
TIPS FROM A BANKING ROAD WARRIOR

7 ways to make friendlier skies for you and fellow passengers

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As many of you know, our consulting and law firms work with community banks in every state in the nation. As I like to kid people, we represent 20% of the banks in Hawaii (there are only 5), approximately 10% of the banks in Vermont (there are only 12), etc. Because of the opportunities we have representing our community bank client base nationwide, I also have the opportunity to spend a significant portion of my time traveling this great country.

I often get asked, "How do you manage to keep your sanity while traveling 250-275 days a year?"

My usual response is "What sanity?"

The people are better than the food

You certainly have to have the temperament to survive the experience of traveling through all our major and minor airports on almost a daily basis. Not surprisingly, I suppose, some of the people who have become my friends over the years are airport service personnel in airports through which I regularly travel.

(I do not include TSA officers in that listing of "friends." I have found most of them simply are not that "friendly." I suppose I should feel close to them, however, being regularly groped, patted down, "strip searched," photographed naked, and the like.)

I also have the opportunity to regularly witness folks who simply are not fit for a traveling lifestyle. This includes the business person who goes ballistic because his flight has been canceled. Unfortunately, that individual's wrath is generally directed toward the only person who can help him get somewhere else, i.e. the gate or airline representative.

Seems kind of counter-productive to me!

You definitely have to have the temperament to do this, particularly in the summertime when there are even more than the usual number of crying babies, whining toddlers, and, understandably, grouchy parents.

The payoff, however, is that you meet some wonderful people in the service industry and you get to visit virtually every nook and cranny of this great country. I consider myself fortunate.

Friending the flying skies

To assist those of you who do not have this wonderful experience of traveling the country on a weekly basis, I thought I would give a couple of pointers as you take final summer vacations or plan fall getaways, or are making plans for the fall round of trade association meetings and seminars:

1. Build in plenty of time. Airplanes run late and connections get missed. If you have an important meeting to be at, give yourself plenty of time to get there, even if it means getting in the night before.

2. Don't take yourself or anybody else too seriously. After all, it is just a means of transportation for getting from one place to the other.

3. Don't get chatty where it isn't wanted. Please do not try to talk to folks (like me) who are trying to work on the airplane.

4. Don't be an obnoxious drunk. A drunk is okay, but an obnoxious drunk is really annoying.

5. Be nice to the flight attendants. They have a tough job to do.

6. When the airlines lose your luggage, as they will, don't worry. Unless you are going to some undeveloped country, you can generally buy what you need.

7. Chill out and enjoy!

I hope this helps and I hope everyone has a great holiday weekend coming up.

About the Author

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