



HOW TO UPDATE YOUR TRAVEL POLICY TO FIT YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE: 5 KEY FACTORS

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Is your company reviewing its travel policy on an annual basis? If the answer is no, not only are you missing out on uncovering new cost-saving opportunities and keeping up with industry trends, but also it may no longer represent your company's culture.

Why Does Company Culture Matter?

Companies with a healthy culture have many advantages, from increased employee productivity and retention to stronger client relationships. So how does this relate to your travel policy? A travel policy is an outward reflection of the values, beliefs and behaviors of your company and its employees. Brand image, visibility, budget requirements, thoughts about employee comfort and safety are just a few of the factors that come into play. And as no two companies are alike, the best policies are hand-tailored to reflect these individual characteristics.

If updating your policy feels overwhelming, remember you don't have to go it alone. Your travel management company should guide you through the maze of industry-specific best practices, help you write effective Duty of Care guidelines, and offer recommendations for management tools and cost-saving programs. Your travel policy is the living document at the heart of your travel program, and if they aren't willing to help keep it viable, perhaps it's time to find a partner who will.

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Culture Matters: Five Key Factors to Consider When Updating Your Travel Policy

It's All About the Brand

Which hotels your employees stay in and what class they fly speaks volumes about your company's culture, not to mention how much you value your top talent. Are you the fashionable upstart whose employees stay in trendy boutique hotels? Do you win clients by making a show of your frugality? Whatever the answer, your travel policy should reflect the image you want to project.

Buying Time

A travel policy can be an effective tool for empowering productivity. If your people routinely work long hours and go the extra mile, make sure they can be as productive as possible while traveling. Consider lounge memberships, in-flight Wi-Fi subscriptions and allowances for seats with enough legroom to work comfortably while flying. Such expenses may start to look nominal when compared to hours of lost productivity.

Do the Right Thing

A travel policy should be tailored to fit the needs of your employees, but it can also be a powerful tool for encouraging desired behavior. Are your employees aware of the cost-saving benefits of booking flights ahead of time or traveling mid-week? Implementing a well-considered policy can bring visibility to decisions and empower employees to make savvy choices.

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Rule Followers and Rule Breakers

Every company has its own unwritten rules that affect the success of even the most well-written travel policies. Often, these cultural norms trickle down from the top. Are your company leaders setting a positive example for others to follow, or do they have a cavalier attitude toward regulation? Educating senior management about the company-wide benefits of adhering to the policy can go a long way toward increasing compliance. Policies should be consistent for salespeople, directors and the C-Suite.

Remember, Things Change

A travel policy is a living document, it should be open to revision and remain flexible. Technology will change, your company's culture will evolve, your employees' needs, preferences and expectations will shift. Not to mention, cost-saving opportunities within the travel industry are constantly in flux. For these reasons, and many others, you and your travel management company should reevaluate your policy at least once a year.

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