

A Swazi cultural tour

A WebQuest for Course T100: Using effective communication skills
in tourism and travel



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Introduction

In this activity you will work as a team involved in solving a communication problem in tour guiding. You will collaboratively select the best option on how to deal with the problem. Then you will complete the task by responding in writing.

The Task

You are a tour guide with tourists inside Ekhaya Cultural Tour bus when the coach breaks down. The tourists will miss an entire day of their tour and the tour company will have to make contingency plans

to accommodate them overnight in a hotel.

The next day, a relief coach arrives and the passengers have to change coaches. This involves a great deal of hassle and many of the customers complain about having to transfer their luggage onto the new coach.

Upon their return home, many of the coach passengers complain to the tour operator about the tour and make clear their intention to put their grievances down on paper.

The tour administrator discusses the problems encountered on the tour with you and driver on your return home. She suggests one of the following options for action:

(a) Write a standard letter of apology to send to all the customers. Accept that the firm should not have left passengers to transfer their own luggage. Accept responsibility for the coach breakdown, but stress that all the company's vehicles are well-maintained and checked before each tour commences. Accept that this is no consolation to those customers who may feel that their holiday was ruined as a result of the delayed journey. Offer free places on a similarly-priced tour in the future.

(b) Find out from the driver and courier which passengers were most vocal in their complaints. Write to these customers only, offering a discount on a future tour, the date of which will be decided at the tour company's discretion.

(c) Write to all customers blaming the garage mechanics who carry out maintenance on the company's fleet of coaches. Give the garage's address to the customers and suggest they contact them directly to complain. In addition, ask the customers to reimburse the tour operator for the cost of the overnight accommodation arranged when the coach broke down.

(d) Make no effort to contact the customers in the hope that the fuss will die down. Cancel all remaining similar tours, as they're too much hassle for the firm, involving too many aspects that could go wrong.

Questions

(i) Which is the best response to the situation? Justify your option by engaging in an online discussion with a peer student, based on at least three techniques to establish rapport with tourists.

(ii) Carry out the task you have selected individually in writing, not exceeding 3 pages – be it through a letter, written transcript for a telephone call, media statement or any other communication means of your choice.

Guidelines

The task requires you to work collaboratively to:

- solve a communication problem;
- analyse a complexity;
- craft a persuasive message;
- process and *transform* the information you have gathered.

You will engage in group discussion based on the webquest found in a course web page available at: [http://wikieducator.org/Course online assessment activities: on effective communication skills for travel and tourism](http://wikieducator.org/Course_online_assessment_activities:_on_effective_communication_skills_for_travel_and_tourism). You will then create your final product using the same wikieducator tool or any other collaborative writing tool of your choice.

The Process

To accomplish the task, you may follow the steps suggested below:

1. First you'll be assigned to work in a team of 3 students.
2. Once you've each selected an option, you can discuss as a team why it is the best option.
3. Then you will carry out the task you have selected to write a letter, or transcript for a telephone call or a media statement.

You will access the following on-line resources:

1. <http://www.wikieducator.org/VUSSC/Content/Tourism> Unit 3 on Effective communication skills
2. <http://www.welcometoswaziland.com/> for background information on Swazi tourism
3. <http://gwutou.hostcentric.com/tourism/index.php> an additional resource entitled: Tourism Snapshot of an industry to give a broad understanding of travel and tourism industry. This additional resource is provided by the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management and the International Institute of Tourism Studies at The George Washington University. Available from: <http://gwutou.hostcentric.com/tourism/index.php>

Evaluation

Your performance will be assessed for group effort and individual work using the assessment rubric below:

Criteria for responding to situation	Beginning (1-10 points)	Developing (11-20 points)	Exemplary (21-30 points)
A. Response Selection and Justification	Least plausible response selected. No effort to show problem solving skills, collaborative skills and to individually construct new knowledge.	Either best response not well justified or a good response selected with somewhat adequate justification. Average effort to meet desired discussion outcomes.	Best response selected with adequate justification which demonstrates desired outcomes of problem solving skills, collaborative skills and construction of new knowledge

<p><i>B. Identified techniques:</i></p> <p><i>-To focus on issue and to keep it impersonal</i></p> <p><i>-To make effort to remain calm</i></p> <p><i>-To take responsibility for problem</i></p> <p><i>-To show empathy</i></p> <p><i>-To make effort towards fixing the problem</i></p> <p><i>-Any other emerging techniques identified during online student discussions</i></p>	<p>The response does not demonstrate application of principles on effective communication techniques in difficult circumstances</p>	<p>The response demonstrates some limited effort in the application of basic principles for effective communication</p>	<p>The response adequately applies most of the techniques of effective communication based on identified principles and extends the discussion through emergent techniques in different contexts</p>
<p>C. Task presentation through structure and language used in letter or media statement or transcript of telephone call</p>	<p>Slovenly presented work with total lack of structure and little attention to language</p>	<p>Structure developed reasonably well, with some language errors</p>	<p>Well- structured, well-developed written work with apt usage of language</p>
<p>D. Tone of written work</p>	<p>Tone used inappropriately and not persuasive</p>	<p>Tone makes effort towards persuasiveness, but not consistent</p>	<p>Tone persuasive enough to create rapport with offended tourists</p>

Conclusion

I hope you have found the task challenging and of benefit as you will apply the skills to your daily work experiences in travel and tourism.

Credits

This assessment task contributes towards your course credits as follows:

- Graded discussion represents 10% of your grade
- Final written assignment contributes 20% towards your grade