

Shadowing a Tour: The Short and the Long of It

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Shadowing helps current or potential guides to hone their skills. Here are some thoughts on getting the most from this experience.

The short version:

- BE RESPECTFUL
- DO NOT INTERRUPT THE GUIDE
- DO NOT CORRECT THE GUIDE
- DO NOT OVER-ENGAGE WITH THE GUESTS
- BE ON TIME
- WAIT UNTIL THE END FOR QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

The long version:

BE RESPECTFUL - Guiding is more than just reciting the subject matter. A talented guide is like a stage actor, intent on telling stories in engaging ways. So a great tour is not only about how much one knows but also how it is presented.

DO NOT INTERRUPT THE GUIDE – In telling a story, a stream of information and style flows to the audience. An interruption can easily disrupt that flow.

DO NOT CORRECT THE GUIDE - It is not your role as a shadow guide to insert yourself. Right or wrong, a correction is embarrassing to the guide and undermines the audience's trust. Guests do not need to know, nor do they wish to know, everything one knows.

DO NOT OVER-ENGAGE WITH THE GUESTS – The focus should be on the guide and what is being said. Shadow guides may chat with guests, but continuing a history narrative when the guide has finished or going on about one's own tour offerings, etc. is not appropriate.

BE ON TIME – Arrive to the tour early, so the guide will have time to introduce you.

WAIT UNTIL THE END FOR QUESTIONS – Make notes during the tour, and after the guests have dispersed, ask the guide whatever questions you may have. This is a learning experience, so take advantage of it.