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How To Occupy A Queue, In Russian

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If you think this is a post about standing in a line, then, with all due respect, you have never been to Russia.

It is true that sometimes it is possible to stand in a line in Russia. However, the word "queue" (a word of ancient English origins) more satisfyingly describes the situation. Queue speaks of sequence and waiting your turn and not just successful geometry.

And it is true that sometimes you will stand to wait your turn in a sequence. However, this is not always true. The more correct word is "occupy". And since history repeatedly shows that Russians are experts in occupation, it might be worth learning How To Occupy A Queue, In Russian before you get a "Technical Break" slap-down, In Russian. If you know what I'm saying.

So, without further ado, I present to you, absolutely free of charge, Situations, Standards,

Skills and Strategies of How To Occupy A Queue, In Russian.

Queue Situations



These happy citizens have occupied a "Take Your Number" Queue

1. A Line. Sometimes it is possible to Stand In A Line, In Russian. However, it is always important to ask the person who appears to be last in line if they are last. I can not emphasize this enough. Always ask the person who appears to be last in line, "Are you last?". You might be surprised to hear the person who appears to be last in line as they expound on the huddled masses who have mysteriously and only in a virtual sense occupied the queue behind the person who appears to be last in line. If the person who appears to be last in line is indeed a genuine last person in line it is customary to state with some relish, "Then I will be behind you!". This creates a sense of camraderie and also forms an inseparable union together with the person who was just formerly the last person in line. Together you will be a formidable tag team of epic proportions as you gang tackle anyone foolish enough to use any Queue Occupation Sequence Shortening Strategies. Yea, they are the line cutters. But more about them later. Because it is important for you to learn how to become one.

2. Many Lines In One Place. I am talking about train stations and banks. Do not be fooled,



Multiple Simultaneous Queue Occupation Strategy Situation

however. This is a virtual minefield of technical and lunch breaks. I think technically all breaks are used for the same thing. Also, please bear in mind that all train stations use Moscow time. I think that sentence was supposed to be "all train stations in Russia use Moscow time", but probably some outside of Russia also use Moscow time. In any case, this explains why train station workers in Khabarovsk eat lunch at 10:00 p.m., technically. The trick is to calculate how long it will take the ticket lady (no, I'm not sexist, it is a lady) to make tickets for the 15 people in front of you and if in fact that is enough time before the dreaded technical break.

3. Huddled Mob Queue. I am speaking of institutions of public service. I just said institutions of public service. There is one institution of public service that I attend at least once annually. The queue forms its sequence as much as two hours before the doors open to the institution of public service. After that, it's only 3 or 4 more hours, 5 tops, before you reach your final queue destination. Upon arrival, ask "Who is last?". However, in institutions of public service this is not enough. There are at least 4 queues forming in this huddled mob. So, the proper question is: "Who is last for cabinet 3, desk to the right?". I am not kidding. There is nothing funny about sequencing oneself in the wrong queue as your hours be a-wasting and you are not getting any younger. A couple years back I was in front of a huddled mob outside the Kazakhstan consulate in Moscow. When I walked up to this study of Cro-Magnon behavior, I decided to throw out a different question: "Who is first?" A weary cry of someone who's rib cage was surely being crushed against the closed door weakly called back, "I am". "Good!" I said, "I will be in front of you!" The mob turned and I swear some of those who had sequenced themselves in the outer edge of the mob shaped queue began to brandish pitchforks. The fortunate/unfortunate crushed yet first sequence person shouted, "Why

should you be first?" I yelled back, "Because I'm an American!" Half of the mob started yelling and half started laughing. Two young Mormon missionaries with red faces stared at their shoelaces.

Queue Standards, Skills And Strategies



An International Queue of Belarus Visa Hopefuls

1. Throw Out Your Understanding of Personal Space. If you can tell me what a good Russian word for privacy is, I will hire you as my translator. With that aside, allow me to assure you that as you Occupy The Queue, In Russian, your personal space does not extend beyond your epidermis. Indeed, if you are not in physical contact with the person sequentially in front of you in the queue, then you are not occupying the queue and stepping in front of you is completely and culturally acceptable. Sadly, this has caused me some shame in fast food establishments in my motherland as I forget where I am. There, those Americans with their white sneakers, big smiles, and "how are you's", spread out all over the floor of Bojangles. I step right up to the cash register and the smiles and "how are you's" quickly turn to Operation Shock and Awe, and I put my theoretical tail between my legs and quickly retreat. Honestly, an aircraft carrier could have easily slipped between the cash register and the so-called first person in line. In Russia, do you feel like an outsider? Go stand in a line. You will get over it.

2. Just Ask. This is the oldest trick in the book, which is why I don't recommend it. The main reason you need to know this trick is so that you'll be ready for it. Without fail, there will be 10 or 15 people who "just want to ask a small question" at the front of the line. And as long as

the train ticket lady has her computer open, might as well make the ticket, eh? Be ready for this, comrades. When you see someone who is intending to break the sequence of the queue ask sternly, "Where are you going?" When they say, "Just to ask", you need to quickly fire back "All of Moscow just wants to ask. I just want to ask. This is why everyone is here. Get to the back of the line!" Since you have already established camraderie with fellow Queue Occupants, come up with your own phrases to rouse up the crowd.

3. Make A List. This is especially useful for lines that are 4 hours long and longer. Inevitably, a



Hungry Lunch Queue Formation

lively discussion will develop about who is behind who. Take out a sheet of paper and begin to write down names and where they are in line. This will make you the person in charge. This is useful. Use it to your advantage. You will earn respect. You will be the Queue Occupation Captain, and in so doing will be almost guaranteed not to lose your sequence. The other side effect of making a list is you can confidently tell someone that they are number 127. This will make the room less crowded as some will understand that they were created to Occupy Another Day.

4. Multiple Queue Occupation. This is standard fare at railway stations, in Russian. This is how it works: you walk up to a line, ask if that person is last in line, then you say "then I will be behind you", pause for 30 seconds, get a look on your face that expresses that you just remembered that you were supposed to attend a wedding outside the train station, but forgot, tell the person that you will be right back and could they please hold your place in line. Then repeat this scenario in the neighboring fifteen lines. Then step back and watch which line is

moving the fastest. It's shocking how loyal the people who are virtually in front of the line in front of you will hold on to a place for you. Have a conscience though: extreme measures should only be used in extreme situations. Which brings us to Strategy and Skill #5.

5. Bring A Baby. Better yet, bring a crybaby. I can neither confirm nor deny whether this blogger has brought children to Huddled Mob Queue situations to provide express results. There is no quicker route to the soft heart of Mother Russia than through the presence of representatives of the future. There they sit quietly reading, now playing, now hungry, now needing a toilet, now throwing a temper tantrum, and now at the front of the line.

5. The Appearance of Importance. Just walk through the front of the line and through the door as if You Are The Only Person In The Universe. If questioned, by Queue Occupants, about your intentions it is best to throw a puzzled glance that says, "Can't you see that I work here?" Or say, "I am from Ivanov". That is an old one, but no one will dare to ask who is Ivanov.

Above all, remember patience is a virtue and it's more about the journey than the finish line. Brush up on your times tables (5 people in line X 5 minutes per person= lunch break). Bring a good book or something to crochet. Use the time to get to know the fascinating Queue Occupiers around you. Make new friends. You can go quickly alone, but together you can go farther.

Is there a Queue Occupation Situation, Strategy, Skill, or Standard that I have failed to blog? Comment below!

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