

Five reasons to embark on a career in travel

According to job search site, CareerCast.com, lumberjacking, broadcasting or newspaper reporting is officially the three worst careers to date - but what's the coolest career for up-and-coming millennials or Gen Zs entering the workforce?



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Travel consultants at Flight Centre recommend that the travel industry is where you need to set your sights.

Here's five reasons why:

Write your own salary check

Working in the travel industry will give you great exposure to understanding business and entrepreneurship. Moreover, the earning potential in the travel industry is phenomenal, says Lee Ziervogel, travel expert at Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG). "With uncapped commission, I get to write my own paycheck. I decide each month what I earn. If I work hard, I get a great salary. It's as simple as that."

Opportunity to travel the world

Although you won't be gallivanting around the world every two months – there is work to be done after all – there are some opportunities to travel.

“It’s not all fun, sun and palm trees. That’s what we sell, not what we do every day,” laughs Ziervogel. However, he’s quick to add that the opportunities to travel are certainly there. “You get to travel if you work for it. The harder you work, the more likely you are to create your own experience. I recently got to travel to Hawaii because I was the top consultant for my training group in the country.”

“I thought I’d be jetting off every two months to new destinations and see hotels and resorts, but that’s not so much the case,” says Mosima Matlatla, Flight Centre travel consultant. She explains it’s interesting to see how things work behind the scenes. “Most people think travelling is very expensive and beyond their reach. The truth is you can get to Thailand for R9,000. You can actually go on holiday, but a lot of people don’t know how. As a travel consultant, you get to know the secrets.”

“Travelling the world at discounted rates make this career awesome,” says Andrew Chisamba, a future business leader at the Flight Centre Travel Group.

FCTG learner, Mpho Khotso Thulo says he has always wanted to work in travel and hopes his career will allow him to see the world. “Since I could read an atlas and understand countries, I’ve wanted to work in travel. I’m hoping my career at Flight Centre will allow me to travel more.”

Meeting interesting people and gaining valuable knowledge

“You meet the most amazing people when you’re travelling or even when you’re dealing with travellers. You get a glimpse into other people’s dreams, ambitions and ways of life,” says Thulo.

Chisamba adds that by working in travel, you’ll gain invaluable knowledge which helps you to develop an inquisitive mind. “It is through this knowledge that one has the confidence to apply for a visa to faraway lands and to venture the globe without fear of the unknown.”

Growth opportunities

At Flight Centre, the company believes in developing business leaders of tomorrow and consultants agree. FCTG is an accredited training provider and has as its goal is to develop a business school with accredited trainers that deliver a career-relevant education to help people develop their skills and earn qualifications that are nationally recognised.

In December, it will be just two years since Ziervogel started at Flight Centre, but he has moved up the ranks quickly. “I’ve been assistant manager, team leader, and currently on the fast-track programme, which means I’m trained to be ready for future leadership positions that may become available. A lot of things are happening for me since I started in travel.”

“I have a five-year plan to become a team leader at Flight Centre, and I know that is a possibility,” says also Thulo.

Leon van der Bergh only started at the beginning of the month with his training programme at Flight Centre. However, he has great ambitions. “There are so many growth opportunities with Flight Centre. My dream is to be MD.”

Making people’s dreams come true

Every travel consultant at Flight Centre agreed that the topmost reason why a travel career is awesome is that you get to make people’s dreams a reality.

“My first job was as an accountant in a travel agency, but a few months into the job, it dawned on me that balancing the books in the back office on my own was not what I wanted in life,” says Chisamba.

“My passion was not for balancing the books. Rather, to enrich people’s lives through planning their travels. You can’t believe the emotion involved in these trips whether you’re dealing with first-time travellers, honeymooners, important

business deals, or even the birth of grandchildren. It's amazing to see someone's face light up after they've booked a holiday," says Thulo.

Ziervogel adds: "It's a fantastic feeling to be able to send people to all these cool places. You're part of the whole booking experience. It might be your client's tenth trip. It might be first-time parents who take their children on a trip. Or you get to experience the excitement of a grandchild who hasn't seen their grandparents before."

Although Van der Bergh hasn't had much exposure to the travel industry, he says: "Every day, as I hear more about the industry, I realise I'll be making people's dreams come true. That, for me, is the most exciting thing."

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