

How to create a travel profile for your executive

Let's start 2020 off with a bang by giving you some useful advice to help you better plan your executive's travel.

If you haven't traveled much for business, you may believe that a business trip is nothing more than a vacation with meetings. It may seem glamorous and luxurious. For many leaders, it's quite the opposite.

Jet lag, back-to-back meetings, noisy hotel guests, flight delays and little recovery time paint a more accurate picture of the weary business traveler. Traveling for work demands that your leader be sharp when it counts. Constant business travel is, quite often, very taxing on a person. Business trips are typically high-pressure, high-stakes events. If they weren't, your leader probably wouldn't need to fly across the country.

Developing a keen understanding of what life on the road is really like, even if you don't travel much yourself, is an incredibly important skill to master in order to effectively plan your leader's business trips.

First and foremost, you must understand that travel planning is a cognitive task. Travel websites may be able to produce refined lists from an immense amount of data, but they simply cannot consider every single vital element that you, a human being, can. You know your leader. You understand what they need. Use that know-how when you plan their travel and allow that understanding to work for you.

It's a good idea to prepare a travel profile for your leader. This can be a simple Word document that you maintain that outlines your leader's travel preferences, quirks and common requests. Check off important items in your document like:

1. Preferred airlines, hotels and ground transportation companies (and any rewards numbers/profiles associated with these).
2. Desired airplane seating location, such as aisle or window.
3. Desired destination information like local tailors, gyms or places of worship.
4. Favorite restaurants, by city.
5. Times they prefer to dine.
6. Food restrictions.
7. Hotel "must-have" lists like gym, pool or concierge.
8. Preferred arrival and departure times.
9. Emergency contact list.

10. How independent they are or are not as a traveler.
11. How tech savvy they are.
12. What times they like to touch base with you while traveling.
13. What type of updates they prefer to receive about the office while they are traveling.
14. Willingness to not fly direct.
15. How much time should be allowed before scheduling a meeting after their return.