



Business Travel

10 Ways to Avoid Business Trip Pitfalls *by Pauline Mitchell*



Pack these streetwise tips in your back pocket to foil crafty culprits and prevent other travel dangers.



Beware distraction. Scam artists will create a commotion by bumping into people, spilling things and creating diversions while they or a colleague steal wallets and other valuables. Be on guard, especially in airports and hotels where you may be preoccupied by unfamiliar surroundings.



Hot spot hackers. Hackers have a field day at airports, cafes, and other free Wi-Fi zones by setting up phony free Wi-Fi connections that are really ad-hoc networks that let them steal your data. Turn off file sharing, disable ad-hoc connections and don't connect to anything you aren't certain is a legitimate access infrastructure.



The plane truth. In-flight theft occurs mostly from carry-ons stored in overhead bins. Keep carry-ons in sight at all times and store them under your feet if possible. Never leave laptops and mobile devices overhead.



Be secure at security. Avoid letting your carry-on go through security before you do. Make sure you're able to see your possessions at all times so no one removes them from the conveyor belt while you're waiting to go through the metal detector.



Hotels on guard. Request a guest room safe to store your valuables. Hotels designed with a central lobby where guests and visitors must pass through add a measure of safety over facilities where rooms can be accessed from the outside.



Buddy system. Remember there's safety in numbers; travel and dine with a group if possible. Never let an unfamiliar person have access to your room.



Meddle detector. Never put your laptop in checked luggage. Scanners won't hurt laptops but metal detectors can, so, if asked, request a hand check instead. And keep a vigilant eye on your business tools at all times. According to a Ponemon Institute Study conducted in 2008, more than 12,000 laptops are lost each week in U.S. airports alone.



A lot to like. Ask where the valet is parking your car to make sure it's in a secure lot and not on a nearby street. If you are travelling alone, ask your hotel to provide an escort to the parking area.



Night out. Plan your free-time entertainment and purchase tickets in advance of your trip for sporting events, concerts or other live entertainment to avoid dealing with scalpers and overpriced tickets.



Stay connected. Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada offers a free registration service for Canadians travelling abroad to be contacted and assisted by government officials in case of an emergency like a natural disaster or civil unrest, or to be informed about an emergency at home. Online registration is available at The Registration of Canadians Abroad (ROCA).

voyage.gc.ca/register. *

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