

Certified Travel Associate (CTA) Program

Practical Knowledge Course

Selling Escorted Vacations

Activities Workbook

Lesson 1: Understanding Escorted Vacations



Time Out

What is your current understanding of an escorted vacation? Please write your definition here.

At Work

Compared to the other types of packaged vacations just mentioned, what are some of the key benefits of an escorted vacation? Write three unique advantages of escorted vacations below.

1.

 2.

 3.

-
-





Quick Quiz

To help you sell the convenience of an escorted vacation, take a moment to consider the *inconveniences* your clients may experience with independent travel. For each type of vacation below, list some common inconveniences that your escorted vacation customers will avoid. Check your lists with those provided in the Answer Key at the end of this module.

Fly/Drive

Knowing what to see, but not knowing how to get there

Train Travel (e.g. Eurail)

Train delays affecting your connections and plans

Lesson 2: Profiting from Escorted Vacations

How About You?

How well can you identify a potential escorted vacation customer? Rate the clients listed below according to how well you believe an escorted vacation to Europe would meet their needs, on a scale of 0 (bad match) to 5 (good match).



| | <i>Bad</i> | | | | <i>Good</i> | |
|--|------------|---|---|---|-------------|---|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. Travelers with limited time (7-10 days) | | | | | | |
| 2. Travelers with limited budget (under \$1,200 per person, excluding air) | | | | | | |
| 3. Clients who don't want to travel with strangers | | | | | | |
| 4. Clients who can't speak a foreign language | | | | | | |
| 5. A couple who say they worry about strange food | | | | | | |
| 6. Newlyweds worried about traveling with a "bunch of old people" | | | | | | |
| 7. People who say they want to see and do a lot while on vacation | | | | | | |
| 8. Someone concerned about not having a travel partner | | | | | | |
| 9. Someone eager to see "more than churches and museums" | | | | | | |
| 10. A client looking for a relaxing, in-depth travel experience | | | | | | |

Scoring: Add your responses.

45-50: Escorted vacation mentor; others can learn from you.

35-44: Good; brush up to become a mentor.

25-34: Hmmm, perhaps you're in a rut selling FITs?

0-24: You're losing sales, and maybe customers!

Time Out

While most Millennials have not been on an escorted vacation, they are interested in new and unique experiences. They like adventure, outdoor activities, and off-the-beaten-path excursions. Describe an escorted vacation that might appeal to a Millennial.





Time Out

Generation X and Y travelers are looking for vacation packages that give them more activities, freedom, choices, and spirituality. When selling to Generation X and Y, keep in mind their typical touring needs:

- Special interest tours
- Tours that include an education component
- Eco-tourism
- Tours shorter in length

Describe an escorted vacation that you believe would appeal to Generation X and Y travelers.

Time Out

Generally speaking, the current Baby Boomer market has the following interests, listed in order of preference:

- Sightseeing
- Cruising
- Education
- Sun and Sand
- Outdoor Activities

Describe an escorted vacation that you believe would appeal a Baby Boomer client.



Time Out

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



How About You?

What information do you often ask for, but may not record, that could be used to generate more sales? Jot your thoughts down here, and then be sure to enter this information into your client database!





At Work

Identify two sources of testimonials that your agency could be using.

1. _____

2. _____

Identify two ways that your agency could incorporate testimonials in your current marketing activities.

1. _____

2. _____

Lesson 3: Selling Escorted Vacation



Quick Quiz

Features and Benefits

How well can you translate features of an escorted vacation into client-centered benefits? For each of the features listed below, write a benefit statement using visual, emotional language whenever possible. Check your responses with those provided in the Answer Key at the end of this module.

Feature: Most dinners are included in the tour.

Benefit: You won't have to worry about finding good, reasonable restaurants, and you'll still have the flexibility to dine alone or with friends.

Feature: Breakfast buffet every day, included in the price

Benefit: _____

Feature: Independent time

Benefit: _____

Feature: No hidden extras at hotels

Benefit: _____

Feature: Professional tour directors

Benefit: _____

Feature: Licensed city guides

Benefit: _____

Feature: Experienced drivers

Benefit: _____

Feature: Guaranteed prices

Benefit: _____

Feature: No night driving

Benefit: _____



At Work

How would you acknowledge this client's concern?

Client: "But, I don't have the time for a long vacation."

You: _____

An example of an acknowledgment statement might be: "You're concerned that an escorted vacation won't fit your schedule, is that right?"



At Work

How would you express empathy with this client?

Client: "Unfortunately, I can only take a week long vacation, so I'm not going to be able to do much."

You: _____

An example of an empathetic response might be: "I know we all wish we could take longer vacations, but don't worry. An escorted vacation will let you make the most of your week. Perhaps we can even include the weekend before and after to make a nine-day vacation."

At Work

How would you redirect this client's attention to the vacation experience?

Client: "Well, I still think an escorted vacation would be too long."

You: _____

You could redirect this client with a response such as: "It's true that many escorted vacations are long, but because so many people like you are looking for shorter vacations, I think we've found a good selection. For example, this "Italian Holiday" package seems to be perfect for you. You can leave on a Friday night and be home the following Friday. You'll have the weekend at home to download your photos and see your friends before going back to the office."



At Work

How would you confirm this client's acceptance of your solution?

Client: "Excellent! I thought I needed at least 10 days for an escorted vacation."

You: _____

A confirming response could be as simple as: "So, this one-week package will work for you?"



At Work

Buying Signals



Answer the following questions to determine how well you can identify buying signals. Check your answers with those provided in the Answer Key at the end of this module.

1. Which statement or question indicates that the customer is ready to buy?
 - a. I don't like the idea of traveling with a group.
 - b. Should I pack one big suitcase or two smaller bags?
 - c. Do you have an extra brochure? I want to show my husband.
 - d. All of the above.

 2. Which statement or question indicates that the customer is ready to buy?
 - a. That's exactly what we had in mind, if we can leave in three weeks.
 - b. Is that the shortest trip you have? And where do I get to golf?
 - c. I'd like to think about it some more—the price seems awfully high.
 - d. All of the above.

 3. Which customer seems ready to buy?
 - a. A man with arms crossed who isn't talking.
 - b. A woman who keeps glancing at her watch.
 - c. A man who is leaning forward, nodding agreement with your descriptions.
 - d. None of the above.

 4. Which customer seems ready to buy?
 - a. A client worried about getting his passport renewed in time.
 - b. A prospect who starts looking at the ceiling.
 - c. A shopper who points to another brochure.
 - d. None of the above.

 5. Which customer may be holding back an objection?
 - a. One who says the trip is too long.
 - b. One who says he can't afford it.
 - c. One who says she needs more time to think about it.
 - d. None of the above.
-

Application Activities

Throughout this course, you've gained valuable information and skills that will enable you to become an effective seller of escorted vacations. As you practice your selling skills with your escorted vacation clients, you may find that addressing some common misconceptions about escorted vacations is an important factor in the process of bringing your clients to a purchase decision.

In this activity, you will practice responding to 10 of the most common misconceptions your customers may have about escorted vacations. By taking the time now to plan your responses to these misconceptions, you will equip yourself to address your customers' concerns throughout your sales interaction, and actually prevent them from becoming objections as you attempt to close the sale.

In **Part 1** you will read a series of statements from potential escorted vacation customers that reflect a misunderstanding about the nature of an escorted vacation. For each statement, you will be asked to write an appropriate response.

In **Part 2** you can practice responding to each statement in an optional role-play skill practice activity.

Since each of us has our own personal selling style and understanding of our clients' needs and concerns, there are no absolutely right answers to this activity. However, suggested responses are provided in the Answer Key at the end of this module.

Part 1: Addressing Client Concerns and Misconceptions

Instructions: Read each of the following concerns expressed by a potential escorted vacation client. After each statement, write an appropriate response. Check your responses with those provided in the Answer Key at the end of this module.

Your client says:

1. "I don't have time for an escorted vacation."

You respond:

Your client says:

2. "I can't afford an escorted vacation."

You respond:

Your client says:

3. "I don't want to travel with people I don't know."

You respond:

Your client says:

4. "I can't speak a foreign language."

You respond:

Your client says:

5. "I worry about having to eat strange food on an escorted vacation."

You respond:

Your client says:

6. "Aren't escorted vacations only for old people?"

You respond:

Your client says:

7. "I consider myself an active traveler, and I couldn't sit on a bus all day."

You respond:

Your client says:

8. "I don't have anyone to travel with me on an escorted vacation."

You respond:

Your client says:

9. "I want to see more than museums and churches on my vacation."

You respond:

Your client says:

10. "I'd rather fully experience and enjoy a destination than embark on a whirlwind tour of several countries."

You respond:

Part 2: Skill Practice — Role Play (Optional)

For this skill practice, choose a partner to play the role of your client. Ask your partner to present you with a concern about an escorted vacation, choosing from the list of concerns provided in Part 1 of this activity.

Respond to each concern as if it were an objection your client presents. Practice the objection handling process you learned in this course (see below for a refresher). Use the response you prepared in the first part of this activity to redirect your clients' concern.

After you practice responding to each concern, discuss with your partner and take notes on how you accomplished each of the following steps in the objection handling process.

✓ Listen completely.

- Use body language to demonstrate active listening.
- Allow the client to fully express his or her misgivings.

✓ Acknowledge the concern.

- Fully understand the objection or concern before responding.
- Summarize in your own words what the client has said.
- Check to make sure he or she agrees with your interpretation.

✓ Empathize.

- Demonstrate your appreciation of your client's concern.

✓ Redirect.

- Present accurate information to clarify a misconception.
- Offer facts or revisit benefits to refocus the client's attention.

✓ Confirm.

- Check for understanding and acceptance.