

## The Wear and Tear of the Road

There is very much a difference between business travel that may last a day or two or even a week compared to the life some business people must go through who travel continuously for weeks or months on end. But it is a necessity of some areas of business that professionals representing that business do stay out on the road for a very long time. These road warriors are examples of people who understand the wear and tear the road can cause on the body, mind and spirit after months of continuous travel.

As humans, we are designed to have homes and nest. So the life on the road runs against that natural instinct to settle in one place and rest there. So the first challenge of traveling continuously is finding ways to replicate a "normal life" despite the constant travel. The one factor that can help with combating road weariness is the psychological factor of familiarity.

Because business persons who travel for many weeks may not see the same people for very long and often move from city to city, the hotels and restaurants eventually begin to blur into one place and the desire for the familiar and "home" starts to make itself known. So one way to provide that sense of sameness is routine. Even on the road, one can establish a routine that you can look forward to each evening. Whether that means watching the same television shows, scheduling your calls home at the same time each day or week or establishing hotel room rituals, by maintaining a "sameness" no matter where you are living at any given time gives the traveler that sense of normalcy that is missing in a life of nonstop travel.

Oddly enough, role models for living successfully on the road are some rock and roll bands who have been living such a life for years if not decades. If you examine their approach to touring, the ones that live that life for very long learn quickly to avoid substance abuse and live a healthy lifestyle. While the typical businessperson doesn't have to get up and perform on stage for thousands, it is important to sleep well and see your digestive systems and regularity remain stable during the constant change of travel.

That may mean establishing an exercise regime that you simply do not break. A morning run followed by a sauna and a light but healthy breakfast not only can get your day off on the right foot, it can confirm your routine and that you are in charge of your lifestyle on the road, not the hotel or the circumstances around you.

Another lesson we can witness from professional musicians who travel a great deal is an intense devotion to professionalism. For the musician, they are on

the road for one and only one thing, to put on great shows for their fans. That focus can keep them centered for long periods of time. We can translate that focus to what we are about as we set out on a long business journey. By focusing on what we are on the road to achieve and give that 100% of our best efforts, that will give us validation when we find success at every stop along the way.

Musicians who learn to survive the road learn to take care of each other and use a sense of family and mutual support to get through a tough tour schedule. If you are traveling with others from your business, that same mutual support can go a long way to toward helping each you survive the experience. Talk openly about the challenges of traveling for such lengthy periods of time. Form an accountability structure to your professional friendships so each of you is looking out for the other. If you can get everybody out for that morning jog, soon your ability to work as a team goes beyond just how you function during meetings but you become a mutually supportive team in getting through the rigors of an aggressive business travel schedule.

By looking at the challenge of surviving the wear and tear of the road as one of life's great adventures, you can gain an energy and a resolve to win each and every day of your business journey. And that resolve will be contagious for your fellow business travelers which translate into greater success in your business ventures during the trip as well.