

## Walking in New York

Business travel can be enjoyable and a productive activity. The steps you take to assure your meetings are a success are the same you will do back at your home office. But they are made more complex by the act of "taking your show on the road". But sometimes the challenges of business travel involve how to handle your personal affairs efficiently and safely even as you focus on your business affairs.

Business travel can take you to many different destination environments. In the same business travel year, you could find yourself on the beaches of Miami, in the exotic café's of San Francisco or in a heavy urban center such as Philadelphia or New York. As a business traveler, your goal is to make your stay as uneventful as possible.

But businesses travel can be dangerous. Just because you are on the corporate expense account, that doesn't mean that those who would victimize travelers will pass you over. So it's important you have a plan to assure your safety on your travels. Probably one of the most vulnerable experiences you may have is finding yourself on foot in an urban setting. Whether you are just taking a walk or you find yourself on foot to return to your hotel, if that short walk occurs after dark or in a setting where you feel there might be a risk, it can be a very disconcerting feeling.

So it's good to have some techniques to take yourself out of a risk category should you find yourself in that situation. In my travels, I found myself in New York quite often. New York is a town where walking from place to place is not that uncommon. So an experienced business traveler gave me some good advice on how to walk about in a town like New York and remove yourself from danger even before it befalls you. These tips can be useful in just about any urban city in the world. And when you have some good ideas about how to navigate such a situation, your confidence level goes up. Some of my friend's tips included...

\* Don't stare up. Don't look like tourist by staring at the tall buildings. Walk like someone who has been here for years.

\* Don't take out your wallet. Get to an indoor location to look at your wallet. Don't give anyone a signal of where your valuables are on your person.

\* Walk with intention. Walk as if you are late for an appointment. Be in a hurry and impatient with others on the street. Look slightly irritated and in a hurry. Don't look like a victim.

\* Don't make eye contact. In an urban setting, the others on the street

are not people to you. Don't look at them or give them a chance to get your attention. Look bored.

\* Keep an escape route. If you are walking on a sidewalk, you can walk very close to the street. Keep an eye on the street itself. If you sense the rush of an assailant, you can dash right into traffic and disrupt moving vehicles. It is guaranteed that no mugger wants to carry out his crime in that situation.

\* Make a fuss. If you see a situation evolving that could be dangerous, create a stir on the street. Get in the middle of the biggest and noisiest situation you can find or create. Noise and crowds frighten off assailants every time.

These are simple rules but they can be used in almost any urban setting you may encounter. So keep these guidelines tucked away. The moment when become useful won't announce itself. So if you are ready to walk in New York, like a New Yorker, your ability to stay out of danger will pay off.

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