high school diploma is the minimum requirement to be a tour guide. Courses such as speech, communications, art, sociology, anthropology, political science, social studies, and literature often prove beneficial. Some tour guides study foreign languages and cultures as well as geography, history, and architecture. Some cities have professional schools that offer curricula in the travel industry. Such training may take nine to 12 months and offer job placement services. Some two- and four-year colleges offer tour guide training that lasts six to eight weeks. Community colleges may offer programs in tour escort training. Programs such as these often may be taken on a part-time basis. Classes may include history, world geography, psychology, human relations, and communication courses. Sometimes students go on field trips themselves to gain experience. Some travel agencies and tour companies offer their own training so that their tour guides may receive instruction that complements the tour packages the company offers.

Professional tour guides lead interpretive tours within cities across the United States and abroad. They provide tourists with information, as well as some entertainment. They may give tours of historic areas, museums, landmarks and more. They generally have extensive backgrounds and knowledge of the subjects they are talking about. Professional tour guides usually give multiple tours a day to different groups of people, but some may conduct longer tours that take days or weeks usually spread out over a trip. These tour guides typically work with travel companies. The following chart provides an overview of what you need to know about entering this field.

Training Required	Safety; transportation; public speaking
Key Skills	Knowledge of region tour is based in; ability to transfer info to audience
Licensure	May be necessary in some cities and countries
Job Growth (2020-2030)*	29%
Mean Salary (2020)*	\$32,200

There are certain skills you will need to become a tour guide. Tour guides earn their positions by having a specialized knowledge of a particular culture or area, and possess the capability of making that knowledge accessible to a diverse audience.

According to the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA), there are specific rules of professionalism intrinsic to being a tour guide (www.wftga.org). A few of these include:

- Presenting objective information
- Being factual and distinguishing between legend and historical truth
- Being respectful to the environment and people around you

Depending on where you want to work, you may want to obtain formal training to be a tour guide. Tour guide training covers topics like safety, transportation and public speaking, and will help make you a better and more qualified candidate for a tour guide position. Some programs will also assist in placing you with a touring company, as well as give you practical experience.

A couple related careers include teacher assistants and announcers. Teacher assistants typically need at least two years of college coursework and an Associate's degree or Certificate depending on State requirements. These para-professionals help main teachers in a classroom by preparing lesson materials, working with students one-on-one and supervising students. Education requirements for announcers vary with the specialty you choose, but public address announcers typically only need a high school diploma. These announcers communicate general information to the public, such as train schedules, security information and more. They may also introduce acts or provide commentary for events.

When your business is growing, the thought of hiring, vetting, and managing tour guides can be daunting. In an earlier post, we wrote about the key qualities that exceptional tour guides possess. Having a defined system for what to look for can make the process of hiring tour guides a lot smoother. In this post, we're sharing the key skills you should look for when hiring and vetting tour guides, including:

1. Strong communication skills

People book tours to have a fun and hopefully unforgettable experience. A successful tour guide knows how to balance providing quality information with listening to the group. Tour guides must be able to provide information in a way that everyone in the group can understand. They need to project their voices, speak clearly, and be willing to repeat information as needed. After all, they're the ones providing direct customer service to your clients on a daily basis. Effective communication skills are key to providing the kind of customer service that turn one-time guests into repeat customers. If your guide isn't great at communication with others, your guests will feel lost and disconnected from the tour. When

you're interviewing a guide, pay close attention to the way they carry themselves in a conversation. Do they have great public speaking skills? What about their presentation skills? Does the conversation flow naturally? These are great indicators that a guide will keep your guests engaged and provide them with excellent customer service.

2. Empathy

Excellent tour guides know how to engage with different personality types and navigate group dynamics. Having exceptional people skills is essential and often underrated. A quality tour guide can practice active listening, read the group's dynamics, and find ways to connect them, so everyone has a great experience. Sightseeing tours, for instance, will attract a wide variety of customers, from families to couples to young groups of friends. Guides should understand how to ensure that everyone in the group feels heard without one person or subgroup dominating the experience or the tour guide's attention.

3. Fast learners

Guests want quality information on the tour's subject matter, including details that they can't easily find on a 30-second Google search or through 101-level online courses. While guides shouldn't come across as robotic or stuff, they should be passionate and have extensive knowledge about the subject. The most effective tour guides learn interesting details about a place, landmark, or activity beyond the basic facts. And they do so quickly. They're fast learners and are always staying on top of the latest trends, especially if it means they can wow their guests with new and exciting information. Better yet – experienced guides know how to share these facts through engaging stories that offer insights and draw people in, bringing the content to life.

4. Quick on their feet

Tour guides that can quickly assess the group's interests and needs and tailor the tour to meet those expectations will be more successful than those who stick to a script. This is why improvisational skills are a big plus for a guide. They should be able to improvise when needed and respond readily to unexpected questions and situations no matter what happens. When you're interviewing a guide for the first time, present them with a theoretical scenario to see how they would respond. Their answer will give you a good idea of how that person may react under pressure.

5. Professional

Your guide can be great at public speaking and know about every historical event that has happened in your city — but if they're unprofessional, your guests aren't going to be impressed. Are they punctual and reliable? Will they represent your company in a good light? Do they act with integrity? These are the questions you should ask yourself before making a hire. A tour guide isn't just leading a group. They are also on the front lines of your company, and what they say and do are a direct representation of your brand. For example, if they show up to work 20 minutes late. This makes your brand look bad, especially if it forces someone else to do the guide's job. or if guests are left waiting around. The same goes for how they manage their schedule with guests. Does the experience they lead feel organized but not rushed? Can they improvise when needed?

6. Problem solvers

Things happen. Can the tour guide not only stay calm and think on their feet but do they take the initiative for solving the problem at hand? After all, they may not have the luxury to call a manager or consult a fellow guide at that moment. They need to address and solve unexpected issues independently while maintaining the trust and safety of the group.

7. A positive attitude

You can teach a tour guide some interesting facts or have them memorize key talking points. However, teaching someone to have a great attitude or to take pride in their work is nearly impossible. If a campus tour guide has no connection to the university where they're leading tours, they're probably not going to be as passionate about it as one who studies there. You want someone who will take initiative to

do more than the bare minimum as well as go above and beyond for guests. In sum, great tour guides create memorable experiences for everyone on the tour or experience. They are knowledgeable, engaging, have a can-do attitude, and someone that others enjoy being around. Great tour guides enjoy what they are doing and are passionate about the topics they discuss. There are a lot of subpar guides in the travel industry — but if you know what to look for when you're interviewing them, you're guaranteed to make a great hire every time.

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