

Traveling: Great Business Travel Tips

For most of us in the business world, business travel is a necessary evil. So, to help you get the most out of your traveling endeavors, I have asked the CarolRoth.com contributor network of entrepreneurs, advisors and experts to share their best business-related travel tips. Their answers are presented below in no particular order.



1. Stay Packed...

I do a lot of back-to-back business travel. To save time, I keep my suitcase partially packed – with a full toiletries kit, basic jewelry, makeup bag, snacks, heels, notebook, pens and business cards always. When I get back from one trip, I repack the basics – pajamas, under-things. Then, I just have to top it off with some business clothes and I'm out the door every time. (Erin Ferree of BrandStyle Design)

2. More Perks!

Usually, just having a smile seems to get me what I want. I always ask when I check in however, if there is an upgrade available, if they give extra points for anything, and what specials might be available. Just last night (although at a stage theater) I asked if I could upgrade my row. Although they don't do exchanges, they made an exception and upgraded me 8 rows. (Gayle Carson of Carson Research Center)

3. Carry On!

I always do carry-on luggage so there is no wait at the airport. I'm at my hotel by the time other travelers are just getting their luggage. And to do so, you must be a good packer. Clothes on the bottom; suits separated by plastic from the dry cleaners (so nothing wrinkles), shoes to match all outfits, toiletries on top. Pack clothes a day ahead and put something heavy on top to get the air out so you have room for even more. (Rosanne Dausilio PhD of Human Technologies Global Inc.)



4. Travel Time, Productive Time

I travel for business over 40 weeks a year. My travel time is my most productive time. I write my blog posts on airplanes. I use hotel time to write my books – I've written over 15 business books. When I check into a hotel, I always ask for local delivery menus. I order in and get to work. If I'm going to be away from home, I want to make the most of my time. Local restaurants and bars don't interest me. Of course, I attend business dinners if that's what the client wants. (Bud Bilanich of The Common Sense Guy)

5. Giftcard Yourself & Save Money

If you're traveling to a "regular" city and you're not taking clients out, a great way to save money is to get a gift card to a chain restaurant(s) you like. You save time, as you know the menu in advance and you potentially save money/hassles over unknown local options/hotel offerings. Of course, make sure that the chain exists where you're staying and this advice is for "regular" meals only – not trying local cuisine. This way, you can focus on business with one less distraction. (David W of Learn About Flow)

6. Travel Nice

Want to speed through security? Want the desk clerk to give you a great room? Want the waiter to let you linger over your client lunch? Be nice. It's amazing how much more you can get accomplished on a biz trip if you are simply nice and polite to everyone you meet. Stuck in a line...happily share about your business. If you're enthusiastic, pleasant and open, you can turn line-ups and flights into relaxation time and "gentle touch" networking. A pocket full of biz cards is fine; a smile is better. (Karen Southall Watts of Karen Southall Watts)



7. Make Travel Profitable

When you're traveling into a city, one of the best ways to make it profitable is to combine purposes. How much business can you do in that city while you're there? For example, can you let your clients know

that you're going to be there and have a consulting day, do a one day training or host a lunch for your clients that they pay to attend? All of these work wonders to make your trips both multi-purpose and more profitable! (Diane Conklin of Complete Marketing Systems)

8. Sleep & Eat FREE!

No trick here – use a credit card that gives rewards for your favorite hotel chain and you can sleep and eat (breakfast) for free. We use our Marriott and Hilton credit cards for lots of business expenses and average around 24 free night stays each year – that's about \$4500 worth of Residence Inn, Hampton Inn and breakfasts for two. Better still, use the cards to pay for business expenses and the rewards for personal trips. Pay yourself to take a long weekend off! (Steve Watson of Watson's Streetworks)

9. The Human Behind the Profile

When traveling, make it a goal to connect with someone you've met on social media. Of course, you want to qualify this connection as safe and relevant to building your business network. Social media makes it possible to gain access to people we ordinarily may never have connected with or to accelerate getting beyond a gatekeeper. If you travel, take the opportunity to turn a virtual connection a human one. After all, that's what successful social media is about – creating real relationships. (Sue Koch of Soaring Solutions, LLC)

10. Target Other Opportunities

Travel is a great opportunity to seek free publicity in another area if ahead of time, you pitch area radio stations or local television with something news worthy or relevant about your business or product and will be able to go into the studio while you're there. (Wendy Kay of WellWealth, LLC)

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