

Business Travel on Short Notice

In any travel situation, the further in advance you can plan your trip, the better you will do on all of your accommodations. But in the world of business, it often occurs that you have to get to a destination immediately and the ability to move swiftly is critical to the success of the business goal. The good news is that you can do some preparations well in advance for short notice business trips so you are not caught completely without a plan.

You don't want to have to flounder around about how to book a flight and where to stay if the business journey looms suddenly and immediately. Short notice business trips seem to be endemic of certain industries and job descriptions so if you know you will go through this drill often, you can make some arrangements far in advance so you have a checklist of just what to do when you find out that you must be at your destination virtually immediately.

First of all, in a short notice travel situation, economy takes a second priority. Your employer knows that if you have to book full fare on an airline to get to your destination at a specific time, the higher expense is unavoidable. Make sure that your company travel policy has some clauses to put aside travel budget limits in such a scenario.

The part of the trip where you will have the least "wobble room" will be airline accommodations. Of course, you can use the big internet search tools like Travelocity or Orbitz. In general, those are good places to start to find what airlines do have flights at your specified times. But once you pick an airline, working through the airline's web site directly will show you the most options they can offer and sometimes provide you with better fares, even on short notice. Be sure you watch the travel details closely so you don't find yourself enduring long layovers that are going to jeopardize the tight timetable of the business meetings you need to attend. If necessary, spend the money on nonstop flights to assure that the business goal of the trip is top priority.

Do your homework about hotel accommodations well in advance. If there are likely destinations that you could be called upon to go to quickly, you can do your research on the closest hotels to the business site so you cut down on commutes once you are there. By having your target hotels bookmarked and the phone numbers on file, you can quickly call and set up your accommodations in a matter of minutes. But if you find that your best choices for hotels are booked up on the days you will be at your site, call them anyway. A good hotel will call around to other hotels in the area and get you a room as close to your destination as possible. They can save you hours of frustration searching for a replacement room.

Rental cars are usually not as much of a problem. It's a good idea to call ahead and get a reservation but short of a major convention or sporting event in town, there are so many rental car agencies that you should be able to find a car to rent even if you don't start your search until you are on the ground at your destination city.

You can make other preparations for the possibility of a short notice business trip like having your toiletries and personal affects you always travel with packed and ready to walk out the door. By having your travel clothes ready to go, you can virtually walk home and walk out in a matter of minutes for a short notice business trip because you are that well prepared.

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