

Member's Quarterly

Winter 2020 Edition

Perspective

On the Road Again: Save Your Sanity

Tips for the busy business traveler

Most of us travel in our jobs. At first, it doesn't look so bad. In the good old days, we sometimes flew business class and stayed in deluxe hotels that catered to our every need. Then the cutbacks in recent years pushed us back into cattle class. We all struggle to lift our over-stuffed bags into the already full overhead bins and squeeze into the last middle seat between a former football player and a mom with her newborn. Our business travel is work added to already long workdays. It doesn't have to be fun, but it should be bearable.

Here are a few tips that might save your sanity as you run to the furthest gate in the terminal to catch the last flight home. Sit down, strap yourself in and breathe. Once your heart rate regulates, check out these suggestions.

Have a 'Pack Smart' strategy

No one was happy in 2008 when airlines started charging for checked baggage. Many business travelers learned how to 'pack smart', but many still get it wrong.

Overhead bin space (or lack thereof) can turn into a nightmare. It's best to pack smart with this simple strategy:

Invest in the right carryon baggage. The cheapest and the biggest are not necessarily the best. Choose two equal-sized bags. One bag should fit under your seat and the other flexible so you can slide it between other bags in the overhead bin.

Business-Eye View: The Security Line

Master the security line when you can — it's an art. The shortest line isn't always the best. Before you choose a security line, do a 'business-eye view': who has unconventional luggage that could be inspected? Who looks like they haven't travelled in a while? Where are the kids? Watch for these situations so you don't get stuck.



Plan an on-boarding routine. This routine makes for a smooth transition from boarding to seat. Organize all your reading material in a compartment or separate bag. When you get to your seat, you can easily access the items. Nothing beats the busy execs who think the aisle is an extension of their office and pull apart their entire bags looking for items while the rest of the passengers are behind them waiting to board.



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Consistency is Key: Electronics

Pick a designated bag or pocket for your electronics and keep it consistent. This lowers the chance of forgetting or losing items. When packing your electronics, check to make sure you have the correct plugs and adapters.

Recharge your gear with a USB port rather than packing numerous cables. Most devices have a USB connection cable for recharging. This is especially helpful when staying at international hotels because electrical outlets aren't always a given.

Get connected ahead of time: Wi-Fi

Check before leaving to see if your hotel offers free Wi-Fi. Some hotels charge excessive fees and don't offer the best service.

If you want to avoid the internet fees, buy an international data plan from your mobile carrier. Most carriers offer affordable international plans which are usually cheaper than daily local rates. Then, use your phone as a hotspot for internet instead of the hotel's questionable Wi-Fi.

Take Care of #1: Eat, sleep and exercise properly

Grabbing a sandwich on the go, working late hours, running to the next meeting — busy business travellers often put themselves second. It's vital to take care of number one- you! Pack your gym gear so you can benefit from your daily workout. Develop a routine that includes proper exercise, healthy eating and getting enough sleep.

One way to maximize sleep, especially for red-eye flights, is to eat before you board. Avoid heavy foods and alcohol as you want to be in top shape when you arrive. The last thing you need is a sugar, alcohol or food hangover.

Last but not least, plan to arrive at the airport and check in *early*. This will give you extra time needed for delays and lineups and should add years to your life!

Travelling may not be as much fun as it was years ago, but it can still be interesting and rewarding.

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