



GENERATIONAL TRAVEL DIFFERENCES: HOW AGE IMPACTS YOUR BUSINESS TRAVEL POLICY

BERIT GRIFFIN

There's a generation gap in almost everything, including business travel. Travel and procurement managers are finding that the newest generation in the workforce – Millennials – prefers to travel a little bit differently.

Here are some key differences in the business travel generation gap.

NON-MILLENNIAL	MILLENNIAL
<p>Old-school, follows the rules. These employees are used to corporate travel policies and generally draw within the lines on business trips.</p>	<p>Since these travelers are new to the workforce, they don't have the benefit of years of workplace experience. Business travel can be unfamiliar to them, and a good travel policy can be a manager's best friend.</p>
<p>Whether Baby Boomers or Xers, these employees weren't born in the digital age. It's not that they're not tech-savvy, it's just that they are used to more in-person contact, like calling a travel agent, or booking a trip via their laptop.</p>	<p>Talking? On the phone? No way! Millennials want to use their smartphones to easily book trips, and while they want (and need) the support of a corporate travel agent, they are geared towards text communications.</p>



NON-MILLENNIAL	MILLENNIAL
<p>A quiet hotel room with a comfortable bed. A car waiting for them at the airport. Older business travelers typically want a smooth, easy work trip. Using suppliers (like hotel chains) with across-the-board quality can be very important to them. They're often not overly concerned with their travel experience, as long as there's nothing to write home about. In this case unremarkable = good.</p>	<p>A boring hotel room might not hit quite the right note for younger business travelers. They want an experience, making it all about the sharing economy. Being able to rent a room in a cool city apartment, with a host who knows all the local hot spots for dinner, is infinitely more interesting to them than a stay at a hotel. Unlike non-Millennials, these business travelers are all about taking joy in the journey. Oh, and car rental? They'd rather Uber, thanks.</p>
<p>There's nothing like personal contact. Older generations grew up with the ideal of closing a business deal with a handshake. And since at least some of their time in the workforce was before the digital era, it can make sense to them to invest in business travel.</p>	<p>Millennials are used to things like instant messaging, video conferencing and working from home. It's not that they don't value personal contact, they just see efficiencies in getting business done via a video conference call instead of flying to see their client.</p>
<p>Despite feeling it is important to conduct business face-to-face, non-Millennials often want to head home as soon as the trip is over. They often have families and homes that need attention, so they're eager to hop on a plane ASAP.</p>	<p>Bleisure is the name of the game for Millennials. With more freedom in their personal lives, and less vacation time, adding on a few days of fun to a business trip makes a lot of sense. Bleisure travel can help workers of any age feel more satisfied with their work, and it is especially popular with the younger generation of employees.</p>

Bottom Line

No matter how old your travelers are (and most likely, they run the gamut of ages), it's important to know and account for generational differences. An experienced partner like Travel Leaders Group can be a great resource to make sure that all your employee travelers are taken care of, so your business can keep humming along.