

FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF TOUR GUIDES  
IN MODERN TRAINING PROCESSФОРМУВАННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ ТУРИСТИЧНОГО ГІДА  
У СУЧАСНОМУ НАВЧАЛЬНОМУ ПРОЦЕСІ

*The Covid-19 pandemic has reduced the number of trips abroad for people in the whole world, and in Ukraine in particular. The damage caused by quarantine measures over the last year and a half is unrecoverable. Consequently, the new tourism markets and the rapid development of domestic tourism contributed to the increase of potential workers in the sphere of tourism.*

*The scientists claim that a real tourism expert has to be characterized by high professionalism, thorough knowledge, communicativeness, progressiveness, skilled performance and competitiveness in the labour market. Undoubtedly, these are the characteristics of the profession of a tour guide as the representative of the country. A clear distinction between the terms "competence" and "competency" is offered. The necessity of the tour guide's professional competence formation is emphasized.*

*In the basis of the formation of professional competence, we lay the Universal Competency Framework as a selection of behaviours at work and the chance of being successful in certain roles and environments. The UCF provides the creation of a much-needed job outline for a tour guide in Ukraine. The profound analysis of the competency framework is aimed at a definite assistance to the potential tour guides at getting into a career choice, understanding and successful performance of duties and responsibilities.*

*The "Great Eight" competencies are: leading and deciding, supporting and cooperating, interacting and presenting, analysing and interpreting, creating and conceptualising, organising and executing, adapting and coping, enterprising and performing. Having analysed the given competencies, we conclude that the professional competence is a combination of the universal key competencies, which we consider to be its main components.*

*The examples of real tour guides' behaviours are introduced for the better comprehension of the realization of the competencies. The conclusion is made that the Universal Competency Framework efficiently produces a competency model of standard components specifically tailored for tour guides in Ukraine. The introduction of such a frame into the modern educational process is offered.*

**Key words:** *tour guide, competence, competency, professional competence, the Universal Competency Framework, model.*

*Пандемія Covid-19 знизилася кількість поїздок за кордон для людей у всьому світі, зокрема,*

*в Україні. Втрати, спричинені карантинними заходами за останні півтора року, не відшкодувати. Як наслідок, нові туристичні ринки та стрімкий розвиток внутрішнього туризму посприяли збільшенню кількості потенційних працівників у сфері туризму.*

*Науковці стверджують, що справжній туристичний експерт повинен характеризуватися високим професіоналізмом, глибокими предметними знаннями, комунікабельністю, прозоресивністю, кваліфікованим виконанням обов'язків та конкурентоспроможністю на ринку праці. Безперечно, ці риси характерні для професії туристичного гίδα як представника дестинації.*

*У статті здійснено чітку диференціацію термінів «компетентність» та «компетенція».*

*Наголошено на необхідності формування професійної компетентності туристичного гίδα, в основу якої закладено універсальну рамку компетенцій (the Universal Competency Framework) як сукупність видів поведінки на роботі та шанс досягти успіху в певних професійних ролях і середовищі. UCF забезпечує створення вкрай необхідного опису посадових обов'язків туристичного гίδα в Україні, допомагає майбутнім гідам у виборі професії, спонукає до розуміння та успішного виконання посадових обов'язків.*

*Відтак, професійна компетентність – це поєднання універсальних ключових компетенцій, які вважаємо її основними складовими. До «великої вісімки» компетенцій належать: лідерство та прийняття рішень, підтримка та співпраця, взаємодія та презентація, здійснення аналізу та інтерпретація, креативність та концептуалізація, організація та виконання, адаптація та подолання труднощів, ініціативність та ефективність.*

*Наведено реальні приклади поведінки туристичного гίδα для кращого розуміння реалізації запропонованих компетенцій. Зроблено висновок, що універсальна рамка компетенцій (UCF) ефективно представляє компетенційну модель із стандартних компонентів-поведінок, притаманних туристичним гідам України. Запропоновано впровадження даної моделі в сучасний навчальний процес.*

**Ключові слова:** *туристичний гід, компетентність, компетенція, професійна компетентність, універсальна рамка компетенцій, модель.*

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**Problem Presentation.** Last year forced the world tourism industry to occur in extreme conditions and radically changed the approach to the tourists' choice of the countries for their recreation.

At the same time, the first half of 2021 was marked by the gradual resumption of tourist flows in the whole world. There has been a significant reconsideration of tourist routes and an increase in domestic travel in many countries. The Covid-19 pandemic has played a crucial role in reducing the number of trips abroad for people around the world, and in Ukraine

in particular. Today, we can only estimate the damage caused by the quarantine measures over the last year and a half.

However, this situation has given impetus for opening the new tourism markets and rapid development of domestic tourism, contributing to the increase of human resources in the field of tourism.

Modern professional education in Ukraine is adopting new conceptual principles of training the future tourism professionals in accordance with the humanistic and culturological approaches under the

requirements for the quality of services in the European integration environment of international cooperation.

Taking into account the world standards determines corresponding changes in the professional training of specialists of tourism, since their activity is aimed at establishing international tourism relations and directed towards achieving mutual understanding between the peoples of the world.

Today, we raise the relevant problems of forming a system of special knowledge of the future tourism specialists; mastering corresponding skills; development of their professional competence; formation of personal qualities, communicative abilities, experience of intercultural communication.

Our research is dedicated to the analysis of the phenomenon “professional competence” of the tour guides and the characteristics of its main components.

**Analysis of Recent Publications.** The peculiarities of the formation of *professional competence of*: the future teachers are introduced in the research works of V. Barkasi, O. Bigych, M. Elkin, Z. Zalibovska-Ilnytska, L. Karpova, A. Maslyuk, L. Petukhova, O. Smirnova and others; the specialists in economy are uncovered by O. Babayan, T. Barsukova, V. Komelina, L. Dybkova, N. Zamkova, H. Kopyl, K. Maslennikov, etc.; the future workers of tourism industry are partially presented in the studies of R. Bryk, M. Halytska, I. Savchak, G. Zaychuk, N. Khmilyarchuk, etc.; the medical field and health care experts — in the works of H. Morokhovets, I. Radzievska, T. Tkachenko, etc.; the mass media specialists are represented by I. Dyachenko, I. Chemerys, M. Zhytaryuk, etc.

The problem of formation of the professional competence of the future specialists in tourism industry is crucial today, as the modern labour market needs highly-qualified competitive specialists who are able to combine leadership skills, creativity, organisational skills, cooperation, oratory, great performance, foreign language proficiency, etc. Hence, the higher education institutions are required to train competitive future professionals.

**Highlighting previously unresolved parts of a common problem.** According to the Tourism Survey (2018) the number of tour guides who work in Europe is (37.5%), South America (17.8%), Asia (16.3%), North America (13.8%), Africa (9.8%) and Australia (4.7%) [10]. The presented figures point out the fact that the profession of a tour guide has now become in great demand and rather valuable in tourism industry.

The analysis of the research devoted to the formation of tour guides’ professional competence in a well-organized process of training indicates at the complexity and insufficient research of this problem. These considerations have provided the reason for choosing the topic of the article.

**Objective.** The article is dedicated to the formation of the professional competence of tour guides based on the well-established universal competency framework and the requirements for the provision of professional tourist guide training.

We focus our research on the dominant behaviours and the development of the competency model of tour guides in Ukraine.

**Presentation of the main material.** Tourism industry is largely labour intensive and provides jobs for well-trained professionals, but also for numerous workers with difficulties to find a job, such as newcomers to the labour market (young people and migrants), women with family responsibilities who can work part-time and people with little qualification in general. Tourism provides working people with income and experience, and, therefore, contributes to their social inclusion and personal development [11].

In contrast, tourism sector suffers from shortage of workers with the required minimum qualifications or skills. As employment and working conditions often fail to meet their expectations, people working in tourism industry tend to look for better jobs elsewhere and may, at the first opportunity, leave to take up more decent work in other spheres.

Having analyzed the views of training professionally competent workers of tourism industry, the scientists claim that a real tourism expert has to be characterized by high professionalism, thorough knowledge, communicativeness, progressiveness, skilled performance and competitiveness in the labour market. We stress that these are the characteristics of the profession of a tour guide as the representative of the perspective industry.

Despite the increase in the global tourism activities, little attention is being paid to the impact of the role of tour guides in contributing to higher customer visitation. To increase the number of tourists to Ukraine, it becomes important to educate and train the tour guides who could impress tourists by the quality level of service, provide destination-related information and encourage them to revisit our country as well as recommend it to their family and friends.

We agree that tour guides are “the representatives of tourist destinations and have a significant role to play in improving the tourist satisfaction and, thus, ensure an increase in the number of tourists to the destinations” [6].

Most definitions point out that a tour guide is responsible for directing and leading tourists on a tour or sightseeing. The World Federation of Tourist Guide Association (2005) defines the tour guide as “a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area”.

Generally, a tour guide takes care of a group of participants, including explanations or teaching with regard to historical and geographical, geological or

even biological backgrounds of the area. For many tour operators, the higher education (Bachelor's degree) is a precondition for the job-entry. Most world companies within the tourist industries ask for a broad range of criteria which have to be met for job applicants, for example: extensive knowledge about local backgrounds, organizational competencies above average, perfect language skills, methodological knowledge (instructional talent), an empathic approach to clients' needs, conflict related skills, leadership skills, self-initiative behaviour including good health and self-confidence [2].

The requirements for the tour guides can be "mapped" to a Universal Competency Framework / "the Great Eight" (Bartram, 2012) which is shown in the table below and accompanied by the examples of tour guiding work situations:

The SHL Universal Competency Framework (UCF) offered by Prof. Bartram (2012) is a single underlying construct framework that provides a rational, consecutive and practical basis for understanding people's behaviours at work and the chance of being successful in certain roles and in certain environments [1]. The framework introduces a model of performance at work that defines the relationships between competency potential, competency requirements and competencies themselves.

According to M. Fitsula, a scientific model "is a semantically and materially realized system that adequately reflects the subject of research, appears as a means of theoretical study of pedagogical phenomena through the imaginary creation of life situations (modelling); assists in cognition of the patterns of the individual's behaviour in various situations" [14]. As A. Bandura (1977) states, "most human behaviour is learned observationally through modelling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action" [4]. Jarcho emphasizes that "mastery often comes from modelling. It is how the apprentice becomes a journeyman and in time a master" [7]. Hence, the organization of such a framework would never become possible without the method of modelling in the training process.

Since 2001, the UCF has been used to create 403 new competency models by 299 consultants working in 24 different countries with 117 client organisations. It provides the ability to produce tailored competency models quickly and efficiently from a standard set of components [1].

We need to clarify why the given competency framework is considered to be genuine. The explanation is as follows:

- it is an articulated set of relationships;
- it defines the nature of the components of a model;
- it specifies how those components relate to each other;

- it explains how they relate to other constructs (performance, personality etc.) that sit outside the framework;

- it is evidence-based [1].

The UCF provides the creation of a much-needed job outline for a tour guide in Ukraine. The profound analysis of a competency framework is aimed at a definite assistance to the potential tour guides at getting into a career choice, understanding and successful performance of duties and responsibilities.

Bartram distinguishes between competences and competencies. Although both terms are similar, there is a clear distinction between them: "Competence relates to performance or outcomes; competencies relate to the behaviours underpinning successful performance" [1]. In other words, people demonstrate competence by applying their competencies' knowledge and skills in a goal-directed manner within the work setting. Thus, the *professional competence* of a tour guide is a combination of the universal key competencies, which we consider to be its main components.

According to M. Kane, the professional competence is "the degree to which the individual can use the knowledge, skills, and judgment associated with the profession to perform effectively in the domain of possible encounters defining the scope of professional practice" [8].

Epstein and Hundert define the professional competence as "the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotions, values, and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served" [5].

The researcher T. Chistyakova states that the professional competence is "the educational result reflected in readiness to perform a certain practice in the professional sphere, on the basis of a system of knowledge, skills, and experience of the learners" [3].

O. Oleksyuk views the professional competence as "the mastery of knowledge, skills and standards necessary for the performance of professional duties, as well as the real professional activity in accordance with standards and norms" [13, p. 13].

So, the scientists quoted above associate the professional competence with the readiness to fulfill duties, effective performance and being beneficial in the professional sphere.

Analysing the problem of the professional competence, A. Markova determines its characteristics:

- competence is not identified with the education of an individual;
- competence is a combination of mental qualities which allow acting independently and responsibly;
- the basis for conclusions about the competence of an individual is the assessment of the final result of the activity;



Table 1

Competency („Great Eight“)	Interpretation	Examples
Leading and Deciding	Takes control and exercises leadership. Initiates action, gives direction and takes responsibility	During the tour, a guide becomes the leader of the group and takes responsibility for every member. He is the one who controls the situation and decides on what (subject), where (place) and when (time) to present
Supporting and Cooperating	Supports others and shows respect and positive regard for them in social situations. Puts people first, working effectively with individuals and teams, clients and staff. Behaves consistently with clear personal values that complement those of the organisation	Building a successful teamwork in a group of tourists is a must. A tour guide should treat tourists respectfully and make every guest feel like the most important person in the group
Interacting and Presenting	Communicates and networks effectively. Successfully persuades and influences others. Relates to others in a confident and relaxed manner	A tour guide informs and entertains at the same time. Delivering facts while on tour doesn't have to be a lecture. A guide should be well-informed and willing to share his/her knowledge, take guests on a journey through storytelling which helps bring life to the subject, captivate the audience and give guests something to remember/pass on to their friends for years to come. If a tour guide can tell a story with animation, expression and a plot twist, he/she will never be forgotten
Analysing and Interpreting	Shows evidence of clear analytical thinking. Gets to the heart of complex problems and issues. Applies own expertise effectively. Quickly learns new technology. Communicates well in writing	A tour guide is able to present ideas clearly and effectively in written form (taking notes); adjust language or terminology to meet the needs of the audience; use correct grammar, organization and structure
Creating and Conceptualising	Open to new ideas and experiences. Seeks out learning opportunities. Handles situations and problems with innovation and creativity. Thinks broadly and strategically. Supports and drives organisational change	Tourists love learning about various fun facts and little known secrets about the area they are touring. Guides should consistently have the ability to convey passion, act positively and tell various interactive stories. It is of vital importance to make interactions, encourage clients to participate actively in the communication process
Organizing and Executing	Plans ahead and works in a systematic and organised way. Follows directions and procedures. Focuses on customer satisfaction and delivers a quality service or product to the agreed standards.	A tour guide's commentary gives guests a sense of what to expect from a tour. A tour guide should: introduce oneself; confirm the tour type and where you'll be heading; note washroom locations; mention the number of stops along the route. Knowledgeable guides are able to explain facts, history, landmarks, figures, local customs, etc. They should also be able to answer additional tour related questions that may come up during the trip
Adapting and Coping	Adapts and responds well to change. Manages pressure effectively and copes with setbacks	Tourists may come from various walks of life, age groups, cultures, nationalities, and backgrounds or speak different languages. The ability to handle social norms and expectations is key to being an effective tour guide. The best guides are empathetic to cultural differences and prioritize making each delivery unique to their guests. A tour guide should also have a sensitivity and understanding for treating guests with special needs. Great tour guides are flexible when it comes to unexpected issues and schedule changes
Enterprising and Performing	Focuses on results and achieving personal work objectives. Works best when work is related closely to results and the impact of personal efforts is obvious. Shows understanding of business, commerce and finance. Seeks opportunities for self-development and career advancement	A tour guide should be able to keep up to date with changing times and constant advancements in technology and determine how they affect or enhance the tours. A tour guide continuously aims to facilitate ways to learn how to make each tour more distinct and unique than the previous ones. A tour guide learns by encouraging guests to provide necessary feedback so that he/she can use the information to enhance future tours

– competence is a characteristic of an individual and is manifested in the results of one's activity [12].

To sum up, the professional competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, methods of activity, professionally important psychological qualities necessary to a specialist to carry out effective professional activity. It is the result of the individual's training, a qualitative characteristic of professionalism, and provides a conscious desire of the individual to perform this activity.

Returning to the selection of requirements for the tour guides listed in the Universal Competency Framework (Table 1) it is significant for our research to make a profound explanation of the "Great Eight" competencies:

– *Deciding and Initiating action* mean that a tour guide is responsible for making decisions, acting confidently and with initiative, taking action and calculated risks. *Leading* is seen as providing direction and coordinating action, supervising and monitoring behaviour, motivating visitors;

– *Support and Cooperating* are aimed at working with a group of tourists which means genuine understanding others, adapting to the team, building a temporary team spirit, informing and consulting others, communicating proactively, showing tolerance, consideration and support, caring for others, as well as developing self-knowledge and insight. A tour guide must adhere to principles and values, refer to upholding ethics and values, act with integrity and show social and environmental responsibility;

– *Interacting and Presenting* are focused on relating, building rapport, networking, managing conflict and using humour, persuading and influencing, making a positive impact, shaping conversations, appealing to emotions, promoting ideas, negotiating, gaining agreement, speaking fluently, articulating key points, explaining concepts and opinions, presenting and public speaking and responding to the audience;

– *Analyzing and Interpreting* include writing correctly, clearly and fluently, reporting in an expressive and engaging style, using technology resources, demonstrating physical and manual skills, demonstrating cross-functional awareness and demonstrating spatial awareness, evaluating information, investigating, producing solutions and making judgments;

– *Creating and Conceptualizing* are based on learning and researching, gathering information, smart thinking, encouraging and managing knowledge; innovating as well as seeking and introducing change; formulating strategies and concepts, thinking broadly, approaching work strategically, setting and developing strategy and visioning;

– *Organizing and Executing* can be divided into planning and organizing (setting objectives, planning, managing time and resources, monitoring progress); delivering results and meeting customer expectations

(focusing on customer needs and satisfaction, setting high standards for quality, monitoring and maintaining quality processes and productivity, working systematically); following instructions and procedures (following directions and procedures, time keeping, demonstrating commitment, showing awareness of safety issues and complying with legal obligations);

– *Adapting and Coping* include adapting and responding to change, accepting new ideas, adapting interpersonal style, showing cross-cultural awareness, dealing with ambiguity, coping with pressure and setbacks, demonstrating emotional self-control, balancing work and personal life, maintaining a positive outlook, handling criticism;

– *Enterprising and Performing* mean that a tour guide should achieve personal work goals and objectives, entail achieving objectives, work energetically and enthusiastically, pursue self-development and show ambition. A real professional ought to possess entrepreneurial and commercial thinking, entail monitoring markets and competitors, identifying business opportunities, demonstrating financial awareness, controlling costs and keeping aware of organizational issues [9].

Thus, the referred competencies we relate to the desirable behaviours of a real professional would definitely result in a successful performance of the tour guide's work. We **conclude** that the Universal Competency Framework efficiently produces a competency model of standard components specifically tailored for the tour guides in Ukraine. The introduction of such a frame into the modern educational process would be of great value and use. The development of training programme designed to enable tourist guides to possess the related standard competencies is to become the subject of our further research.

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