



TIPS FOR MUSEUM DOCENTS AND TOUR GUIDES

- Introduce yourself and make sure each visitor in your tour group feels welcome.
- Orient your visitors to the exhibition, and give them a starting point from which you'll begin the tour. Give your visitors an idea of what to expect—how long the tour will last (30 minutes is a good average), whether there are seating areas along the way, where facilities are located, etc.
- Assess your audience and structure your tour accordingly. Younger visitors often relate to technology, popular culture, and references to today, while older visitors relate to historical content and personal memories. Be prepared to provide information to any visitors that may not be able to access the exhibition due to a disability.
- Be familiar with the exhibition and the information provided. Feel free to carry notes on tours, but avoid reading directly from them. Aim for comfortable and conversational exchanges with your visitors.
- Use technology! Images, diagrams, or videos as displayed on tablets can help you reach more people.
- Encourage visitors to ask questions. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know," but try to find out the answer before the visitors leave.
- Avoid focusing on questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no." Ask open-ended questions like: "What do you think ...?" or "How do you feel about ...?"
- Give visitors time to think about and answer questions. Usually someone will speak up in about 10 to 15 seconds.
- Have fun. Tell stories about objects that make them seem more accessible. Personal anecdotes make museum content seem more approachable.
- If photography is permitted, encourage visitors to take pictures or selfies and tag them with your museum's name or hashtag.
- Know the museum's name, address, phone number, hours of operation, and the location of the gift shop, restrooms, water fountains, and seating areas for all visitors, including those with disabilities.
- If your museum has an app, be sure to let people know about it. Become an expert on any guided tours or behind-the-scenes content your museum may have to offer.