

START SOMETHING SPECTACULAR!

CAREERS IN TOURISM – TRAVEL CONSULTANT

Travel consultants provide information, advice and booking services for people wishing to travel. They sell travel and tourism-related products, and may be employed by travel agencies, government tourist bureaux, tourism wholesalers and airline and shipping companies.

Duties and Tasks

A travel consultant may perform the following tasks:

- provide literature and information to clients concerning local, interstate and international tours, travel routes, accommodation, fares and travel regulations
- discuss client requirements and advise on suitable options
- plan, prepare and cost itineraries for clients
- make travel, accommodation and related bookings
- confirm bookings and notify clients of luggage limits, insurance, medical, passport, visa and currency requirements
- issue tickets for travel, accommodation vouchers and all relevant documentation
- collect payments and maintain records of transactions
- assist with changes to travel arrangements and bookings where required.



Travel consultants in large organisations may specialise in particular areas such as international or domestic travel. Ongoing learning is important to those working in the industry.

Work Conditions

Working in a travel agency! It conjures up images of travel to distant and exotic places with camel rides and climbing up snow-topped peaks or basking in the sun on a tropical beach. Unfortunately, the reality is not quite like that. Travel consultants work in offices usually at computers and most of the travel they do is in the mind, although they do get access to cheap fares and sometimes go on a famil, which is checking out a destination. However, the work is fun as you get to plan people's holidays, and you do meet lots of people.

Most travel consultants work on a commission basis and work long hours including weekends, often working 10-hour days. The position can be stressful, with meeting deadlines and problem-solving being a major part of the job. Because there is always so much new information to absorb - new travel packages, computer reservation systems, visa requirements and so on - ongoing learning is important to those working in the industry.

Personal Requirements

- good communication skills
- strong customer focus
- good organisational skills
- strong computer and written skills
- able to work in a team
- high level of personal presentation
- able to work under pressure
- enjoy working with people
- a strong sales focus



Education/Training

You can work as a travel consultant without formal qualifications. You will probably get some informal training on the job. However, there are formal qualifications available, and these may assist you in gaining employment and advancing within the industry.

To be a qualified travel consultant, you need to have either a Certificate III in Tourism (Retail Travel Sales) or a Certificate III in Tourism (International Retail Travel Sales). If you wish to have your own agency, you need to be licensed which includes having the appropriate certificate as well as on-the-job experience.

Certificate III in Tourism (Retail Travel Sales) is the qualification required to be a domestic travel agent

Certificate III in Tourism (International Retail Travel Sales) is the required certificate to be an international travel agent

Other qualifications are available to help travel consultants to move forward into supervisory and management positions in the retail travel industry, or related positions within the broader tourism industry, such as sales and marketing or management.

Employment Opportunities

Job opportunities depend on the level of tourism activity. While the industry is growing, competition for positions is very strong.

Employment prospects tend to be better for people who can demonstrate both formal qualifications and relevant experience. It is generally accepted that there is a surplus of retail travel graduates. Employers are often reluctant to employ graduates fresh from training programs, without relevant experience.

You can specialise in domestic or international travel, or in some companies you can do both. You may work for a small private company, or be part of a large chain. Most airlines also have travel agencies. Some agents specialise in corporate or group bookings. Others conduct all their business via the Web. As things are becoming computerised and many customers now book their own tickets, the role is changing slightly to one of providing advice and customer service. Some related jobs include working in a tour company, a government tourist body, or working in a visitor information centre.

Some travel consultants set up their own agencies. Individuals or companies who wish to operate a travel agency must be licensed to operate. For more information, refer to your state licensing body.

For more information

Career Gateway www.careergateway.serviceskills.com.au	Career Gateway helps parents and career advisors, employers and students with career information
Australian Job Outlook www.jobsearch.gov.au	Australian government website that provides information on job prospects, weekly earnings, type of work and other useful occupational information.
Wagenet www.wagenet.gov.au	The aim of this site is to help you find information about wages and conditions of employment.
Year 12 What Next? www.year12whatnext.gov.au	Australian government website designed to help Year 12 students plan their post school education and training
My Future www.myfuture.edu.au	Australian government website containing comprehensive career information.
My Hospitality www.myhospitality.com.au	Free Australian hospitality industry and trade directory, employment provider and information source