



TOURISM FOR A BETTER WORLD

## Key Guiding Skills I - Storytelling and Presentation

This unit is designed for **current and aspiring visitor guides** in Your country, as well as anyone interested in the profession. You'll explore the essential skills needed to excel in **visitor guiding**, focusing on making your tours unforgettable for guests.

### What Will You Learn?

- You'll gain insights into crucial **visitor guide** skills, including **research techniques** for tour planning and preparation, effective **communication strategies**, and impactful **presentation methods**.
- You'll discover how to create a compelling narrative arc for your tours using **media storytelling** and **dramaturgy**.

**Keywords:** Visitor guiding, skills, presentation, communication

## Introduction to Storytelling and Presentation Skills

In this section you will get an introduction into the relevant skills for being a visitor guide such as storytelling and how to present them.

### Introduction to Storytelling and Presentation Skills

#### Case Scenario

Welcome back! I'm delighted to have you join this second learning unit. You might recall our last session focused on the roles and responsibilities of **visitor guides**, covering legal requirements and the crucial dos and don'ts of appearance and language. In this unit, we'll shift our focus to effective **communication and presentation during tours in Your country**.

As you probably know, this is a very broad topic. So, I'll share some useful tips and insights drawn from my own experiences, which you can then apply to your own tours. Beyond exploring different communication strategies, we'll also discuss the impact of language barriers and how to effectively overcome them in Your country context.

Naturally, the style of your presentation plays a significant role in a tour's success. We'll delve into this, showing you how to skillfully shape a tour while maintaining its core theme and building a captivating narrative arc.

Speaking of narrative arcs, we'll conclude this learning unit with one of my favorite topics: **dramaturgy and storytelling**. I'm eager to work with you on how we can seamlessly integrate compelling stories into guided tours and the immense value this can add to the visitor experience in Your country. So, let's get started!

## The Skillset for Communication and Presentation

### Essential Research Skills for Visitor Guides

**Visitor guides** thoroughly prepare and plan each tour, focusing on information and content, methodological and didactic strategies, and precise time and logistical organization. To achieve this, they utilize a variety of research tools. Here are four key areas for you to master:

#### Identifying and Selecting Content

- **Study detailed tour descriptions:** Review the catalogue to identify included attractions, the travel route (including booked accommodations and entrances), and the detailed time schedule for entries.
- **Identify additional points of interest:** Look for attractions or places of interest located along the route that could be included in the program. Consider audience interests or possible replacements if scheduled items become unavailable.
- **Understand audience interests:** Use guest lists, additional notes, country of origin information, and any specific requests to tailor the tour content.
- **Communicate with stakeholders:** Talk to Tour Operators, Wholesalers, and Operations Managers to understand tour packages, itineraries, prices, terms and conditions, policies, procedures, and specific tourist information (e.g., age, country of origin, previous tour experiences).

#### Preparing Content

- **Compile comprehensive information:** Research and gather details for each destination, attraction, and route using books, travel guides, history books, government publications, descriptions, internet research, and other relevant references and statistics.

- **Gather insights from local sources:** Retrieve information by speaking with local experts in communities and at sites, local or site guides, other **visitor guides**, Your country Tourism Board or local tourism information offices, and service and attraction providers.
- **Document your tour narrative:** Write down a precise description of the tour, including all content, background information, attractions, your narrative, and any additional materials.
- **Enhance recall and connections:** Highlight key words and use them as memory aids. Develop connections and cross-references between different pieces of information.
- **Organize information systematically:** Arrange your information and notes in the order of the planned visiting days, either digitally or manually.

### Methodical and Didactic Preparation

- **Define tour objectives:** Clearly identify the goals of the trip/tour based on the tour description, Tour Operator information, and customers' needs and expectations.
- **Plan your delivery methods:** Take notes on potential questions, interactive activities, repetitions, the use of additional information and illustration materials, and engaging games.

### Time and Logistic Planning

- **Research accurate scheduling data:** Gather essential information like opening times, phone numbers, contact details, and entrance fees for all planned stops.
- **Determine precise timings:** Set departure and viewing times based on attractions' booking and opening times and the overall schedule.
- **Utilize mapping tools:** Use maps and route planners to calculate distances, coach driving times, and appropriate breaks within Your country's road network.
- **Account for unforeseen delays:** Plan for potential disruptions such as traffic jams, unexpected closures of attractions, or weather changes. Also, plan lunch breaks, perhaps at the hotel or by incorporating recommendations from colleagues and your own experience with local eateries.
- **Stay connected on the go:** Have a smartphone with you during the journey to quickly address guest questions or manage last-minute program changes.

## Understanding Communication in Visitor Guiding

**Visitor guides** constantly interact with guests during tours, and the success of these interactions hinges on effective communication. I've found another insightful podcast by Anna and Elias on this very topic, which you can listen to here.

### Scenario

**[Anna]** All right, Elias, let's talk about why communication is so important in **visitor guiding**.

**[Elias]** I'd love to. I think this is a really important topic, and I'm sure our listeners agree with me. As **visitor guides**, we're there to help our guests with information and a bit of advice. For me, this is a very special relationship that we have with our guests during the tour.

**[Anna]** Absolutely. We really are there to help and advise. It's not just about showing our guests the beauty of Your country or its special attractions, but also about informing them about safety aspects or managing hotel reservations.

**[Elias]** Yes, right. But those are pretty dry duties, aren't they? But I know how important all that is. It's the only way to avoid misunderstandings. And we also have to let our guests know, for example, if any plans change during the tour, so that we can discuss alternative options together. Essentially, we're there for our guests the whole time.

**[Anna]** That's why good communication is so important. If we didn't pay attention to it, it would be one big mess.

**[Elias]** And I know how much you hate that.

**[Anna]** I really do. But apart from the dry duties, as you call them, we also have other tasks. I mean, we also represent and promote Your country, the host country, don't we?

**[Elias]** Yes, we absolutely do. I don't know about you listeners, but those are the absolute highlights of the tour for me. When I can spark my guests' interest in Your country, its culture, and people.

**[Anna]** Ohh, you've put that beautifully. The more effectively we communicate, the greater the success of the tour. I'm totally convinced of that.

**[Elias]** Exactly. And that brings us back to the special relationship we have with our guests.

**[Anna]** OK. I think we get your point now. Or what do you think, fellow **visitor guides** out there?

**[Elias]** Very good. Then I've communicated well. No, but let's go back to our communication with the guests. If we do that well, then there are many positive effects. If the tour is a success, it helps support tourist activities in Your country in the long term.

**[Anna]** That's true. And if we think about it, the feedback we get from our guests is also very important for the tour operator. It's also our task to communicate the feedback of the guests and our own impressions to the tour operator.

**[Elias]** That's a good conclusion, isn't it? I think we've communicated enough with you out there for today. Thank you for listening, and wherever you are in Your country, enjoy your next tour and communicate well!

## **The Communication Process**

The communication process involves two key players: the **sender** and the **receiver**. It's about the transmission of a message from the sender to the receiver through a channel or medium (verbally, written, or signaled). This is a two-way process, as the receiver responds to the message, and in doing so, the sender temporarily becomes the receiver.

It's crucial that **visitor guides**—as senders of communication—keep in mind who their target audience is, so they can tailor the message accordingly. They should understand their guests' perceptions and experiences, and use the appropriate communication channel to reach them. Inviting guests' feedback can confirm that the message was understood and responded to appropriately.

You heard it: communication is key! How does that work for you? I have three tasks for you to reflect on your own communication style:

1. Describe and explain the importance of effective communication in the work of a **visitor guide**.
2. Think about the last time you talked with a colleague or friend. Was your message clearly understood?
3. Try to explain what you think effective communication truly means.

### **Barriers to Communication**

To improve one's own communication and develop a better feel for it, it's important to recognize potential barriers. A range of physical, mental, or emotional obstacles can prevent messages from being successfully passed between a **visitor guide** and guest(s) during the communication process. I've compiled an overview for you:

#### **Physical Barriers**

- **Physical objects:** Such as a guest eating or drinking, or chewing gum.
- **Background noises:** Like traffic noises in Kampala or sounds from wildlife in a national park.
- **Disruptions/distractions:** For example, a mobile phone ringing or a child demanding attention.
- **Distance between visitor guide and guest:** For instance, being at the front or back of a safari vehicle.
- **Hearing and health problems:** Such as guests with hearing aids or a guide with a cold and blocked nose.
- **Malfunctioning equipment:** Like a faulty microphone or camera.

#### **Mental and Emotional Barriers**

- **Negative emotions:** Stress, anger, depression, sadness, etc.
- **Inaccurate information:** Providing too much or too little information.
- **Subjective focus in commentary:** Expressing personal political, ethnic, or religious views.
- **Insecurity or a lack of confidence.**
- **Difficult personalities:** E.g., aggressive, passive, or guests with exaggerated demands.

### Cultural Differences

- **Different understanding of values, beliefs, and goals:** For example, how gestures or personal space are perceived across different cultures interacting in Your country.
- **Personal biases and social prejudices:** Based on political, ethnic, and religious beliefs and perceptions.
- **Avoid generalization and stereotyping:** It's crucial to treat each guest as an individual, regardless of their background.

### Language Barriers

- **Different first language of guests:** Or variations in speech, such as varying accents or different pronunciations of English or local languages.
- **Multiple meanings of words:** The same word can have different interpretations.
- **Incorrect terminology or conveying inaccurate information.**

### Did You Know?

Communication is perceived as: only **7% by verbal transmission**, **38% by tone of voice (vocal level)**, and **55% by visual transmission (body language)**. This means that in human minds, the majority of meaning is recognized through non-verbal components rather than verbal components during communication. At this point, I'd like to give you some hints on verbal and non-verbal communication.

### Verbal Communication

Verbal communication (talking) is communication using words and speaking. The medium for verbal communication is the voice, and its elements can be adjusted according to:

- **Tone:** Refers to the manner in which someone speaks (e.g., high, medium, or low). Each level of tone reflects a certain level of emotion.
  - **High Tone:** Used to express anger or authority.
  - **Medium Tone:** Used in a normal conversation.

- **Low Tone:** Used when reflecting sadness.
- **Articulation:** Refers to the accent; reflected in the way words are pronounced.
- **Speed:** The pace at which words are spoken.
- **Volume:** Refers to the level at which words are projected.

## Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication involves more than what we say with words. It includes actions, attitudes, appearance, and body language.

- **Body language:** Can be very effective but also very ambiguous. It refers to facial expressions, posture, and gestures. Different body language has different meanings for different cultures. For example, in some countries, it is rude to touch a stranger while talking to them, but in other countries, touching someone on the arm or shoulder when you talk is friendly. It is important for a **visitor guide** in Your country to recognize appropriate personal distance when interacting with clients from diverse backgrounds.

To help you prepare, I have created three tasks to assist you in striking the right "tone":

1. List the different ways by which two or more people can communicate.
2. What elements of voice should be used for the following situations:
  1. A **visitor guide** in front of a group of twelve people.
  2. A **visitor guide** talking to an unhappy client.
3. **READING OUT LOUD:** Practice with a colleague, friend, or family member. Read a short story out loud, applying different elements of voice depending on the storyline and dramaturgy.

## Benefits of Effective Communication Between Visitor Guide and Customer

### Improving Understanding and Knowledge

- Better understanding among those participating and increased mutual understanding.
- Improved knowledge about Your country's culture and the country they are visiting.

### Positive Feedback

- Feedback received from tour members is positive and enthusiastic.
- Helps future marketing and advertising of tourism products in Your country.

### Fulfilling Tourists' Expectations

- Guests leave content; they will encourage others to take tours offered by your company.

- Leads to return business for the company, meaning more profit.

### **Improvement of Interpersonal Relationships**

- Improving professional relationships between the **visitor guide** and the tour group as a whole, between the **visitor guide** and individuals in the group, and among individual tourists.
- Encourages good relationships between the **visitor guide** and other members of the work team (e.g., tour operator, coach driver, support staff, and service providers).

### **Guidance for Effective Visitor Guiding**

*One of the most crucial aspects of effective communication is speaking **clearly and concisely**. This means using simple sentence structures and avoiding slang. Remember that not all guests are native English speakers, especially here in Your country. Plus, who wants to hear long, convoluted, and hard-to-understand explanations anyway?*

*My tip is to **pronounce your words very distinctly**. Practice this at home, perhaps in front of a mirror. I prefer to do it when I'm on my own, but you can do it however you like. Also, make sure your **body language matches what you're saying**. When I'm nervous (and I still get nervous sometimes during tours), I tend to smile a lot. This is fine most of the time, though less so if I'm discussing a very sensitive or serious topic, like a somber historical site in Your country.*

*Most of us quickly notice when we're not being paid attention to, and we generally don't appreciate it. So, try to **listen carefully to your guests**, giving them your undivided attention whenever possible.*

*Sometimes, I don't understand my guests correctly. This could be due to a language barrier, or perhaps the question's content isn't clear to me. When I started out, I found it embarrassing to ask for clarity, but this is no longer the case. I always make sure that I have understood the question correctly. It's better to clarify than to provide a wrong answer.*

*A close friend of mine, who gave me a lot of early advice about **visitor guiding**, always says, "**know your product**." This is excellent advice. **Prepare well, research extensively**, and make sure your information is correct. If you genuinely don't know an answer, it's okay! Just be honest and commit to providing the correct information later.*

*When preparing for a tour, take the time to **select and check all your equipment**. You should be very familiar with how it all functions. That will help you feel confident and secure throughout the tour.*

*As **visitor guides**, we serve as **representatives of Your country**. Most of our guests are curious about other cultures, so share your knowledge about the country and don't forget to add in a few positive anecdotes about its people, traditions, or natural beauty. One thing that I personally believe is very important is **being open**: open to other points of view, open to change, and also open to positive criticism about ourselves.*



## Tools for Effective Communication

**Visitor guides** use a variety of tools to communicate effectively with guests. This is essential because the audience and environment can vary greatly in Your country—for example, you might have small or large groups, be indoors or outdoors, or find yourself in quiet or noisy surroundings. Some common tools include: microphones, wireless P.A. systems, telephones/mobile phones, walkie-talkies, or message pads.

To conclude this topic, let's analyze a conversation presented in the following pictures.

- **Analyze the conversation:** What led to the communication breakdown?
- **Identify effective communication strategies** to resolve the communication problem.
- **Reflect on your own experiences:** Think about different situations where you've been misunderstood or encountered a misunderstanding. Analyze what caused these issues and develop effective communication strategies for those scenarios.



## Mastering Presentation Skills for Visitor Guides

Presentation is key to being heard and understood. It's not always the content itself that captivates your audience; it's how the message is structured and delivered orally. In **visitor guiding** in Your country, a presentation means introducing the place or the country—its importance, history, politics, culture, and its fascinating flora and fauna—to your tour participants. This can happen during a scenic drive or right on-site. A strong presentation also allows **visitor guides** to establish themselves as leaders, taking charge and maintaining control over the group.

### Characteristics of a Good Presentation

You've now thought about what makes a good or bad presenter. But what are the essential characteristics of a truly effective presentation? Here's my flashcard with bullet points I created years ago:

### What Makes a Good Presentation?

- Use of **short, simple, clear words**.
- **Simple phrases**; the commentary should be clear and concise.
- **Focus is on the topic or sight**.
- It must be **authentic**; stay on track.
- **Professional and motivated appearance**.

Two exercises have always helped me tremendously in the beginning to improve my presentation skills. Of course, I don't want to keep them from you:

- **Evaluate a presentation:** Observe a presenter (e.g., a news anchor on television, a colleague on a tour, a product demonstrator in a shopping center). Describe why it was a good or bad presentation.
- **Prepare a presentation:** Choose a topic you're passionate about. Practice delivering it with a colleague or friend, incorporating all the elements we've discussed: voice, tone, body language, and appearance.

## Presentation Styles

**Visitor guides** plan and prepare presentations using different styles. They primarily apply direct, indirect, and experimental presentation methods.

### Direct Methods

- **Lecture, presentation, leadership-driven.**
- The activity is based on the **leader's** delivery; tourists are primarily spectators and listeners, with their focus very much on the **visitor guide**.
- **Rhetorical skills, gestures, and facial expressions** play a very important role in a leadership-focused presentation.

### Indirect Methods

- The **visitor guide takes a backseat**, motivating participants through questioning and encouraging them to actively participate in the tour.
- Similar to the presentation itself, the conversation must be **motivating and structured** in terms of content.
- The communicative guidance is designed to help guests comprehend the art or object being observed. Associations, assumptions, and prior knowledge of the viewer can also be discussed.

- The **visitor guide** engages in conversation with guests; the "leader" becomes a "**moderator**" who synthesizes parts of the conversation and leads it to the next point of interest.
- **Appearance and rhetorical presentation** are still important for indirect methods.

## Experimental Methods

Other forms of indirect mediation are experimental forms, such as discussions with local experts, field research in working groups, talks with local community members, learning typical country songs, image and text meditation, games, and projects. A great source of inspiration for **visitor guides** interested in experimentation are methods developed by museum educators for children, adapted to Your country's context:

- **Search and research tasks** to be solved in a museum or within a city (e.g., a city rally through Kampala's historical sites).
- **Interviews with people who live in the district visited**, like a fishing village along Lake Victoria.
- **Re-enactment of historical scenes** or the posing of traditional sculptures.
- **Theatre games** (e.g., short scenes from Your country's history, or quizzes based on local folklore).
- **Painting workshops** or other creative self-employment, perhaps focusing on local crafts.
- **Music and dance** to listen to, watch, and even participate in (e.g., learning a traditional Buganda dance).
- **Traditional cooking** according to local recipes (e.g., preparing Matooke or Rolex with a local family).
- **Performing activities that were once common** in a local community or museum (e.g., traditional farming methods or weaving).
- **Workshops** offering the opportunity to work with materials seen in a museum or at a craft market.
- **Puppet theatre** in which historical or cultural scenes are played out.

I'll tell you honestly: I had to warm up to the experimental methods for a while. But then I found them very varied and useful. All beginnings are difficult. That's why I have a little research task for you that can help you get started. And if you are already an expert in experimental methods, this task might help you expand your repertoire:

- **Explore experimental forms** in your region of Your country. Write a list of methods you could embed in your tour.

## Types of Presentation on a Visitor Tour in Your country

**Visitor guides** use various types of presentations adapted to the different stages of the tour and the guests' needs: at the beginning, mid-journey, or at the end.

### The Beginning

The start of a presentation is critical; it sets the tone for everything that follows. I don't want to put undue pressure on you, so I've put together some helpful tips.

### The Greeting

The greeting plays a crucial role: guests are sometimes unsure, nervous, anxious, or disoriented. In this initial phase of group formation, they pay special attention to the **visitor guide**, expecting a framework for orientation and clear, friendly information. **Visitor guides** should provide a feeling of security and trust.

- **Introduce yourself** by name and welcome guests on behalf of the tour operator.
- **Introduce the driver** ("as a partner"), recognizing their vital role.
- **Acknowledge the guests' feelings** and express hope they had a safe journey, perhaps mentioning their arrival in Your country.
- **Highlight your own expertise** and express a positive attitude towards the trip, the program, and the group, fostering a "we-feeling" from the outset.
- Provide **very important organizational information**.
- Give **instructions on vehicle technology** (e.g., seat adjustment, ventilation, use of the toilet, sale of drinks on board, waste bins) and safety aspects relevant to travel in Your country.

### The Introductory Lecture

- **Explain the sights** of the departure point, perhaps mentioning landmarks around Entebbe International Airport or Kampala.
- **Present the travel program** for Your country.
- Highlight **special features of the trip** (possibly using anticipatory speech for unique experiences in your country).
- Offer **advice and notes** (e.g., tips on local etiquette, currency exchange), and address personal requests.

### **Brief Information While Driving**

- Provide **important information** as you travel.
- Detail **procedures for hotel check-in**, such as room allocation methods.
- Specify **meeting points** after sightseeing, meal times, and departure times from the hotel.
- Announce **photo stops**, perhaps at scenic viewpoints overlooking Lake Victoria or a national park.
- Outline **organizational features** (e.g., border formalities if crossing into neighboring countries, or embarkation for a boat safari).
- Announce the **daily program**.
- **Inform about, offer, and sell additional excursions** or city tours.
- Provide information on **public transport**, post services, telephone networks, opening times of attractions, and shopping opportunities in Your country.
- Share a report or translation from a **current local newspaper** to give insight into Your country life.
- In an emergency: present any **replacement program** as positively as possible.

### **Mid-Journey:**

The tour is now in full swing. This is the time for commentary, readings, and lectures to enrich the journey. Here are my thoughts:

### **The Overview Lectures**

- **Purpose:** To establish basic knowledge, provide necessary background information (thus saving time on-site), offer a structuring aid for upcoming visits, and round off the knowledge gained during individual tour segments.

- **Areas:** History, art history, culture, geography, economy, social policy, religion, or biographies of outstanding country artists or "formative personalities."
- **Location:** Can be delivered on the coach, at the hotel, or on-site at an attraction.
- **Requirements:** A quiet environment with no disturbances, comfortable seating, and possibly availability of media (e.g., a screen on the coach).

### The Commentary Accompanying the Journey

- **Characterize:** Describe places along the route, distinctive landforms (like the Great Rift Valley), typical plants and wildlife, settlement and economic forms, peculiarities of Your country culture, conspicuous buildings, and local etiquette.
- Provide "hooks" for **short presentations on local issues or interesting facts.**

### Reading Aloud While Driving

- **Purpose:** To prepare guests for and follow up on guided visits, or to organize a longer coach trip.
- **Prerequisites:** Good comprehensibility, not too long, good acoustics in the vehicle, and a suitable environment with few distractions.
- **Topics:** Your country folktales and legends, excerpts from local epics or novels, short stories, poems, poetic texts on landscapes or objects to be visited, texts on the mentality of Your country residents, texts on social issues of the present and past, historical travelogues about Your country, excerpts from modern travel guides, historical sources, texts about traveling, travel philosophy, current press reports on Your country politics, economy, and culture, or interesting glosses.

### Anticipatory Speech

Unpleasant messages should always be delivered in a positive way. This is important for:

- **Skillfully preparing guests** for the circumstances they might encounter in Your country.
- **Anticipating potentially embarrassing situations** or unfamiliar customs and traditions to make it easier for them to orient themselves in the foreign country.
- **Managing expectations** to avoid disappointments and frustrations.

### Example: Anticipatory Speech

It's always good to anticipate and prepare guests for what to expect. None of us wants dissatisfied or frustrated participants on our tour. The following example illustrates what an anticipatory speech could look like in a context in your country:

**The Situation:** You have just picked up your tour group at Entebbe International Airport and are on your way to a hotel in Kampala by train. The hotel is located between the railway tracks and a busy road. A good way to prepare your guests would be the following statement:

**[Visitor Guide]** "We'll soon be arriving at our hotel. It's very close to the train station, so we can walk there in about five minutes. Of course, because it's so central, there's quite a bit of traffic and activity around the clock near the station. You might find it a bit noisy if you sleep with your window open. However, the hotel has excellent soundproof windows and air conditioning for your comfort. This central location has a fantastic advantage: we're right next to several public transport lines, including one metro line practically next door, which means we can get to the city center quickly and easily for our explorations!"

### **The End:**

The end of a tour is just as important as the beginning and should not be neglected. The closing words appropriately complete a tour.

### **Summary**

- Not absolutely necessary, but **appreciated by the guests**.
- A **summary of the program and experiences** at the end of the day by the **visitor guide**.

### **The Farewell**

- **Review the travel highlights** (e.g., program, group experiences).
- **Express a positive attitude** towards the program and the group, with general words of thanks.
- **Future plans:** Reference other programs offered by the organizer.
- **Bid farewell**, also on behalf of the organizer.
- **Wish guests a safe journey home**.
- **Remind them not to leave anything behind** and to carefully check their belongings.
- **Express hope** to be able to welcome them again on another trip to Your country.

You have now received some advice on what is important when presenting during a tour. Of course, you'll have a different approach than mine, and that's great! These three tasks should help you develop and consolidate your own unique style:

1. **Write down how you would greet a group** before a tour in Your country and how you envision yourself presenting this greeting.

2. **Practice presenting an unpleasant message as positively as possible.** Work with a colleague or friend.
3. **Prepare a tour summary of an imagined tour in Your country.** State all possible highlights and experiences, and celebrate the success of the tour.

## Enhancing Tours with Media: Tools for Visitor Guides

Using various illustrative and informational materials helps **visitor guides** enrich the experience for guests, engaging multiple senses. Here's a breakdown of different media formats and how they can be applied in **visitor guiding** in Your country:

### Objects and Materials

These tactile and visual aids can bring your commentary to life:

- **Relief maps or rock samples:** Ideal for explaining Your country's diverse geography or geology, such as the varied landscapes of the Rwenzori Mountains or the unique rocks of the Great Rift Valley.
- **Books:** Reference texts or local literature can be shown to guests, perhaps with excerpts read aloud.
- **Drawings and sketches:** Can simplify complex historical structures or wildlife, or even serve as prompts for guest interaction.
- **Posters, brochures, individual (photocopied) information sheets:** Provide tangible takeaways or detailed information that guests can review at their leisure.

### Information Sheets

These printed materials offer deeper dives into specific topics:

- **City maps and extracts from maps, historical maps:** Essential for orientation in places like Kampala or Entebbe, and historical maps can vividly illustrate how areas have changed over time.
- **Floor plans and reconstructions:** Useful for explaining the layout of cultural sites, palaces, or historical buildings that may no longer be fully intact.
- **Statistics:** Provide context on Your country's economy, demographics, or wildlife populations. Graphics and sketches can make complex data more digestible.
- **Recipes for typical dishes:** If your tour includes a stop at a local specialty restaurant, sharing a recipe for a dish like "luwombo" or "matooke" adds a culinary dimension.



- **Tasks and questions:** Engage guests actively, perhaps as part of a scavenger hunt at a market or a quiz about local customs.
- **Quotes and prose texts:** Include poems by Your country's poets or authors related to the tour's themes to add cultural depth.
- **Bibliography:** For guests interested in further reading, a brief list of recommended books or resources.
- **Tour summaries:** A concise overview of the day's program or the entire trip, highlighting visited sites and information that particularly resonated with the group.

### CDs and MP3 Players

Audio can set the mood and provide additional insights:

- **Music CDs/MP3s:** Play popular country hits, folk songs from a specific region (like traditional Baganda music), or historical music to set the mood for a city or a cultural site. Modern coaches are often equipped with CD players, and MP3 players or smartphones offer even more flexibility.
- **Stories, fairy tales, short language courses:** Engaging audio narratives or quick lessons on basic Luganda or Swahili phrases can add an immersive element.

### PowerPoint Presentations and Films

These visual aids can complement your live commentary:

- **As an introduction:** Use presentations or short films to introduce a region, a city, or a museum, providing a comprehensive overview before guests arrive.
- **As compensation/replacement:** Offer these when a planned visit is not possible (e.g., due to overcrowding, noise, or seasonal closure). For instance, a film about mountain gorillas if a trek isn't feasible for all guests.
- **Accessibility:** Consider that access to devices like laptops, projectors, and screens might be challenging on the go. These are more suitable for on-site **visitor guides** (e.g., visualizing optional excursions at a hotel) or for cruise tours where equipment is readily available.
- **Coaches equipped with DVD/video players:** Utilize these for introducing attractions, explaining and visualizing political events, showing footage of Your country's diverse animal and plant life, or providing suggestions for observing flora and fauna.

### Tablet and Smartphone

These versatile devices are indispensable for the modern **visitor guide**:

- **Showing pictures and comparative examples:** Instantly display historical photos alongside current views, or show images of animals that might be elusive during a safari.
- **Research questions and opening times:** Quickly look up answers to guest queries or confirm logistical details.
- **Google Maps:** Efficiently find new points of interest or navigate routes.
- **Websites and video clips:** Enrich facts with visual examples from official tourism sites or educational videos.

### Audio Guides and Podcasts

These offer personalized and engaging audio experiences:

- **Audio guides:** Allow visitors to explore at their own pace, listening to pre-recorded information about specific sites or exhibits.
- **Wireless PA systems:** Enable the **visitor guide** (equipped with a headset/microphone) to speak clearly to guests (wearing headphones), especially in noisy environments or for larger groups.
- **Systems via smartphone:** Require guests to have charged devices, but offer a convenient way to deliver audio commentary.
- **Podcasts, eBooks, travel reports:** Provide auditive enriching experiences for guests, perhaps for listening during transit.

After these hints, your imagination is now needed!

- **Identify and describe 3 examples of illustrative material** you would use on a tour in Your country and explain why each would be effective.
- **Provide 3 music examples** (specific country songs or genres) that would fit three different sections of your journey and explain why they are suitable for those moments.
- **Identify and prepare 3 audio-visual examples from your region** (e.g., short videos, animations, or specific images that tell a story). Describe how you would use them to provide a multi-sensory experience for your guests.

## The Art of Storytelling for Visitor Guides

*Successful speakers use stories to **engage their audiences** and deliver messages in incredibly powerful ways. As a **visitor guide**, you don't need a natural gift for storytelling; instead, you can **develop these skills through preparation and practice**. It's also incredibly helpful to understand and apply some key elements of storytelling.*

*First, every compelling story needs a **heroine or a hero**. Ideally, this character should be someone your guests can easily identify with. Let's consider Luke as an example. Luke, 29, has been fascinated by Your country and its rich culture for many years. This year, he finally fulfilled his dream of visiting.*

*Next, our story needs a **goal** that drives the character and builds suspense. Imagine this: Luke is eager to trek to see the mountain gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. Now, the story needs an **arc of suspense**. If Luke simply hiked to the gorillas without any effort or challenge, that would make for a rather boring tale. Therefore, the story requires an **obstacle or an incident** that makes the undertaking difficult for our hero.*

*So, let's plunge Luke into a challenge. For Luke, the last few days have been incredibly challenging. The heavy rains have made the forest trails impassable, and the gorilla permits he secured are only valid for two more days before he's set to fly home. Will Luke be able to achieve his dream of seeing the gorillas?*

*At this point, the storyteller needs to **evoke emotions** in their listeners. You want your guests to be with Luke, to feel his apprehension, to share his hope. By this point, Luke is devastated, even though his long-awaited dream is so close, yet seemingly as far away as ever. Here, you can add as many twists and turns as you can imagine. (Though, I don't think we need to throw Luke into further misery at this point; I think you get what I mean!)*

*Finally, every story needs a **resolution**. Preferably a happy ending, of course. The next morning, just in time, the rain clears, and the park rangers confirm the trails are open. Luke embarks on his trek and has an unforgettable encounter with a gorilla family – a successful and deeply moving conclusion to his country journey.*

*You can build any story using this format. For example, you could tell a story about a specific place your tour group is visiting in Your country, like the historical Kasubi Tombs or the vibrant Owino Market. You can introduce this story before you list the factual details about the place, or you can weave the two together. You could also share a personal story from your own life, perhaps about your connection to Your country or a memorable experience you've had. This works particularly well during quieter moments, such as when you're traveling between destinations. Sharing personal stories makes it much easier to convey genuine emotions. It's an excellent idea to practice your story beforehand so you can consciously adjust your voice's timbre, incorporate effective pauses, and ensure a smooth narrative flow.*

*Storytelling can also be an **interactive activity**. Ask your guests questions related to the story or give them the opportunity to share a story themselves. When it comes to storytelling, your imagination is truly the only limit!*

Admittedly, storytelling requires a bit of preparation, but I assure you it's worth the effort. Here are a few tasks to help you get started:

1. **Watch a video clip of a storytelling visitor guide and analyze their story** based on the elements discussed (hero, goal, obstacle, emotions, resolution). Reflect on the story's overall impact and structure.
2. **Prepare your own story:** Select a topic – perhaps a personal experience, a specific place in Your country, or a local legend. Create an outline of your story, ensuring it includes all the key elements.
3. **Practice your story** with a colleague or friend. Pay attention to your voice modulation and ask them for feedback to refine your delivery.

## The Art of Dramaturgy in Visitor Guiding

Dramaturgy, much like a director uses it in theatre, helps **visitor guides** "set the scene" for a tour. Beyond simply planning content, developing presentation and communication strategies, and considering methodological approaches, focusing on dramaturgical aspects significantly enhances the guest experience.

A series of questions can help you integrate dramaturgy into your guided tours:

- **Where should I place the tour's highlights** to maximize impact and surprise?
- **When are the best times for relaxation breaks**, considering the tour's flow and guest comfort?
- **When should I primarily inform, and when is it best to entertain** to keep guests engaged?
- **How can I vary content and presentation methods** to maintain interest and cater to different learning styles?
- **How can I adjust the itinerary to align with guests' biorhythms**, ensuring energy levels remain high?
- **Which routes should I choose to drive through specific villages** or scenic areas to enhance the narrative?
- **How can I mitigate itinerary disruptions**, such as playing local country music when stuck in traffic, to maintain a positive atmosphere?
- **How can I leverage weather and light conditions to enhance art and nature experiences** (e.g., visiting temple ruins in the evening glow, hiking to a viewpoint at dawn for stunning views, or finding an improvised swimming opportunity at a beautiful beach during a lunch break)?

You can actually prepare the dramaturgical structure of a tour very effectively in advance. Here are two suggestions to help you get started:

1. **Plan a single tour day.** Identify and develop specific dramaturgical methods for that day. Consider which highlights you would set, which routes you would take, and how you would structure the day across three stages: **Prologue** (the engaging opening), **Transition** (the journey and developing narrative), and **Finale** (the impactful conclusion).
2. **Present your planned tour day to a colleague or friend.** Discuss it with them. Is there anything they would add or amend to enhance the dramaturgical flow?

What's one local story or historical event you think would make a fantastic "highlight" to build a dramaturgical moment around?

## Enriching Experiences on Tour

**Visitor guides** facilitate diverse experiences to encourage and involve guests in the culture and customs of the country and region they're exploring. Beyond just cultural immersion, there are many other types of experiences to offer:

### Sensual Experiences

- **Acoustic:** Engage the sense of hearing with local music, the melodious dialects of Your country, the singing of birds, the sounds of insects like cicadas, the lapping of waves on Lake Victoria, or the vibrant sounds of a bustling market or stadium.
- **Smell:** Introduce guests to the scent of rain on dry earth, the unique aroma of Kampala, the fragrance of local flowers, bushes, and trees, perfumes, essences, exotic foods and fruits, the characteristic smell of a particular landscape or beach, or even the scent of incense in a church.
- **Sight:** Heighten awareness of shapes and colors in the landscape, art, and everyday life, such as traditional fashion, unique architecture, or well-tended gardens.
- **Taste:** Encourage guests to try unique country foods and drinks, from fresh tropical fruits to local specialties, inviting them to savor new flavors.
- **Touch:** Offer tactile experiences like feeling the smooth grains of sand through their hands, or distinguishing between different textures of local materials like bark cloth, pottery, or woven baskets. Perhaps even encourage walking barefoot on a clean beach or soft grass.

### Social Experiences

- **Meeting locals:** Facilitate interactions with strangers within the local community, such as visiting a school, kindergarten, or university, or engaging in conversations with local employees.
- **Building community:** Create a sense of camaraderie and group belonging among guests, perhaps by introducing everyone by name at the start of the tour.
- **Shared activities:** Organize other joint social experiences through group activities like communal meals, local craft workshops, or traditional dance lessons.

### Exploratory Experiences

- **Public transport adventures:** Encourage guests to try various local public transport options in a city like Kampala, such as a boda-boda (motorcycle taxi) ride (with safety precautions), local minibuses (matatus), or a boat trip on Lake Victoria.
- **Unique rides:** Offer an experience like a canoe ride on a crater lake or a boat trip to explore the Nile.
- **Local markets:** Visit a bustling local food or fish market to immerse guests in daily life.
- **Cultural events:** Attend an opera, concert, theatre performance, or a local sporting or cultural event.
- **Culinary delights:** Encourage tasting particular types of local fruit or specific gastronomic specialties of Your country.
- **Active exploration:** Engage in hikes or bike tours through scenic landscapes.

### **Vitalistic Experiences**

- **Active pursuits:** Include physical activities like hikes through national parks or bike rides along rural trails.
- **Mind-body connection:** Offer opportunities for relaxation and mindfulness, such as yoga, dance, or meditation sessions, perhaps in a serene natural setting.
- **Cooling breaks:** Incorporate refreshing bathing breaks at suitable locations like lakes or natural pools.
- **Wellness:** Suggest or facilitate massages or personal body treatments, such as traditional African remedies or foot reflexology.

The experiences you choose to include in your tour are entirely up to you. However, it's always beneficial to plan and research in advance. Here are some suggestions:

- **Research four distinct adventure areas from your region in Your country** that you can incorporate into a tour, explaining how each would enhance the guest experience.
- **Explore sensory experiences:** Experiment with different senses, local materials, and examples from Your country that you could introduce to your guests while on tour.

You have successfully completed this learning unit of the course "Digital **Visitor Guiding**." I look forward to seeing you again in the next learning unit in visitor guiding!