OUR PLANET

5 BIGGEST BUSINESS TRAVELER'S MISTAKES

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A TRAVEL MAGAZINE FOR BUSINESS TRAVELERS

BUSINESS TRAVELER'S MISTAKES

How can a traveler make a mistake? The only mistake I can imagine is if a traveler did not achieve the purpose of the trip.

But it's not that simple.
Of course, some of our less successful business trips might even have been the most fun ones (we are not making any connection here).
There is a vast difference between traveling private and for business.

My old boss used to say - a business trip should be the opposite of an adventure tour. With the latter, surprises are a nice change and a desired part of the journey. On a business trip, surprises are not welcome.

But the most significant mistakes don't just happen once you've arrived. The biggest mistakes are in the wrong preparation and are relatively easy to avoid.

THINGS THAT LEAVE US SPEECHLESS

The average business trip costs € 1180,00. That is approximately a small notebook or a more admirable piece of any office equipment. No company would have a policy like:
Go shopping during your work hours and buy your notebook wherever you want.
Such a business decision would not be seen as very professional - especially by owners, shareholders, and investors.

Yet, this is what happens in many companies regarding travel planning. Staff members who are not trained travel planners browse through websites compare pictures, rates, and conditions to decide on a booking without control or approval. With corporate travel being noted as the second biggest controllable expense on the company ledger, a comprehensive, updated travel policy helps control costs, set clear expectations, mandate tool usage, and much more.

One of our long-time clients Gerald once wrote to us after an event:

"I was green when I first started planning business travel. So green in fact, that my company hired event planning consultants to coach me through my first couple of projects. It was the smartest, most cost-effective thing they could have done, especially for a high-stakes trip like a trade show. Because until I worked with the pros, I didn't 'know what I didn't know.' My consultants taught me things that never would have even occurred to me. Like why you should write a travel guide for your team. And why you should include a suggested packing list and dress code guidelines."

A customer we are working with for three years now - wrote us:

I initially thought I just had to book my team's trade show exhibitor space, and reserve hotel rooms, no problem. But after much confusion and stress I realized I was actually responsible for:

- Booking flights
- Planning transport to/from hotels
- Reserving refundable hotel rooms
- Booking rooms for business dinners / happy hours, and client meet & greets
- Planning where my team would eat each meal
- Providing expense process instructions
- Creating a team travel plan/event guide
- Providing a suggested packing list
- Managing all trade show details including
  - Booth shifts/schedule
  - Booth packing, shipping, and tracking
  - Trade show signage
  - Reserving booth space, carpet and padding, electrical, wifi, and booth cleaning

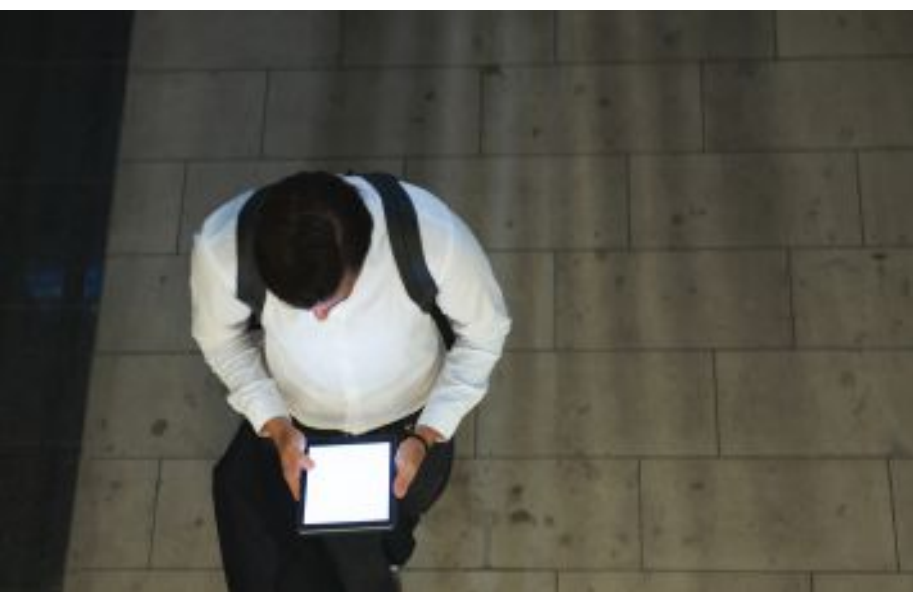# EVERY TRIP OR EVENT WE PLAN - IS A ONE-OFF! THERE ARE NO REHEARSALS

OLIVER RIEFLER

Corporate Travel Mistake #1. Having no travel tool

Why do I need a travel tool? When your staff is booking their trips on their own, you will most likely only find out when you have a new file of Travel Expenses on their desk - after their trip.

A cloud app where your staff can make bookings, changes, cancellations give your controller what he needs - control.

Special agreements, reward programs, external expertise - all this you can only get with the right tool.

When your company still uses forms and paper authorization you can be sure that it's a perfect moment of implementing a simple tool that gives you a clear overlook of travel expenses and at the same time guarantees you the best available rates as well as bringing external travel experts in - only when you need them.

Corporate Travel Mistake #2. Having no travel policy

The main reason not to have a travel policy is the wrong idea that it needs a colossal rule book and takes away the fun of travel. The opposite is the case - especially when you avoid mistake #1. A good travel expert will help you get better hotels for lower costs the difference between 3* and 4* or 4* and 5* is often just a few Euros. The most expensive hotel is the cheap pension on the other side of the city, forcing you to waste precious time in public transport or money by taking taxis.

Corporate Travel Mistake #3. Assuming People Know How to Expense

Another common mistake is assuming your team understands your company's travel expense policy. Namely, what to expense, and how to expense it. Make sure they know how to handle typical trip costs like:

- Meals
- Hotel room wifi
- Transportation: car rentals, Uber rides, taxis, airport parking, shuttles, etc.
- Emergency supplies (ex. new computer charger if one dies)
- Client meetings (coffee, dinner, etc.)
- Hotel minibars
- Baggage check fees

Corporate Travel Mistake #4. Planning that all works fine

Are you guilty of not planning for the worst when traveling and then getting upset when delays and cancellations happen?
In reality, these things happen, and you better be prepared for them.
"I always assume that my flight is going to be delayed, so I make sure my phone and computer are always fully charged," said Marcus Deix, CEO & Co-Founder of a music management agency.

More importantly, who will help you
• rebook flights,
• change airport transfers,
• hotel reservations, etc.?
Have you ever tried to adjust all your travel plans during a meeting marathon? That´s where your travel agent, travel support (or whatever you want to call them) comes into the picture.
Have you ever tried to get hold of somebody at one of the online booking websites? There is a huge difference.

Corporate Travel Mistake #5. Booking too late/Last minute

When Charter planes are empty in the beginning of summer vacation tour operators started in the 80ies to offer cheap "last minute" offers.
Like many things - exactly the opposite happens in business travel. Don't wait until the last minute to book your flight.
Not only is the flight more expensive, but your seating options may be limited to less than desirable seats unless you have status with the airline.

If you are worried, you are booking too early and don't have all the necessary details for your trip, and you have some flexibility at the time of booking.
"Flights booked within three days of departure are 47% more expensive booked over two weeks in advance," says Franklin, business travel manager in SKIFT. High costs for flights tend to flag alerts to management and financial audits within most companies. To avoid explaining yourself, do your best to plan ahead and keep costs low.

TRAVEL MAKES YOU ONE MODEST. YOU SEE WHAT A TINY PLACE YOU OCCUPY IN THE WORLD.

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT