



 CORPORATE TRAVELLER™

Seven Steps to Business Travel Savings



While keeping track of your travel budget can be a time-consuming process, it doesn't have to be.

By following a few simple rules, you can save valuable time for your business, and control your travel costs at the same time. To help you, we've put together seven steps on how you can save time and money on business travel while also streamlining the process for your staff and travellers.

1.

Implement a travel policy

Once you've decided to take control of your business travel budget, start by implementing a company travel policy, creating a set of guidelines for both your business travellers and your travel bookers. This not only gives your travellers a clear idea of what they can book, but also helps you avoid overspending.

While the fine print on your travel policy is up to you, we've made some suggestions below:

- List your preferred airlines and hotels. Dealing with fewer suppliers will give you additional leverage when negotiating rates.
- Set a per night hotel budget for your travellers. Remember though that some cities are more expensive than others, and might need higher allowances.
- Set the classes of cabin that your employees can fly in.
For example, you might want to encourage them to book in Premium Economy rather than Business Class on shorter flights to save costs.
- Include a hierarchy policy, allowing senior employees a higher travel budget than junior employees.
- Set out how far in advance travel should be booked in order to take advantage of advance booking rates.
- Make sure all employees are aware of who approves their travel and the process involved when requesting and booking it.
- Consider implementing a rule where all bookings are made within a certain margin of the cheapest available option.
- Book all travel through a travel management company (TMC) such as Corporate Traveller, thereby increasing the efficiency and ease of your booking process, removing the need for your staff to claim expenses, and giving you added benefits such as exclusive rates and traveller extras.

2.

Stay on top of account management

Once you've written your travel policy, make sure that it is not only adhered to, but also that it supports both your objectives and your travellers' experiences.

It's important to keep track of what your employees are booking and how much they are spending, and to amend your travel policy accordingly. To do this, you should implement a regular review and update of your travel policy and make suggestions on how to reduce your spend.

Identify your high volume destinations and most used hotels and airlines, and negotiate better rates for these. Consider switching your preferred airlines to better value ones, and look at the most commonly used routes to see where savings can be made – you might choose to fly indirectly for example.

Keep up to date with the latest airfare deals and ensure your employees are regularly trained on how to use your online booking systems to obtain the best rates.

Better yet, save your employees the hard work and make use of a TMC who will book, analyse and review your spend for you, while continually looking for new ways to save you money.

3.

Increase your global buying power

Give your company access to the best rates on the market by working with a travel management company with a powerful global negotiation strength such as Corporate Traveller.

As part of the Flight Centre Travel Group, Corporate Traveller offers a very wide range of airfares as well as thousands of flexible corporate rates at hotels all over the globe. This means that no matter what your destination, we'll be able to offer you and your travellers a wide selection of properties all of which fit your travel policy.

4.

Make use of your TMC's airfare expertise

When using a TMC such as Corporate Traveller, you'll be working with travel consultants who have often come from leisure travel or other corporate backgrounds within the Flight Centre Travel Group. They'll be familiar with ticketing complex routes and will have intimate knowledge of the Amadeus global distribution system (GDS) used by most major airlines.

Furthermore, our specialist Air Product and Airfare team are kept up to date with the latest fares, ensuring you always have access to the best rates.

They know a few tricks of the trade that will help you get the most out of your airfares. They'll tell you for example that it's always better value to book as early as possible. In 2016, the average client booking through Corporate Traveller saved 28.4% on the cost of a domestic flight when booking 22–30 days in advance, compared with clients who booked just 3–7 days before travel.

Your TMC will also advise you that rather than choosing fully flexible fares, you can actually save with semi-flexible fares, which allow changes for a small fee. And that booking different cabins for the outbound and inbound journeys can in fact reduce the overall price of a return ticket, especially when flights are busy.

5.

Sign up to corporate loyalty programmes

Save time and money and get rewards by signing up to corporate loyalty programmes for your preferred airlines. Encouraging your staff to sign up for the airline's individual traveller loyalty schemes can often lead to benefits to your travellers at no additional cost to your company.

Just like rewards schemes offered by airlines, many large hotel chains also have loyalty programmes, allowing subscribers to collect points each time they book. These points are later exchanged for discounts and freebies, making further savings for your business as well as increasing your travellers' enjoyment.

Take Marriott for example, whose loyalty programme allows your travellers to exchange their points for retail gift cards and free hotel nights across the Marriott brands, as well as premium experiences such as concert tickets and sporting events.

The British Airways OnBusiness scheme allows you to earn points each time your travellers fly with British Airways, American Airlines, Iberia and their eligible partners, which can be spent on cabin upgrades and reward flights. Better yet, if you book flights using British Airways American Express Corporate Card or Corporate Card Plus, you can earn 50% more points. Meanwhile, any of your staff signed up to BA's Executive Club will continue to earn Avios points as they fly.

Continuing the trend, Emirates Business Rewards programme gives 1 Business Rewards Point for every USD1 spent with Emirates. Companies can register as many employees or guest travellers as they like and points can be redeemed against travel in any class or for one-way or return class upgrades on most Emirates flights.

6.

Look for cost-free extras

Usually, in order to qualify for an upgrade or negotiate a discounted rate at a hotel, you would need to guarantee booking at least 100 nights there. This can be a tall order for many companies, especially those with a small to medium sized travel spend. That's where a travel management company (TMC) such as Corporate Traveller comes in.

As part of the Flight Centre Travel Group, we have access to the Flight Centre Global Hotel Programme: one easy to use booking solution with a wide selection of hotels all available in one place, allowing you to enjoy discounted corporate rates without the volume of bookings usually required by a hotel programme.

Corporate Traveller's SmartSTAY programme also brings with it additional extras that make the stay even more comfortable for your travellers, such as free breakfast, late and early check-ins and free upgrades which, when added to the bottom line savings you'll benefit from, makes for a pretty irresistible combination.

7.

Make use of travel technology

It's essential to keep abreast of the latest developments in travel technology, as these can be your gateway to booking stress-free, discounted travel. For example, an online booking tool, designed for simple point to point domestic travel, could increase productivity for your travel bookers, as well as offering discounted transaction fees.

At Corporate Traveller, our technology platform **YOUR.CT** can be used to create and manage traveller profiles, check and process visa requirements, and to house online booking tools for flights, hotels, car hire and rail.

About Corporate Traveller

Corporate Traveller specialises in providing business travel management for medium and large sized corporates. We offer a tailored approach based on the perfect blend of expertise and technology to ensure your travel is right for your business.

For almost 20 years Corporate Traveller has worked with businesses just like yours. We're here to help you grow by making the business of travel easier. Building personal relationships with our clients and offering best in class service sets us apart from other travel management companies. Corporate Traveller is part of the Flight Centre Travel Group, and is a proud level 1 BBBEE contributor. When you partner with us, you partner with South Africa's most experienced and trusted travel team.

