

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH TOURISTS

TUTOR'S GUIDE



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Contents

The Tutor's guide

Using the Tutor's guide

Purpose

Adult learning

Design

Resources

Helping the participants with language

Module 1 What is communication?

Module 2 Good communication in the tourism industry

Module 3 What to say to a tourist

Module 4 How to make a tourist feel welcome

Module 5 Talking on the telephone

Module 6 Communication in problem solving

Module 7 Networking

The Tutor's guide

Using the Tutor's guide

The Tutor's guide contains teaching material and resources, together with suggestions on how to use these, so that you can lead the participants through this course. Parts of the Participant's Workbook have been included in the Tutor's guide so that you can see it easily.

Purpose

This course aims to get participants to think about the importance of communicating effectively with tourists, both from the tourists' viewpoint and their own.

As participants go through the course they will learn what communication is, why good communication is important, and how to communicate effectively in many situations.

Adult learning

Whether adults have had much formal education or not, they have a great deal of knowledge and skills through their life experience. You should draw on this when you are teaching adult groups. Adults like to relate what they are learning to their experience. Talking about their experience and feelings is important.

Sometimes they will be shy when you first ask them to take part in discussions or to talk about themselves. You may need to lead with questions or be prepared to talk about your own experiences to start a discussion. You may also find that letting people talk quietly in twos or threes before they talk in front of the whole group is a good way to start.

Discussions are important for adult learning. Asking questions and looking for solutions to problems are good ways of helping adults to learn. It is more important for adults to learn by working things out for themselves than to have someone teach them. The tutor is a guide rather than a teacher.

Above all, make every person feel that their thoughts, feelings, and experiences are important. People will then become more confident at taking part in group discussions and activities.

Design

This course is intended as a basic introduction for people who may not know much about tourists or ways of communicating with tourists. The language, activities and exercises in the workbook are designed for participants with limited formal reading and writing skills.

The course consists of three parts:

This tutor's guide
Participant's workbook
Adaptation guide

Resources

Your tutor's pack includes a number of resources.

- Videotapes
- Photographs and pictures
- Posters
- Case studies (audio and written)
- Tourist brochures, travel magazines
- Tourism statistics
- Telephone message pads.

These are explained in the Modules.

You may also be able to ask some local tourist business people to help you. They may be able to give you information about their business. Ask if they can come to talk to your group about their experiences and provide extra local resources.

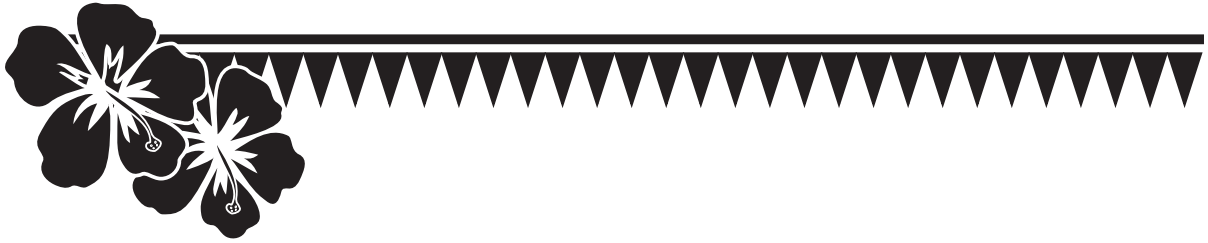
Helping the participants with language

Most people who communicate with tourists need to be able to speak English. The Participant's Workbook uses English. The participants you work with might find some of the English in the course difficult, so you might need to help them.

Plan for difficult language. Before you start the course, read through the Participant's Workbook. Think about these questions.

- What language (words, sentences, ideas) will be most difficult? For example, the participants need to understand the word 'expectations' — will this be a difficult word?
- How can you explain the difficult language using other English words? For example, 'expectations' are beliefs about something that will happen. Another example: 'identify' means saying something's name — saying who someone is or what something is.
- Is there anything you can do to help the participants understand the difficult English? For example, can you:
 - Use an example or a story to explain? ('Yesterday, I had an expectation that it would rain. My expectation was realistic — it did rain today!' Another example: 'The police officer asked me to identify the man who took my money. That means I had to tell the police which man took my money.')
 - Draw pictures to explain? (For example, to explain 'groom' you could draw a picture of a well groomed person, with neat hair, face and clothes, and a badly groomed person, with untidy hair, dirty face and messy clothes)
 - Use actions to explain? (For example, you could show the actions for groom)
- If the participants don't understand, how can you explain the difficult language using the participants' first language? (Try to explain it in English first, though. The participants probably need practice trying to understand difficult words — most English-speaking tourists will use some difficult language!)

If you think a new word is useful for the participants, use it often. Tell the participants that they should try to remember the word. Ask the participants to practise using it in a sentence and in their role-plays. If you don't think a new word is useful, help the participants understand it, but tell them they don't need to spend time learning it.



MODULES



Module 1

What is communication?

Communication is something we do every day, so how we communicate is very important. Communication occurs when a message passes from the sender to the receiver and is clearly understood.

This module looks at what communication is, and how people communicate.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to

- identify communication topics
- define communication
- use a communication model
- identify appropriate verbal communication
- identify appropriate non-verbal communication
- identify barriers in communication and ways to overcome them.

Resource

Video of conversation barriers. This will be used for Workbook Activity 1.4.

Communication

Ask the participants to think about what happens when they talk with someone. Talk about the first two steps in the process:

- (a) You share an idea with someone or give him or her a message

- (b) The other person listens, understands and might respond.

What are the things that you usually talk about?

Discuss with the participants the different things they might talk about with different people. For example, if you are talking with

- a friend: a joke
- your children: maybe you want to teach them how to swim
- a shopkeeper: you might be asking which goods are available
- your brothers or sisters: maybe about family sharing
- a visitor from another village: how good your village sports team is.
- a tourist from another country: places to see or things to do.

Workbook Activity

Now ask participants to do Workbook Activity 1.1, to find things they talk about with different people, then define 'communication'.

Communication Model

Talk to the participants about how we can use a communication model to help us understand how to communicate. Six elements in the communication model are:

- Sender
- Message
- Receiver
- Barriers
- Feedback
- Form of communication.

Use a blackboard or large piece of paper to draw the model on the next page. Explain and discuss each element as you add it to the diagram. Ask the participants to give you examples of each element.

Communication model

Insert communication model picture here from the Graphics folder on the CD.

Use file :
comm_model_tutor.bmp

OR

comm_model_tutor.eps

An explanation of each element:

- **Sender:** The person sending the message.
- **Message:** The idea that the sender passes on to the receiver.
- **Receiver:** The person who gets the message.
- **Barriers:** Things that cause misunderstandings or mistakes in communication.

- **Feedback:** The part of the response by the receiver that is sent back to the sender.
- **Form of communication:** The way the message is sent, for example, face to face, telephone, in writing.

Workbook Activity

Get the participants to do Workbook Activity 1.2 by identifying the six elements of the communication model.

Different ways of communicating

Discuss with the participants two different ways of communication:

- (1) Verbal communication
- (2) Non-verbal communication.

Verbal communication

Verbal communication uses spoken words.

Talk about two examples of verbal communication:

- (1) Talking face to face
- (2) Talking on the telephone.

Ask participants to think about what words they might use and how they might say them when they share a joke with a friend. Now ask them to compare that with talking to their boss. How does the communication change? How is talking to a tourist different from talking to, for example, a younger brother? When they talk to a customer, especially one who might not speak the same language as a first language, they have to choose words that the other person will understand — no slang — but still with a friendly manner. They should be careful with the speed they talk, pitch and tone. Get the participants to help you draw up some ‘rules’ for good communication. Here are some examples:

When we communicate we should use:

- the right words for the situation or person
- an open, friendly manner

- the right — pitch, tone, speed
- no slang or other words that might be misunderstood or might cause offence.

Workbook Activity

Now get the participants to do Workbook Activity 1.3 to show that they can identify appropriate ways to talk.

Activity Answers

- ✓ be open and friendly
- x be rude
- ✓ use the right tone and speed
- x speak very fast
- ✓ use words the listener will understand
- ✓ use swear words

Telephone conversation

Good communication on the telephone helps to create a good image of you and your organisation.

Workbook Activity

Read the following conversation to show how important it is to use thinking and feedback skills when answering the telephone to make sure a message is understood. Ask the participants to complete Workbook Activity 1.4 to identify the six communication elements in the conversation.

Insert picture here from the Graphics folder on the CD.

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cartoon.bmp OR cartoon.eps

Activity

Ask the participants to stand in a line and play 'Chinese Whispers'. Tell the person at the front of the line a story — maybe two to five sentences long. Make sure nobody else can hear you speak (whisper!). The front person turns and whispers the story to the next person. He or she turns and whispers it to the next person, etc. As they whisper the message to each other, make a loud distracting noise (sing?) to create a 'barrier' to communication. At the end of the game, the last person tells the story to the group. Is it still the same story? Discuss how the story changed, and why.

Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is the way in which we send a message to someone without using words (speaking).

How do we communicate without speaking?

- Body language
- Written communication

Body language

Body language is communication using parts of the body.

There are many ideas, thoughts and feeling that are communicated without words. Discuss with the participants things that could be communicated without words, and the ways they could be communicated. Talk also about how most body language (like smiling and crying) is the same in every culture, but some body language has different meanings in different cultures. For example, in many Asian countries it is polite to use both hands to give something (like money or a business card) to someone else. In some countries it is rude to touch a stranger while you talk to them, but in other countries, touching someone on the arm or shoulder when you talk is friendly.

Workbook Activity

When you have finished discussing the messages they can give without words, tell the participants to do Workbook Activity 1.5 to identify the messages given by body language.

Activity answers

- x* Poking tongue
- ✓ Thumb up
- ✓ Smile
- ✓ Hug
- x* Thumb down
- x* Frown
- x* Folded arms
- ✓ Waving

Written Communication

Written communication could be, for example, a letter, newspaper, or fax. You read a letter and (hopefully) understand the message, or you write a letter or note and hope that the other person gets it and understands it. Discuss with participants the forms in which they might receive or send written communication, and discuss with them the need to make written communication clear.

Barriers to communication

Barriers are the things that stop your message being understood.

For example, someone tells a joke, but instead of laughing, the listeners look angry and walk away. What went wrong?

Ask the participants to explain why this might happen.

Maybe the listeners did not understand the joke. Maybe they did not hear the punch line (the funniest part of the joke). Ask the participants to think of other reasons.

Something that causes misunderstanding is called a *communication barrier*.

Here are some of the barriers that can stop a message being understood:

- too much information
- poor listening skills
- poor speaking skills
- noise
- cultural difference/accent difference
- listener's mood at the time.

Discussion Activity

Ask the participants to talk about the following, then report back:

- (1) Have a conversation with a friend and find your main barrier in communication.
- (2) How would you overcome a communication barrier caused by
 - (a) different accent?
 - (b) surrounding noise?

Workbook Activity

Play the video showing conversation barriers and discuss with the participants the barriers they saw and the solutions they could use. Ask the participants to do Activity 1.6.

Module 2

Good Communication in the Tourism Industry

Good communication is important because it prevents misunderstandings and mistakes. This is very important in the tourism industry, where the risks and costs of misunderstanding are high.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to

- demonstrate good communication skills
- identify the possible results of poor communication
- explain the importance of good communication in the tourism industry.

Resource

Videotape and handouts of the story of Pea.

A communication gone wrong

The resource for this module tells the story of a communication that went wrong. Play the videotape to the participants, then hand out the written version of the story.

The story

The village of Pea was very excited. The tour guide had telephoned, and Mary had taken down the message that 10 tourists were coming off the cruise ship for lunch at 2 o'clock.

The whole village got involved in making umukai (underground oven cooking). Food was gathered and put in the pits, the floorshow party gathered, work stopped for the day.

At 10 o'clock, a minibus stopped at the village, and two (2) people got out. They looked very surprised at the huge feast half prepared and the floorshow practising.

'Where are all the other tourists?' asked Mary.

'This is all there is', said the tour guide. 'I said 2 people for 10 o'clock!'

You can see from this story what can happen when communication in the tourism industry is not good. The hosts are unhappy; the guests are unhappy and will not want to pay for a feast they did not ask for. Nobody will want to do it again.

Now ask the participants the following questions. Some possible answers are given below. Use these as a means to help participants find their own answers.

- (1) What went wrong?
- (2) What should have been done?
- (3) What were the results of poor communication?
- (4) How could the problem be solved?
- (5) What could be improved for next time?

(a) What went wrong?

In our story, poor communication happened and the numbers got mixed up:

10 at 2 o'clock instead of 2 at 10 o'clock.

Poor communication often happens, not just in the tourism industry.

(b) What should have been done?

Mary should have checked the message with the caller to make sure she got it right.

(c) What were the results of poor communication?

- loss of income
- unhappy customers
- unhappy hosts
- no return business
- poor business reputation
- waste of food
- waste of time.

(d) How could the problem be solved?

The two tourists were there early, so something had to be done. Perhaps someone could have explained the problem and organised some activities to show them the village and keep them busy while a quick lunch was cooked.

(e) How could things be improved?

You always need to be flexible (ready to change) because things can and do go wrong, and you must think of ways to fix them. Always

- make sure that the message you get is correct
- have other options ready
- explain the situation to the customer if things do not go right
- make sure that the customer is looked after.

Workbook Activity

Ask participants to do Workbook Activity 2.1 to show that they understand how important good communication is.

Activity answers

A good communicator

- ✓ speaks clearly
- ✓ listens carefully to what is being said
- ✓ checks that the message is right
- x says too much, too quickly.

The results of good communication are that

- ✓ the message is heard correctly
- ✓ the message is understood correctly
- x there is information overload (too much information).
- ✓ the message is clarified (checked and made clear)

Good communication is important for tourism because

- x all tourists are rich.
- ✓ messages about tours and travel are important
- ✓ if you get the message right, you will avoid costs and bad feelings
- ✓ you need to listen more carefully to tourists than to locals because they may have different expectations (ideas about how things should be done)

Why is good communication important?

Discuss with the participants why good communication in tourism is important — for them, their family and /or village and for their visitors. Discuss with them how they would feel if they were invited to someone else's place and then ignored or made to feel unwelcome.

Workbook Activity

Ask participants to do Workbook Activity 2.2, and write down a communication problem they have solved. When they have finished writing, they should give a short talk in front of you and the other participants. If they are shy about talking, you should encourage them. Speaking in front of groups of people is an important skill for communicating with tourists.

Module 3

What to say to a tourist

Communicating with a tourist is different from talking with someone local. This is because the tourist has been travelling from one place to another and has a variety of expectations.

It is often difficult to know what to say to a tourist who is a stranger, especially a stranger who may know nothing about your country and may not know your language. In this module, participants will define what a tourist is, discuss the kinds of things tourists may be interested in, set some 'rules' for discussion, and practise greeting a tourist.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, the participants should be able to

- define what a tourist is
- identify tourist expectations
- know what to talk about with tourists
- communicate host community expectations to tourists.

Resources

- video of host greeting tourist
- leaflets of local tourism product — events, handicrafts, hotels, etc.

What is a tourist?

Help the participants to define what a tourist is. Here are some ideas you can use. An international tourist is a person who comes from overseas for a holiday, travels from one place to another, and stays there for a short period. For most tourists, their main purpose is to have a holiday, and not find a job to earn money. Discuss with the participants the kinds of things that a person on holiday might want to do in their area.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to do Activity 3.1, to show that they can identify what a tourist is and is not.

Activity answers

A tourist is someone who

- ✓ goes from one place to another
- x does not travel
- ✓ stays for a short time only
- x stays for a year or more
- x comes here to study
- ✓ does not earn money
- x is involved in business

The local community expectations of a tourist

Discuss with the participants what they expect a tourist to be, what they expect a tourist to want to do, and any rules or behaviours that they might want a tourist to follow. Participants may have some ideas about tourists that may not always be correct. For example, they might think of tourists as being

- rich
- strange
- white
- ignorant (not knowing anything) about the local culture and customs.

Talk about different sorts of tourists, such as

- families
- backpackers
- honeymooners
- tour groups.

Discuss with them the need to be open in their ideas about what tourists are, where they come from and what knowledge they might have about the host country. It is important that participants decide what is acceptable behaviour in tourists and know polite ways to

inform tourists about what should and should not be done. You could make up some 'rules' in the group.

What to say to a tourist

Participants need to learn that, as the hosts, they need to greet tourists and help them feel welcome. They may feel shy or feel they do not have language skills. Discuss with the participants ways they can feel confident and not shy with strangers they have not met before. Help them find ways to practise their foreign language and public speaking skills.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to do Activity 3.2. Play the video to the participants. This video shows a host greeting a visitor to his country and making him feel welcome. Draw the attention of the participants to the elements that the host uses in his welcome talk to

- ask the tourists what they want
- tell the tourists what they can do
- ask the tourists about themselves and their interests
- tell tourists about local customs, including any special rules for your village or culture
- be helpful and show that you want to give information.

Now ask the participants to find a partner and role-play (act as) a host greeting a visitor. They must do this twice, so that each participant gets to play host. The important part of this activity is that the 'host' uses the elements listed above in his or her welcome.

You may like to observe, then invite the best role play pair to act in front of the group. You may need to encourage them if they are shy. Standing up and speaking in front of other people is an important communication skill in the tourism industry.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to do Activity 3.3. They should talk to their friends and relations and ask them what they expect tourists might want to do and what they should and should not do.

Check with the participants what they found out next time you meet.

Module 4

How to make a tourist feel welcome

Tourists usually meet many people during their trip. When they come to your place, they may be tired from travelling or unsure about the new environment.

Hospitality is more than just knowing the right things to say. It means making tourists feel welcome by developing and using appropriate

- skills
- knowledge
- attitudes.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to

- explain why it is important to warmly welcome tourists
- describe the needs and expectations of tourists
- demonstrate how to welcome tourists
- demonstrate good personal presentation and grooming.

Resources

For this module, you will need to play the video about a host greeting a visitor again. This time, participants will view it from the perspective of how to make a visitor feel welcome.

The workbook also contains a personal grooming checklist.

Know your customers

Every day you may deal with many tourists. It is important that you identify the type of customers, and the products and services they need.

Types of tourists

Tourists may be

- internal (inside) tourists visiting from a neighbouring island or town
- international tourists from overseas.

Discuss with the participants the kinds of people they might meet as tourists.

Here are some of the examples from Module 3. You and the participants may think of others.

- Families
- Backpackers (people staying in cheap hotels)
- Honeymooners (people who are newly married)
- Tour groups.

How would their behaviours and needs be different?

Tourist needs and expectations

Discuss with the participants the fact that tourists will have a number of expectations when they visit your country. Some of these expectations will be different from local expectations. Talk about how these expectations might be different. Talk about how the participants might have different expectations when they are visiting somewhere than the expectations they might have when they are at home.

Here are some headings for expectations of tourists:

- information
- adventure experiences
- entertainment
- quality service and facilities

- food
- transport
- accommodation
- host knowledge of the tourism ‘product’.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to do Activity 4.1. This activity helps them to define the kinds of expectations a tourist might have.

For each, ask the participants for some details (for example, what kind of accommodation?).

Quality service

Discuss what is meant by ‘quality service’. It means that you should try to meet or do better than the customer’s expectations of

- product knowledge
- skills
- attitude.

Product knowledge

Participants need a high level of product knowledge so that they can answer questions from tourists about what there is to see and do, where to eat, where to stay, and so on. Discuss with them what they already know about local tourism, where they can get more information, and how they can get it.

Skills

Discuss with participants what skills they might need so they can be comfortable when they talk with tourists. Skills will be discussed in more detail later in the course.

Attitude

The attitude of anyone dealing with tourists should be that their customers are honoured guests and that all guests should be treated equally well. This may be difficult with some guests, but the attitude of wanting to provide service must remain the same. Discuss with participants what this might mean in practice.

Workbook Activity

Get the participants to do Workbook Activity 4.2 to show they understand what is meant by product knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Activity Answers

- S** Being polite to guests
- A** Having a smile that comes from the heart
- PK** Knowing the local bus timetable
- S** Greeting a tourist in their own language
- S** Using and remembering guests' names
- A** Being positive about your country and your workplace
- A** Keeping the place clean
- S** Making appropriate eye contact
- PK** Telling guests about events
- PK** Providing a range of brochures
- A** Treating all tourists as welcome guests
- PK** Advising guests on shopping

Being a welcoming host

In Module 3, participants looked at **what** they might say to a tourist they had never met before. In this module, they will look at the same video, and, this time, identify **how** to say these things to make them feel welcome as a guest.

Workbook Activity

Play the video again and this time, ask the participants to identify the following aspects of being a welcoming host. This list is in Workbook Activity 4.3.

- A warm welcome to tourists
- Introduction by host of self first

- Friendly and polite attitude
- Positive body language.

When they have viewed the video, break them into pairs of ‘host’ and ‘tourist’ and get them to role play the skills and attitude of being a welcoming host. The role play should be done twice, so that each person plays host.

Personal presentation and grooming

Personal presentation and grooming give a strong message to tourists and other customers about the place where you work and who you are. Cleanliness and health (hygiene) are very important. They can be a life or death matter. Not only that, but good hygiene is good business. Customers will be offended and angry if people communicate a poor attitude by having poor hygiene.

Discuss with the participants what personal grooming is, and why it is so important, especially when dealing with visitors from overseas. Here are some examples of personal grooming. You and the participants may think of others.

Personal presentation and grooming is made up of having clean and tidy

- clothes
- shoes
- grooming (hairstyle, fingernails, makeup, and so on).

Health and hygiene is also important and includes

- Hands
- Hair care
- Daily bathing
- Dental care.

Hands: Of all parts of your body, your hands need the most frequent washing. Think of all the things your hands touch each day.

Hair care: Hair collects dirt quickly. Wash your hair regularly to keep it looking and smelling good.

Daily bathing: Daily washing and wearing clean clothes will keep you smelling good.

Dental care: Brushing your teeth after every meal is still the best way to have a clean mouth. Bad breath can be very unpleasant.

Workbook Activity

Get the participants to read through the personal grooming checklist in Workbook Activity 4.4. Tell them to keep it safe and use it whenever they are working with tourists or other customers.

If it is suitable for your group, you may like to use the checklist for a personal presentation inspection. You would need to warn participants the day before you hold the inspection.

This is the participants' checklist.

When I am working with other people, whether they are tourists or locals, I make sure that I

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| | (✓) |
| Bathe or shower daily | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wear clean, well-ironed clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have clean shoes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keep my hair clean and tidy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cover any sores or wounds | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keep my fingernails short and clean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't cough or spit anywhere near food or other people | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't smoke near customers | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't scratch or pick sores | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wash my hands often | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Brush my teeth often | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stand straight and do not slouch | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Module 5

Talking on the telephone

The telephone is often used in the tourism industry for sending and receiving messages. It is not always good for communication because

- messages might not be understood
- messages might be forgotten or not passed on.

In this module, participants will learn how to use a telephone for effective communication.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to

- Explain why good telephone communication is important
- Answer a telephone appropriately (well)
- Make a telephone call appropriately.

Resources

Video clip showing good practice in answering and making a phone call

Set of telephone message pads

Why good communication on the telephone is important

Discuss with participants the importance of receiving and giving good messages by phone. Here are some ideas to start the discussion:

- first contact — first impression: the customer decides whether you are a good business or not the first time they talk to you
- the way you answer the telephone creates an image of the business

- good use of the phone saves time and money for the business and for the customer.

Participants should be able to identify the two main uses of the telephone:

- to answer the incoming telephone calls
- to make a call.

Workbook Activity

Ask participants to do Workbook Activity 5.1 to show they know why good telephone practice is important.

Activity Answers

- T** The first time someone hears you, they should think you are friendly and good at your job.
- F** If the caller has rung the wrong number, it is a good chance for a chat.
- T** The way you answer a telephone gives the listener an image of your business.
- T** Good use of the telephone saves costs.
- F** Answering the phone on the first ring shows you are not busy.
- T** Using the telephone can save time.

How to answer a telephone call

Workbook Activity

Show the participants the video about good practice in answering a telephone call. Discuss the video and help them to see appropriate ways to answer the phone and take messages. The instructions are in Workbook Activity 5.2.

Here are some suggestions.

Equipment: Make sure you have:

- (6) Pen, paper, message pad near the phone
- (7) A list of numbers you call often

Answering the phone:

- (1) Answer quickly — within 3 rings.
- (2) Say the name of the business and your name (for example, ‘Hello, this is the Beachfront Hotel, William speaking. How can I help you?’).
- (8) Answer questions positively — don’t just say, ‘Don’t know’.
- (9) Sound friendly and helpful.

Taking a message:

- (10) If the person asked for is out, ask if you can help or take a message.
- (11) Listen carefully and make sure that the message is correct.
- (12) Politely ask the caller to repeat the message if you aren’t sure that you have understood it.
- (13) Write the message down, then repeat it back to the caller, to check.
- (14) Write the date and time of call on the message pad.
- (15) Get the name and number of the caller. Repeat the number to check.
- (16) Thank the caller and wait until they have ended the call before you hang up.
- (17) Make sure that the message is delivered as soon as possible.

Making a call:

- (1) Check the telephone number before you ring.
- (2) Say your name.
- (3) Check you are talking to the right person.
- (4) Give your message clearly and politely.
- (5) End the call politely.

Workbook Activity 5.3

At the end of the discussion, ask the participants to write in their workbooks at least 8 rules they should follow when receiving a telephone call and 5 rules to follow when making a call. (The

participants could do this in a group: ask one person in each group to be the 'secretary' or writer.)

Message Pad

A message pad is a printed pad designed for taking telephone messages. The message pad usually has the spaces for the following information:

- (1) Caller's name
- (2) Date and time
- (3) Message
- (4) Signature of the message receiver

Hand out to participants 3 or 4 copies each of the telephone message pad.

Telephone Message Pad	
Date: _____	Time: _____
To: _____	
From: _____	
Message:	

Signature of Receiver: _____	

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to find a partner and role-play using their 'telephone rules' (Workbook Activity 5.3) to practise making and receiving telephone calls. They should use their message pads to write messages.

They must do this twice, so that each participant gets to play message receiver. The important part of this activity is that the participants practise their 'telephone rules'.

For extra practice, tell the caller in each pair to pretend to be

- in a hurry
- difficult to understand
- angry.

You might like to watch, then invite the best role play pair to present their role play before the group.

Module 6

Communication in problem solving

Dealing with tourists is not always easy. Sometimes they may not understand you or you might not understand them, and you both might feel embarrassed.

Sometimes they might end up doing the wrong thing because they do not know any better, or they might just be a difficult person.

This module will help participants use communication skills to solve problems between hosts and tourists.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to

- deal with customer complaints
- deal with difficult customers in appropriate ways
- solve communication problems using the six-step model.

Resources

You can use the wall chart provided, with the headings of the six-step problem-solving process on it, to record group exercises on problem solving.

Problem solving

Discuss with the participants why good communication is essential for problem solving. Here are some ideas. For each idea, try to think of examples, or ask the participants to give examples from their experience.

Why customers complain

Customers might complain about

- food
- uncleaned rooms
- delays and cancellation
- bad service
- discomfort.

Sometimes, they may complain because there has been a **misunderstanding**. They might not have understood you, or you might not have understood them.

It is your duty as a host to try and make the customer as comfortable as possible.

In dealing with customers' complaints, you **NEVER**

- argue with the customer
- talk down to the customer
- blame anyone.

What is a difficult customer?

Sometimes, whatever you do, the customer will not be happy. You may simply have a difficult customer. This is one who is a challenge to serve because of their behaviour. They may be

- angry
- rude
- fussy (nothing is right, everything is always not good enough)
- affected by alcohol (drunk)
- unwell
- tired.

How to deal with a difficult customer:

- Be patient.

- Provide the best service you can even though the behaviour is difficult.

Complaints about poor service may happen as a result of

- bad communication
- misunderstanding
- bad management
- not enough training
- different expectations.

Workbook Activity

Ask participants to do Workbook Activity 6.1, to show they know the right ways to deal with a difficult customer.

Activity Answers

If you see a tourist doing something wrong, you should

- x* Move away from them
- ✓ Politely explain what to do
- x* Ignore the wrong behaviour
- x* Get angry with them
- ✓ Get someone to help if you cannot explain yourself

If you see a customer get angry

- x* Tell them to be quiet
- ✓ Ask them to explain the problem
- x* Ignore them
- ✓ Listen carefully
- ✓ Identify and fix the problem

Solving a communication problem

In the tourism industry, complaints and communication problems must be solved so the tourists and the hosts are not embarrassed or harmed. Discuss with the participants things that might go wrong when tourists and hosts do not understand each other, and help them to think about what might happen as a result. How can these problems be avoided or solved?

Six steps on how to solve a problem:

- (1) Identify the problem.
- (2) Identify the possible causes.
- (3) What are the issues and possible consequences (what could happen because of the problem)?
- (4) Identify possible solutions.
- (5) Study the solutions and put them in order from the best to the worst.
- (6) Decide on the action to take.

A case study

Read the following story to the participants, then discuss with them their ideas on how the problem could be solved, using the six-step approach. Some ideas on how to solve the problem are given below the story.

The Story

During a formal kava ceremony, where everyone is sitting down, according to custom, some tourists stand up and start taking photographs. To stand up while the chiefs are sitting down is highly offensive (rude) to the local people.

Step 1: Identify the problem

State what the immediate problem is.

In this case, the problem is that the tourists have broken proper protocol by standing up at the wrong time.

Step 2: Identify the cause

Sometimes there may be more than one possible cause. Consider all possible causes.

In the story above, causes for breaking the rules might be that

- the tourists did not understand the local culture
- they were not given good information and advice about the ceremony before being invited to attend.

Step 3: What are the issues and possible consequences?

Looking at the issues shows how important the problem might be. Because this problem has happened, what other problems might it make?

In the story above, it is possible that

- the locals will feel insulted
- tourists will get a bad name
- the tourists will become embarrassed if they realise their mistake
- the tourists will take away a bad image of the country if the locals get angry
- there will be a loss of return business
- the country will get a bad reputation.

Clearly, this is not a problem that can be ignored.

Step 4: Identify possible solutions

There may be several ways to overcome a problem. Think of all the possible solutions first before you decide how good they are.

Possible solutions to the problem in the story might include

- informing the tourists beforehand what they should and should not do at a kava ceremony
- politely telling the tourists to sit down
- taking away the tourists' cameras
- stopping tourists from attending future kava ceremonies

Step 5: Study the solutions

For each solution you identified in Step 4, look at its good points and its bad points. Some solutions are better than others, and some solutions are impossible. Ranking the solutions will help you think carefully about the best solution.

In the above story

- (1) Informing the tourists beforehand would stop the problem happening, but it means that tour operators must know the local rules and culture, and they must make sure that the tourists fully understand them.
- (2) Telling the tourists to sit down would overcome the problem, but it would have to be done very carefully to avoid causing embarrassment.
- (3) Taking away the tourists' cameras might stop them breaking the rules, but it would probably cause anger and embarrassment.
- (4) Preventing tourists from attending kava ceremonies might solve the problem, but it would cause loss of money.

Step 6: Decide on the best action to take

You will probably find that one option is better than the others. Look for a win/win solution, where no one loses.

In the story above, the best action might be to produce a brochure. If a brochure is written about the ceremony and its protocols (what to do and what not to do), this can be given to tourists before they come to the ceremony, and problems of ignorance or misunderstanding can be avoided.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to look at Workbook Activity 6.2, read through the story in the workbook, then, as a group, work through the six-step process to find a solution to the problem given.

Module 7

Networking

Networking involves communicating with many different people to get them to co-operate. This may involve planning, organising, encouraging, following up and checking, and making sure that everyone does their part, including the person who is doing the networking.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to

- explain the importance of networking
- identify links or possible contacts in tourism issues
- demonstrate networking skills.

Resources

Participants will need to be provided with information about local people and national and international organizations involved in the tourism industry. They should be able to gain local knowledge by asking friends and family.

What is networking?

Discuss with participants what networking is. Although networking is an everyday activity for most people, they may not have thought about it. Networks are paths of communication. They could be a straight line — between two people — or like a spider's web — between many people. Networking involves people exchanging information and contacts to achieve some purpose. In discussion, help participants to identify networks that they use. Networks may include friends, family, and so on.

Why is networking important in tourism?

Discuss with participants how they cannot run any business on their own. They need to have contacts. In the tourism industry, where you deal with people from far away, you need contacts who have contacts.

Who might be involved in a network?

Discuss with participants how networks can work at different levels. A network could be formed and effective among people at the same level or at different levels, with many people.

Example — Networking at one level

Four independent tourist operators might share information and resources for managing their separate businesses.

Example — Multilevel networking in the tourism industry

At the **local level**, a network might include

- tour guides
- weavers and carvers
- sellers of crafts and other shopkeepers
- dancers and musicians
- fishermen
- growers and sellers of food
- restaurant and motel owners
- restaurant and motel workers.

At the **national level**, a network might include

- handicraft sellers and agents
- bus companies
- taxi services
- national airlines and inter-island shipping companies
- tour organisers
- the National Tourism Board

- hotel and restaurant owners
- newspapers and other information providers
- conference facilities
- infrastructure services.

At the **international level**, a network might include

- international airlines and shipping companies
- international travel agencies and booking companies
- international hotel chains
- banks.

Discuss with the participants what each of the above terms (words or groups of words) means and how they might be involved in or with a tourism network. Find local examples, such as local shipping companies and entertainment organisers.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to do Workbook Activity 7.1, in which they identify local people who could be contacted in a tourism-related network. If they do not know the names of local people or local firms under some of the headings, suggest that they ‘network’ by asking other participants or friends and family to give names.

When they have finished this activity, they should have a useful list of local tourism contacts. If your island has a local telephone system, suggest that the participants put phone numbers beside the names.

How does a network ‘work’?

The person using the network must make sure that they

- identify the tasks and the people involved
- identify the most effective channel to use
- make their message clear so that everyone understands what is needed.

A network in action

Discuss with the participants the following example of a network in action. The participants should be able to identify

- who is involved
- what the tasks are
- who is to do which task.

Example — Networking at different levels and involving many people

The Tourism Board knows that there is a famous family of firewalkers in a village. The Board would like the family to give a performance.

The following steps are taken to organise the performance.

- The Board writes to the head of the family.
- The family approaches the village headman.
- The village headman tells the village.
- The headman tells the family that the village has given permission (the village says it is OK for the family to give the performance).
- The family writes to the Tourism Board.
- The Board writes to the family with a date for the performance.
- The Board writes to the hotels and bus operators informing them of the performance.
- The family and the community get together and prepare for the performance.
- The family gives a presentation to the tourists.
- The tourists pay the Tourist Board, the Tourist Board pays the bus company and the family, the family pays the helpers and also contributes to the village funds.

Workbook Activity

Ask the participants to look at Workbook Activity 7.2. This Activity asks them to plan an event for their local area for tourists. They have to identify the networks that would be involved in setting up this event.

Participants may choose from

- a dancing competition
- an organised home stay
- a fishing competition
- whale watching
- a sports tournament
- an eco-tourism trip
- a historic sites tour
- a village tour
- anything else

Participants should identify

- who will be involved
- what each person will need to do
- who should talk to them
- when they need to be involved
- whether they will need to be paid, and if so, how
- how they will make sure tourists know what they should and should not do
- how they will make sure the tourists arrive
- what they will have to do, using their communication skills, to make this event happen.

Note

This is a difficult activity. You may need to help the groups. These are some suggestions.

Who would be involved?

Consider the local level (village permission, local tour guides, local food suppliers, etc). Also consider national contacts (Tourism Board, Visitors' Centre, newspapers)

What will each person have to do?

For example, the Visitors' Centre might need to tell people about the event, bus operators might need to organise transport, the village might need to give permission (say it is OK to have the event in the village).

Who should talk to them?

The group needs to organise who will contact each group or person.

When do they need to be involved?

The publicity (telling people about the event) would need to be done well before the event happens. The transport operators and food suppliers need to be ready on the day of the event, the organisers need to be involved before, during and after the event.

Will they need to be paid? If so, how?

For example, transport operators might charge a fee per head (some money for each person — maybe \$2.00 for adults, 50c for children), the Visitors Centre and the performers might charge a flat fee (some money for the whole event — maybe \$100 for the event). The organisers would have to choose a price that covers all costs and still leaves a profit for the village.

How will you make sure tourists know what they should and should not do? Somebody in the group needs to write and send out a brochure about the event that includes any safety and cultural aspects.

How will you make sure the tourists arrive?

Somebody in the group needs to take phone bookings and check with transport operators.

What will you have to do, using your communication skills, to make this event happen?

Participants should review the communication skills they have learned in this course and may need to use a few others. For example, they may need to

- **Write** to the village council
- **Talk** to their local contacts

- **Discuss** arrangements with the local transport company
- **Telephone** or **write to** the Visitors Centre
- **Answer the phone** to take bookings
- **Write** a small brochure about the event
- **Welcome** the tourists when they arrive.

Whether the event that the participants plan is a real one or an imaginary one, this activity should use all the skills that the participants have gained in the course. Wish them good luck and enjoyment!