



# Travel Policy and Corporate Culture

Midsized companies have a new set of challenges over larger companies, as they need to attract and retain top talent without the glamour and glitz of a strong brand or mass millennial corporate appeal. It is more important than ever to consider how to utilize the travel policy to add value to the overall employee benefit program. When surveying road warriors in a sales and service environment, the following two facts caught our attention:

## Two Key Facts:

- 85% of very frequent travelers would be interested in a job at a different firm if it offered an attractive travel policy.
- 83% said a travel policy is as important, if not more important, than pay and responsibilities.

In-demand employees are also aware of their market value. When they look for new jobs, they look for a competitive, attractive travel policy. As such, travel managers in the middle market should ensure they understand the importance of business travel in their company's growth efforts.

## Importance of Business Travel

Commercial leaders need to understand the importance of business travel and how it is managed, and likewise, companies need to consider how to make their travel management programs more efficient for those on the road.

1. **It starts with communication** – Let the traveler know the policy is in place because you care about their safety and security. The moderate mandates for booking preferences are not to limit them, but to take advantage of all that you have negotiated to ensure savings for the company while providing full content. Let them know you have done the heavy lifting, and the policy is intended for not just the company's bottom line, but so they remain safe, and you can stay in contact with them under any situation.
2. **Provide the traveler with choice** – Putting a more personalized approach to traveler choice will go a long way. Whether it is a choice of 3- or 4-star hotel properties or a set hotel per diem per city; opportunities for economy upgrades over a 3-hour flight duration; or the option to use shared car services instead of rental cars can make a huge difference. The key component is flexibility to give travelers choices through either your preferred online booking tool or the dedicated travel management company.
3. **Highlight your self-service technology** – What is right for some is not right for everyone, but what you can count on is that the traveler wants convenience, efficiency, and confidence while on the road. They do not want to be inundated with pushed messages, but they do want to know where they are going, what may have disrupted their travel, and then to have easy access



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to their travel management company to immediately make changes on their behalf. Be ready and be proud of what your TMC offers you by way of self-service technology offerings.

4. **Choose your words carefully – show you are listening.** Your travelers will likely read your policy only one time – if you are lucky. Make that opportunity count by ensuring you are using a traveler-centric perspective to the message. Travel is very personal and often emotional. Let them know you have taken their feedback into consideration and have opportunities for ongoing feedback to continue to make the travel policy as responsive to the travelers' needs as possible.