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孙小珂 编著

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旅游专业英语

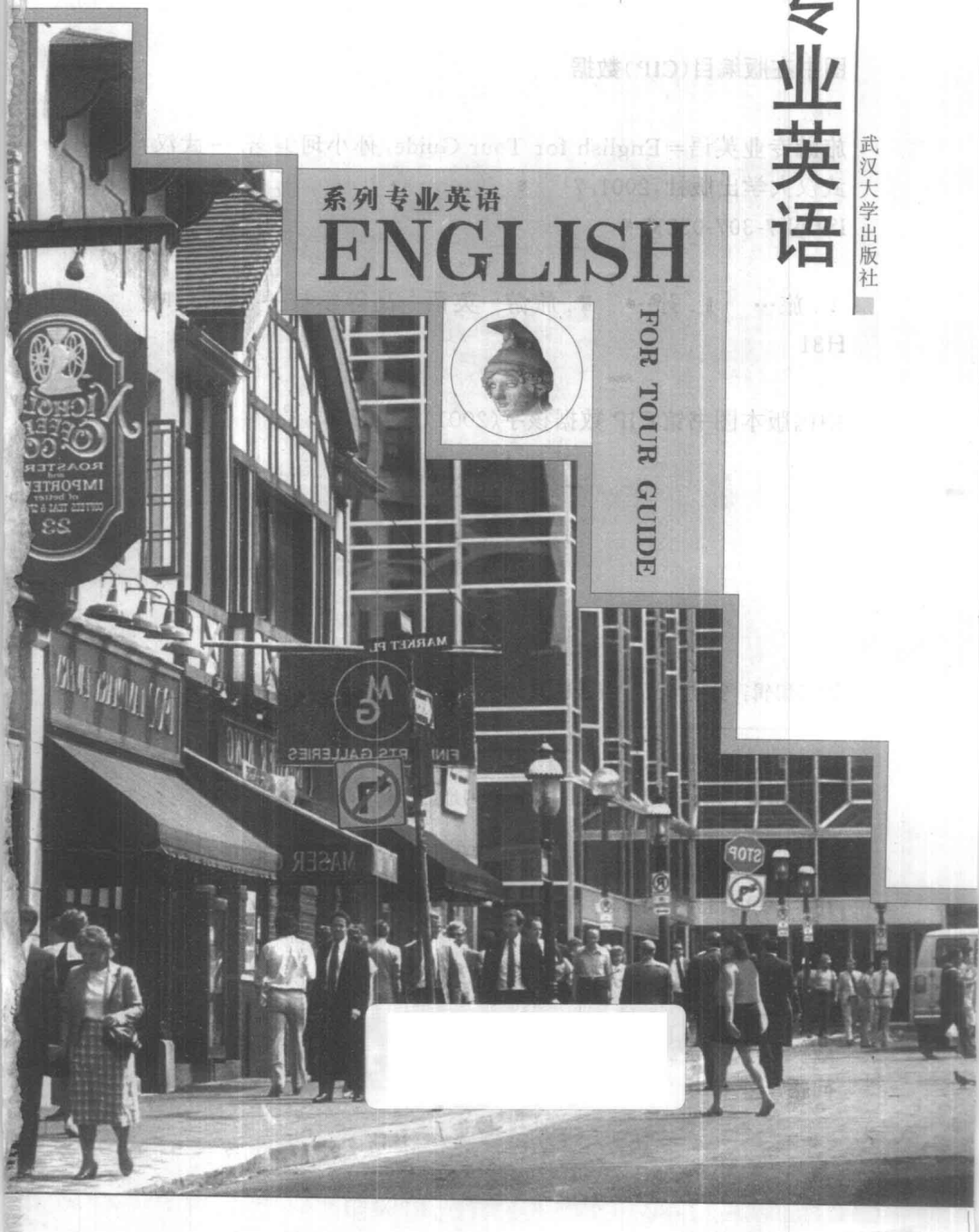
武汉大学出版社

系列专业英语

ENGLISH



FOR TOUR GUIDE



图书在版编目(CIP)数据

旅游专业英语=English for Tour Guide/孙小珂编著. —武汉:
武汉大学出版社, 2001. 7

ISBN 7-307-03217-1

I. 旅… II. 孙… III. 旅游—英语—高等学校—教材 IV.
H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2001)第 032665 号

责任编辑: 曾建华 责任校对: 卢建 版式设计: 支笛

出版: 武汉大学出版社 (430072 武昌 珞珈山)

(电子邮件: wdp4@whu.edu.cn 网址: www.wdp.whu.edu.cn)

发行: 新华书店湖北发行所

印刷: 武汉市贴花印刷厂

开本: 850×1168 1/32 印张: 10.375 字数: 266 千字

版次: 2001 年 7 月第 1 版 2001 年 7 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 7-307-03217-1/H·223 定价: 14.00 元

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Part One

The Duties and Roles of a Tour Guide

导游员的职责与任务

Lesson One

The Qualifications for Being a Good Tour Guide

导游员工作要求

The tour guide is the representative of a travel service and is often the only one that the tour members will meet. The way in which you carry out your duties has an enormous impact on the functioning of the tour. The impression the tour members will have both of the travel service and China will be based on the professionalism of you. A travel service attaches great importance to the quality of a tour guide.^①

To be an efficient tour guide, you are required to have facility of the two PQ factors — the professional qualifications and personal qualities^②. These two factors play a very important role in performing a good job in different customer-contact situations.^③

The professional qualifications consist of three aspects which are called as “ASK”. “ASK” here stands for ATTITUDE, SKILLS, and KNOWLEDGE.

I. Attitude 态度

In order to perform a good job and become professional, you must have the correct attitude to your work. You must like your job and enjoy it. In doing your work well in the tourist business, you should enjoy meeting people, because tourism is closely related to people.

In all sorts of service, “the customer-is-always-right”^④ attitude is a good policy. People are all different in behavior and manners. Nobody is perfect.^⑤ People do make mistakes, including customers and tour guides. What should a tour guide do when there is contradiction between the tourists and the tour guide? A tour guide should have the attitude that your customers are all very good people. They have come to China because they are interested in China. They should deserve good service so that they will leave China with strong favorable impression. If you adapt this attitude, you will create a good atmosphere with customers and they will want to return and tell their friends how delightful China is.

II. Skills 技能

In addition to attitude, you should be competent in guiding tour groups. As the leader of the group, you must perform your work effectively in order to achieve the final goal of giving the tourists satisfaction.^⑥ Therefore, you have to practise various skills.

1. Management Skill 管理技能

Most of the tourists come to China in large groups, so you must acquire the skill of management. Without this effective skill, you can not perform your work successfully.

To do your work well, you must demonstrate your effective communication skill.^⑦ This applies to giving commentaries on the coach, walking-tours, and instructions or briefings to tourists. Informally, you have to communicate frequently with individual tourists which will in turn make tour group management much more easily.

To do it well, you must provide good service. "Service" is made up of seven words: smile, excellence, readiness, viewing, invitation, creativeness and eye.^⑧ That means you should always provide smiling service to your guests, always make your work perfect, always be ready to serve your guests, always view your guests individually, always invite your guests to come again, always create an amiable and harmonious environment for your guests, and always keep your eyes open on every guests. It is a universal principle for all service industries, especially for the tourist industry.

To do it well, you have to develop the skill of solving various problems. Encountering problems or unexpected situations can become a daily routine of a tour guide,^⑨ but with the professional qualifications and experience, these can be solved easily. Facing a problem, you must first of all develop a positive attitude toward it and remain cool and detached. This means you have to view or re-view the situation objectively, and find the best solution to it. Sometimes, you might receive complaints from your guests. In han-

dling complaints, you should always be polite and helpful. You should always be ready to lend an attentive ear to what the guest has to say and always hear the guest out. You must not interrupt the guest unless necessary. You should then make a short apology and express your understanding of the guest's situation or sympathy with the guest. Only when you puts yourself in the guest's shoes can you look at the problem from the other person's perspective. After that you should take actions quickly to remove the complaint, either by making polite, patient and detailed explanations, or making swift, effective corrections and remedies.^⑩ But whatever you intend to do you must keep the guest informed of the measures or actions you plan to take and when you will carry them out.

2. Language Skill 语言技能

A tour guide should first have the common language that his customers use. When you have the sufficient language skill, your customers will feel that they can share the atmosphere easily.

Language plays an important part in a culture. One's cultural background determines his thinking style.^⑪ Our native language is Chinese, so our thinking style is different from the English-speaking people. You need to practise the corresponding language until you can use it to the satisfaction of your tourists.

Being a tour guide, one will have a lot of chances to talk in public. So you needs public speaking skill. If you are so frightened when you stand up, it is not very good because nobody wants to see a frightened face with irrelevant manners. You are required to look at the listeners evenly; your voice should be clear and loud enough for everybody to hear. Your pace of speaking is as important as your

volume, because if you talk too fast people can not follow. Additionally, your facial expression, gesture, posture and eye contact will all help the listener to understand you.^⑫

3. Listening Skill 聆听技巧

When guests do the talking, you need to have listening skill. Especially, when guests talk about the problems, you should be very careful, otherwise you would not be able to know what has happened to them.

4. Observing Skill 观察力

To do a satisfactory work, you are required to have the skill of observing people's behavior. With this skill, you can know the interests and needs of the guests according to their age, occupation and appearance.

III. Knowledge 知识

In our work of tourism, knowledge is vitally important. In order to make customers satisfied, you need to know almost everything. Here, we say "everything" to mean to have a general knowledge of all subjects as much as possible. The reason for it is that tourists are people who have different interests, they are also curious about China. To be a qualified tour guide, you should definitely have an adequate knowledge of the product. In tourist business, the term "the product knowledge" means the knowledge of the country. It involves many aspects such as the political and governmental structure of the country, the geographic and historic knowledge of

the country, the country's economy and social scene, etc.

1. Political and Governmental Structure 政策知识

Some tourists might be much interested in our social systems and our governmental structures, such as the People's Congress^⑬ and its function and the election system. The reason is that our country has a different social system, governmental structure and election system from them.

2. Physical Aspects of the Country 地理知识

The term of "physical aspects of the country" refers to the geographic knowledge of the country, for instance, the area, the size, the river, the mountains, the scenic spots, our soils, climate, natural resources and so on.

3. Economic Development 经济知识

Some businessmen appreciate the topic of China's economic development. The topic might involve agriculture, such as farming of wheat, rice, sugar, cotton, cattle, since they want to know the life of the Chinese people. Sometimes the tourists will ask how many airlines come to China and all the railway network^⑭ in China.

4. Social Scene 社会知识

The social scene includes medical care of Chinese people, national welfare, family planning policy, educational system, and the housing problem.^⑮ Our policy for family planning is a very popular topic to the tourists to China, because China has one quarter of the world population. In short, they would like to know anything dea-

ling with social development.

5. History 历史知识

China enjoys the longest history in the world. A lot of people would like to know our history. To be a good tour guide you should be able to tell the different dynasties in Chinese history, especially, the history dates back from the Tang Dynasty to Qing Dynasty.

6. Religion 宗教知识

When you take the tourists to visit temples, you have to tell them the stories of Buddhism and Taoism. Therefore, you must learn the knowledge about them in advance.

7. Special Topics 热点话题

The special topics are important to your customers. For example, the special topic of China at the moment is the modernization program, the special economic zones,^⑩ the new policies to farmers, and perhaps all the changes in China. Current news is important too. If you are with an American, and you know that American President is coming to China for a visit shortly, you might like to talk about his visit and the importance of it. So our topics depend on news. In order to have up-to-date topics, the tour guides should be up-to-date first.

As for personal quality, one should develop GOOD PERSONALITY and GOOD MANNERS.

I. Good Personality 优良的品格

The first impression is vitally important. It is based on what tourists see and hear of you, or what you do, what you say and how you say it. Careful attention to the following factors will help you make favorable impressions and help you serve more effectively.

1. Health 健康

Health affects our look and manner. Therefore all tour guides have to be fit. A fit man is best able to be enthusiastic and he is able to be alert and keen and be on the job constantly. All guests want to see a healthy face; nobody wants to look at a gloomy and tired looking face. The state of health is of tremendous importance to your guiding work.

2. Kindness and Friendliness 善良友好

You must be kind and friendly to your guests. Usually, we show our kindness and friendliness by smiling. But it is not enough for a tour guide. You still have a lot of other ways to show your kindness and friendliness such as nice gestures, intonation of the language, friendly eye contacts and so on.

3. Understanding 善解人意

Try to understand tourists from their points of view. The reason is that they have different culture from yours. Try to think as if you were one of them.

4. Punctuality 准时

In any business, punctuality is vital. We should understand that punctuality is one part of our honesty. If you are not punctual, it means you do not care much of these people, and do not show respect to them.

5. Responsibility 负责

Responsibility is the first prerequisite of a tour guide. When you are taking a group of tourists out, you are the leader. They will feel helpless unless you are responsible.

6. Determination 果断

Determination shows your ability to lead tour group. If by any chance, an accident happens, you are required to find the best way to solve the problem as quickly as possible.

7. Lively and Out-going 活泼开朗

You will meet a lot of people on your work. This working situation demands that you have an extrovert personality. Only with lively and out-going personality can you deal with foreign tourists friendly and sociably.

II. Good Manners 礼貌礼节

China is a well-known country of courtesy. In the work with foreigners, you should keep this valuable cultural heritage, and still be polite about other cultures and customs, treating all our cus-

tomers in a friendly way.

1. Attire 服饰

When meeting the guests, you should get properly dressed because it is likely to be formal. For men, the national costumes, suits and all other kinds of national clothes are considered as correct. For ladies, national clothes, suit, blouse, and Chinese summer long dress are all correct attire. It should be mentioned that on formal occasions casual attire is not acceptable, such as jeans and sneaker. When you are leading tour group out, casual clothes,^⑦ comfortable and durable shoes will fit.

When you are on tours, you should pay enough attention to your physical appearance. The clothes are required to be clean, natural, pressed, but should not be ostentatious. Shirts must be clean, especially the wristband and collar. In summer, if you wear a long sleeved shirt, the bottom of it should be kept in the trousers. The trouser legs should never be rolled up. You should polish your shoes before you go to work. At work, non-collar shirts^⑧ and short pants^⑨ should not be worn. Miniskirts are unacceptable for ladies on business.

On all social occasions, when you enter rooms, including a restaurant, house or office, you are supposed to take off your hat, overcoat, raincoat, windbreaker and overshoes. Men never wear hats indoors. Overcoats are taken off inside a house. When the host offers to take your coat, hand it over, and say, "Thank you."

2. Greeting 问候

When you meet your group, initially, you should do self-intro-