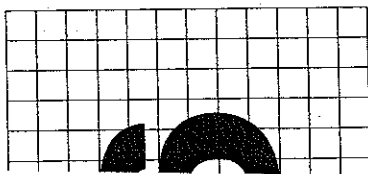


THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY



Of all the industries worldwide, travel and tourism continues to grow at an astounding rate. Nearly everyone tries to take at least one vacation every year, and many people travel frequently on business. Some travel for education or for that special honeymoon or anniversary trip. And where there's travel, there are foreign languages and opportunities for those who speak more than one language. In this industry, unlike in the fields of interpreting and translating, languages are considered secondary assets—not the primary skills you would need to get hired. But secondary or not, if you don't speak another language, your chances for landing a plum travel industry job fade. Given two candidates with equal degrees, training, and qualifications, both personable, well-groomed, and people oriented, but one speaks only English and the other both English and fairly decent Spanish (or French, or Italian, or German . . .), the choice is obvious.

So, if you have adequate language skills and would love to use them in an industry that values international culture and differences, consider travel and tourism. The industry needs multilingual people to cater to foreign clients, draw up and negotiate contracts, do sales presentations in foreign languages, and communicate with international clientele. The following areas within travel and tourism can provide exciting careers for those with the necessary skills and qualifications—and language capabilities.

HOTEL, RESORT, AND CRUISE STAFF

Hotels and resorts in areas frequented by international travelers and cruise lines with an international clientele need a variety of staff—and would prefer that staff to be bi- or multilingual. There are many different positions within hotels, resorts, and cruise lines; the following are most likely to attract candidates with foreign language skills.

Hotel and Resort Managers

Managers are responsible for the efficient and profitable operation of their establishments. In a small hotel, motel, or inn with a limited staff, a single manager may direct all aspects of operations. However, large hotels may employ hundreds of workers, and the manager may be aided by a number of assistant managers responsible for various aspects of operations among departments. Assistant managers must see to it that the day-to-day operations of their departments meet the general manager's standards.

The general manager has overall responsibility for the operation of the hotel. Within guidelines established by the owners of the hotel or executives of the hotel chain, the general manager sets room rates, allocates funds to departments, approves expenditures, and establishes standards for service to guests, decor, housekeeping, food quality, and banquet operations.

Resident managers live in hotels and are on call twenty-four hours a day to resolve any problems or emergencies, although they normally work an eight-hour day. As the most senior assistant manager, a resident manager oversees the day-to-day operations of the hotel. In many hotels, the general manager also serves as the resident manager.

Front office managers coordinate reservations and room assignments and train and direct the hotel's front desk staff, which deals with the public. They ensure that guests are handled courteously and efficiently, complaints and problems are resolved, and requests for special services are carried out.

Food and beverage managers direct the food services of hotels, overseeing the operation of hotels' restaurants, cocktail lounges, and banquet facilities. They supervise and schedule food and beverage preparation, supervise service workers, plan menus, estimate costs, and deal with food suppliers as well as customers.

Convention services managers coordinate the activities of large hotels' various departments for meetings, conventions, and other special events. They meet with representatives of groups or organizations to plan the number of rooms to reserve, the desired configuration of hotel meeting space, and any banquet services needed. During the meeting or event, they resolve unexpected problems and monitor activities to check that hotel operations conform to the expectations of the group.

Other assistant managers may be specialists responsible for activities such as personnel, accounting and office administration, marketing and sales, purchasing, security, maintenance, and recreational facilities.

Cruise Staff

Probably everyone, at one time or another, has seen reruns of "The Love Boat" on television and watched Julie, Doc, Isaac, Gopher, and Captain Stubing go about their daily activities, interacting with passengers while ensuring everyone has the best vacation ever. Although the series might not exactly mirror reality, being part of a cruise ship staff can be fun and exciting, with the opportunity to travel to exotic ports, meet all different kinds of people, make new friends, and lead a carefree lifestyle.

Cruise lines employ all sorts of personnel to handle the many tasks involved with running a ship. A smaller ship with 850 passengers might have over 400 crew members; larger ships that carry 2,500 or so passengers employ up to 1,000 crew members. The "marine crew"—the captain, seamen, deck officers, oilers, and engineering officers—generally come from the ship's country of origin. Most of the jobs open to Americans are as part of the "hotel crew."

To fully understand what a cruise ship is like, think of it as a hotel that floats. Just as hotels have different personalities and amenities, so do cruises. Some are deluxe, offering the best food and service, as would an elegant hotel. Other cruises are more casual and fun, filled with activities that cater to a young crowd. Whatever style the cruise, most employ crews to work in the following positions:

Accountant	Doctor/Nurse	Reservationist
Assistant Cruise Director	Entertainer	Sales Manager
Beautician	Gift Shop Manager/Assistant	Shore Excursions Director
Casino Operator	Photographer	Sports/Fitness Director
Cruise Director	Port Lecturer	Stewards
Cruise Staff/Activities	Purser	Waiters/Waitresses
Disc Jockey		Youth Counselor

Job titles and responsibilities vary from ship to ship. Cruise staff put in long hours—anywhere from eight to fifteen hours a day, seven days a week—and must maintain a high level of energy and always be cordial and friendly to the passengers.

When in port, most of the crew are allowed to go ashore and have time off to explore, although some cruise staff function as chaperones, helping passengers find their way around foreign locales. Shipboard activities usually follow a rigid schedule, with little time in between for the crew to take a break. With a constant eye on their watches, cruise staff run from one activity to another, announcing games over the loudspeaker, setting up the deck for exercise classes, supervising ring-toss tournaments or other special events, and encouraging everyone to participate.

An outgoing, energetic individual would be in his element in such a job; someone lacking those skills would find the work very difficult.

Median annual earnings of hotel managers and assistants were \$26,700 in 1998. The middle 50 percent of these workers earned between \$19,820 and \$34,690. The lowest 10 percent had earnings of less than \$14,430, while the top 10 percent earned over \$45,520. In 1997, median annual earnings in the lodging industry, where nearly all of these workers are employed, were \$28,600.

Salaries of hotel managers and assistants vary greatly according to their responsibilities and the segment of the hotel industry in which they are employed. Managers in some hotels may earn bonuses up to 25 percent of their basic salary and may also be furnished with lodging, meals, parking, laundry,

and other services. In addition to typical benefits, some hotels offer profit-sharing plans and educational assistance to their employees.

Earnings of hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks also vary considerably depending on the location, size, and type of establishment in which they work. For example, clerks at large luxury hotels and those located in metropolitan and resort areas generally pay clerks more than less-exclusive or "budget" establishments and those located in less-populated areas. In addition to their hourly wage, full-time information clerks who work evenings, nights, weekends, or holidays may receive shift differential pay.

Salaries for Cruise Staff

While salaries are not overly generous, the additional benefits are provided with free food and housing while shipboard. It's not necessary for a full-time employee of a cruise line to maintain quarters ashore, and therefore most of the salary can be saved. Cruise ships also sail to exotic ports, giving staff members the chance to travel and meet people from all over the world.

Training for Hotel Personnel

At many hotels, on-the-job training is possible at all levels of employment, but completing a formal training program will help you compete. Without experience, you might very well get hired but start at the bottom of the ladder. With a college degree in hotel management or a related field, you could walk into an assistant manager position or be offered a place in a management training program.

In the past, most managers were promoted from the ranks of front desk clerks, housekeepers, waiters, chefs, and hotel sales workers. Although some people still advance to hotel management positions without the benefit of education or training beyond high school, postsecondary education is increasingly important. A bachelor's degree in hotel and restaurant administration provides particularly strong preparation for a career in hotel management, although a college liberal arts degree may be sufficient when coupled with related hotel experience.

Restaurant management training or experience is a good background for entering hotel management because the success of a hotel's food service and beverage operations is often of great importance to the profitability of the entire establishment.

More than 160 colleges and universities offer bachelor's and graduate programs in this field. More than 800 community and junior colleges, technical institutes, vocational and trade schools, and other academic institutions also have programs leading to an associate degree or other formal recognition in hotel or restaurant management. Graduates of hotel or restaurant management programs usually start as trainee assistant managers, or at least advance to such positions more quickly.

Hotel management programs usually include instruction in hotel administration, accounting, economics, marketing, housekeeping, food service management and catering, hotel maintenance engineering, and data process-

ing—reflecting the widespread use of computers in hotel operations such as reservations, accounting, and housekeeping management. Programs encourage part-time or summer work in hotels and restaurants because the experience gained and the contacts made with employers may benefit students when they seek full-time employment after graduation.

Training Dining Staff

A college education is not necessary, but some cruise lines prefer to see an applicant with a degree in psychology, hotel management, physical education, or communications. It's also a good idea to know another language, especially Spanish or German. Equally important are the following personal qualities:

- Patience
- Diplomacy
- Tolerance for a wide variety of people
- A never-ending supply of energy
- An outgoing and genuinely friendly nature
- Enthusiasm
- Artistic talent
- Athletic ability

Most successful applicants land their jobs by applying directly to the various cruise lines, which are located mainly in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York. Look through the Yellow Pages for each city for cruise line addresses and phone numbers.

RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Independent restaurants or restaurants in airports, hotels, and resorts frequented by international travelers benefit from a staff that can communicate in more than one language. Positions with the greatest need for additional languages include:

Bartenders
Managers
Wait Staff

In addition, American fast-food chains and restaurants such as McDonald's and Pizza Hut are springing up all over the globe. Restaurant managers with language skills are desperately needed to set up these enterprises.

Managers

The daily responsibilities of many restaurant and food service managers can be as complicated as a meal prepared by a fine chef. In addition to the traditional duties of selecting and pricing menu items, using food and other supplies efficiently, and achieving quality in food preparation and service, managers are now responsible for a growing number of administrative and human resource tasks. For example, they must carefully find and evaluate new ways of recruiting employees in a tight job market. Once hired, managers must also find creative ways to retain experienced workers.

In most restaurants and institutional food service facilities, the manager is assisted in these duties by one or more assistant managers, depending on the size and operating hours of the establishment. In most large establishments, as well as in many smaller ones, the management team consists of a general manager, one or more assistant managers, and an executive chef. The executive chef is responsible for the operation of the kitchen, while the assistant managers oversee service in the dining room and other areas. In smaller restaurants, the executive chef also may be the general manager and sometimes an owner. In fast-food restaurants and other food service facilities open for long hours, often seven days a week, the manager is aided by several assistant managers, each of whom supervises a shift of workers.

The quality of food and services in restaurants depends largely on a manager's ability to interview, hire, and, when necessary, fire employees. This is especially true in tight labor markets, when many managers report difficulty in hiring experienced food and beverage preparation and service workers. Managers may attend career fairs or arrange for newspaper advertising to expand their pool of applicants. Once a new employee is hired, managers explain the establishment's policies and practices and oversee any necessary training. Managers also schedule the work hours of employees, making sure there are enough workers to cover peak dining periods. If employees are unable to work, managers may have to fill in for them. Some managers regularly help with cooking, clearing of tables, or other tasks.

Another fundamental responsibility of restaurant and food service managers is supervising the kitchen and dining room. For example, managers often oversee all food preparation and cooking, examining the quality and portion sizes to ensure that dishes are prepared and garnished correctly and in a timely manner. They also investigate and resolve customers' complaints about food quality or service. In an international setting, it is important to know more than one language.

Wait Staff and Bartenders

Whether they work in small, informal diners or large, elegant restaurants, all food and beverage service workers aim to help customers have a positive dining experience. These workers are responsible for greeting customers (perhaps using a language other than English), taking food and drink orders, serving food, cleaning up after patrons, and preparing tables and dining areas. All of these duties require a high quality of service so customers will return.

Bartenders fill the drink orders that waiters and waitresses take from customers. They prepare standard mixed drinks and, occasionally, are asked to mix drinks to suit a customer's taste. Most bartenders know dozens of drink recipes and can mix drinks accurately, quickly, and without waste, even during the busiest periods. Bartenders also collect payment, operate the cash register, clean up after customers leave, and often serve food to customers seated at the bar. Bartenders also check identification of customers seated at the bar to ensure they meet the minimum age requirement for the purchase of alcohol and tobacco products. The majority of bartenders who work in eating and drinking establishments directly serve and interact with patrons. Because customers typically frequent drinking establishments for the friendly atmosphere, most bartenders must be friendly and helpful with customers.

Food and beverage service workers are on their feet most of the time and often carry heavy trays of food, dishes, and glassware. During busy dining periods, they are under pressure to serve customers quickly and efficiently. Part-time work is more common among food and beverage service workers than among workers in almost any other occupation. Those on part-time schedules include half of all waiters and waitresses and six out of ten food counter and fountain workers, compared to one out of six workers throughout the economy. Slightly more than half of all bartenders work full time, with 35 percent working part time and the remainder working a variable schedule.

Training restaurant

Most food service management companies and national or regional restaurant chains recruit management trainees from two- and four-year college hospitality management programs. Food service and restaurant chains prefer to hire people with degrees in restaurant and institutional food service management, but they often hire graduates with degrees in other fields who have demonstrated interest and aptitude. Some restaurant and food service manager positions, particularly in self-service and fast-food restaurants, are filled by promoting experienced food and beverage preparation and service workers. Waiters, waitresses, chefs, and fast-food workers demonstrating potential for handling increased responsibility sometimes advance to assistant manager or management trainee jobs.

A bachelor's degree in restaurant and food service management provides a particularly strong preparation for a career in this occupation. In 1998, more than 150 colleges and universities offered four-year programs in restaurant and hotel management or institutional food service management. For those not interested in pursuing a four-year degree, more than 800 community and junior colleges, technical institutes, and other institutions offer programs in these fields leading to an associate's degree or other formal certification.

Most employers emphasize personal qualities when hiring managers. Self-discipline, initiative, and leadership ability are essential. Managers must be able to solve problems and concentrate on details. They need good communication skills to deal with customers and suppliers, as well as to motivate and direct their staff.

Most restaurant chains and food service management companies have rigorous training programs for management positions. Through a combination of classroom and on-the-job training, trainees receive instruction and gain work experience in all aspects of the operations of a restaurant or institutional food service facility. Topics include food preparation, nutrition, sanitation, security, company policies and procedures, personnel management, record keeping, and preparation of reports. Training to use the restaurant's computer system is increasingly important as well. After six months to a year, trainees usually receive their first permanent assignment as an assistant manager.

Willingness to relocate often is essential for advancement to positions with greater responsibility. Managers typically advance to larger establishments or regional management positions within restaurant chains. Some eventually open their own eating and drinking establishments. Others transfer to hotel management positions because their restaurant management experience is a good background for food and beverage manager jobs in hotels and resorts.

Training for Wait Staff and Bartenders

There are no specific educational requirements for food and beverage service jobs. Although many employers prefer to hire high school graduates as wait staff and bartenders, completion of high school is usually not required for fast-food workers, counter attendants, dining room attendants, and bartender helpers.

For many people, a job as a food and beverage service worker serves as a source of immediate income rather than as a career. Many entrants to these jobs are in their late teens or early twenties and have a high school education or less. Usually, they have little or no work experience. Many are full-time students or homemakers. Food and beverage service jobs are a major source of part-time employment for high school and college students.

Because maintaining a restaurant's image is important to its success, employers emphasize personal qualities. Food and beverage service workers are in close contact with the public, so these workers should be well-spoken and have a neat, clean appearance. They should enjoy dealing with all kinds of people and possess a pleasant disposition.

Usually, bartenders must be at least twenty-one years of age, but employers prefer to hire people who are twenty-five or older. Bartenders should be familiar with state and local laws concerning the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Most food and beverage service workers pick up their skills on the job by observing and working with more-experienced workers. Some employers, particularly those in fast-food restaurants, use self-instruction programs with audiovisual presentations and instructional booklets to teach new employees food preparation and service skills. Some public and private vocational schools, restaurant associations, and large restaurant chains provide classroom training in a generalized food service curriculum. Some bartenders acquire their skills by attending a bartending or vocational and technical school. These programs often include instruction on state and local laws and regulations, cocktail recipes, attire and conduct, and stocking a bar. Some of these schools help their graduates find jobs.

Median earnings of food service managers were \$26,700 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between \$19,820 and \$34,690. The lowest-paid 10 percent earned \$14,430 or less, while the highest-paid 10 percent earned over \$45,520. In addition to typical benefits, most salaried restaurant and food service managers receive free meals and, depending on their length of service, the opportunity for additional training.

Food and beverage service workers derive their earnings from a combination of hourly wages and customer tips. Earnings vary greatly depending on the type of job and establishment. In some restaurants, these workers contribute a portion of their tips to a tip pool, which is distributed among the establishment's other food and beverage service workers and kitchen staff. Tip pools allow workers who normally do not receive tips, such as dining room attendants, to share in the rewards of a well-served meal.

In 1998, median hourly earnings (not including tips) of full-time waiters and waitresses were \$5.85. The middle 50 percent earned between \$5.58 and \$6.32; the top 10 percent earned at least \$7.83. For most waiters and waitresses, higher earnings are primarily the result of receiving more in tips rather than higher hourly wages. Tips usually average between 10 and 20 percent of guests' checks, so waiters and waitresses working in busy, expensive restaurants earn the most.

Full-time bartenders had median hourly earnings (not including tips) of \$6.25 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between \$5.72 and \$7.71; the top 10 percent earned at least \$9.19 an hour. Like waiters and waitresses, bartenders employed in public bars may receive more than half of their earnings as tips. Service bartenders are often paid higher hourly wages to offset their lower tip earnings.

TRAVEL AGENTS

Travel agencies hire people who speak foreign languages to answer phones and deal with customers from other countries.

Travel agents generally work in an office and deal with customers in person or over the phone. They plot itineraries, make airline and hotel reservations, book passage on cruise ships, or arrange for car rentals. They work with affluent, sophisticated travelers or first-timers such as students trying to travel on a budget. They may book a simple, round-trip air ticket for a person traveling alone or handle arrangements for hundreds of people traveling to attend a convention or conference. Some travel agents are generalists; they handle all situations. Others specialize in a particular area, such as cruises or corporate travel.

Travel agents gather information from different sources. They use computer databases, attend trade shows, and read trade magazines. They also visit resorts or locations to get firsthand knowledge about a destination. The field offers wonderful opportunities throughout the year for free travel on "fam" (familiarity) trips.

Travel agents work hard, though. They have to keep up with rapidly changing fares and rates, and they have to know who offers the best packages and service. The downside, according to many travel agents, is that they seldom have enough free time to do all the traveling they would like. They are often tied to their desks, especially during peak travel periods such as the summer or important holidays.

Salaries for Travel Agents

Salary varies according to the region in which you work and your experience. Depending on the agency, you could start out on an hourly wage or a yearly salary. Some travel agents prefer to work on a commission basis. That way, the more trips they sell, the more money they earn. A salary plus commission is ideal. Travel agents who are good salespeople can also earn bonuses or more free or discounted trips. If your pay is initially low, it can be offset by this added benefit.

Training for Travel Agents

A four-year college degree is not necessary to become a travel agent. It can be helpful, however, and shows commitment and discipline. Most travel agents study for at least two years and earn an associate degree. Many community colleges, and trade and vocational schools offer good programs in travel and tourism or hospitality management. Some travel agencies are willing to hire and train inexperienced applicants.

For a list of schools offering certified programs, write to the American Society of Travel Agents or the Institute of Certified Travel Agents. (Their addresses are listed at the end of this chapter.)

AIRLINE AND AIRPORT PERSONNEL

Airlines and airports employ people with additional language skills in a variety of capacities, particularly as reservation and ticket clerks and flight attendants. (Pilots and air traffic controllers do not need to know another language; their work is conducted solely in English.)

Customs officials and immigration officials usually need to know more than one language. See Chapter 5 for more information on these careers.

Reservation Clerks and Ticket Agents

Many travelers rely on the services of reservation clerks and ticket agents. These people perform functions as varied as selling tickets, confirming reservations, checking baggage, and providing tourists with useful travel information. Most of them work for airlines, usually in large reservation centers answering telephone inquiries and offering suggestions on travel arrangements, such as routes, time schedules, rates, and types of accommodation.

Reservation agents quote fares, provide travel information, and make and confirm transportation reservations. Transportation ticket agents are sometimes

known as passenger service agents, passenger-booking clerks, reservation clerks, airport service agents, ticket clerks, or ticket sellers. They work in train and bus stations as well as airports selling tickets, assigning seats to passengers, and checking baggage. In addition, they may answer inquiries and give directions, examine passports and visas, or check in pets.

Other ticket agents commonly known as gate or station agents work in airport terminals assisting passengers boarding airplanes. These workers direct passengers to the correct boarding area, check tickets and seat assignments, make boarding announcements, and provide special assistance to young, elderly, or disabled passengers when they board or disembark. Training is usually on the job.

Employment of reservation and transportation ticket agents is sensitive to cyclical swings in the economy. During recessions, discretionary passenger travel declines, and transportation service companies are less likely to hire new workers and may even resort to layoffs.

Reservation and transportation ticket agents currently earn an average yearly salary of \$22,120. They receive free or reduced-rate travel on their company's carriers for themselves and their immediate family and, in some companies, for friends.

Major airlines are required by law to provide flight attendants for the safety of the flying public. Although the primary job of the flight attendants is to ensure that safety regulations are adhered to, they also try to make flights comfortable and enjoyable for passengers.

At least one hour before each flight, flight attendants are briefed by the captain (the pilot in command) on such things as emergency evacuation procedures, crew coordination, length of flight, expected weather conditions, and special passenger problems. Flight attendants make sure that first aid kits and other emergency equipment are aboard and in working order and that the passenger cabin is in order, with adequate supplies of food, beverages, and blankets. As passengers board the plane, flight attendants greet them, check their tickets, and instruct them on where to store coats and carry-on items.

Before the plane takes off, flight attendants instruct all passengers in the use of emergency equipment and check to see that seat belts are fastened, seat backs are in upright positions, and all carry-on items are properly stowed. In the air, helping passengers in the event of an emergency is the most important responsibility of a flight attendant.

Safety-related actions may range from reassuring passengers during occasional encounters with strong turbulence to directing passengers who must evacuate a plane following an emergency landing. Flight attendants also answer questions about the flight; distribute reading material, pillows, and blankets; and help small children, elderly or disabled people, and any others needing assistance. They may also administer first aid to passengers who become ill.

Flight attendants generally serve beverages and other refreshments and, on many flights, heat and distribute precooked meals or snacks. After the plane has landed, flight attendants take inventory of headsets, alcoholic beverages, and moneys collected. They also report any medical problems passengers may have had and the condition of cabin equipment.

Lead, or first, flight attendants, sometimes known as pursers, oversee the work of the other attendants aboard the aircraft while performing most of the same duties.

Because airlines operate around the clock year-round, flight attendants may work nights, holidays, and weekends. They usually fly seventy-five to eight hours a month and in addition spend an equal amount of time each month on the ground preparing planes for flights, writing reports following complete flights, and waiting for planes to arrive. Because of variations in scheduling and limitations on flying time, many flight attendants have eleven or more days of each month. They may be away from their home base at least one-third of the time. During this period, the airlines provide hotel accommodations and a allowance for meal expenses.

The combination of free time and discount airfares gives flight attendants the opportunity to travel and see new places. However, the work can be strenuous and trying. Short flights require speedy service if meals are served, and turbulent flights can make serving drinks and meals difficult. Flight attendants stand during much of the flight and must remain pleasant and efficient regardless of how tired they are or how demanding passengers may be. Occasionally, they must deal with disruptive passengers.

Training for Flight Attendants

Airlines prefer to hire poised, tactful, and resourceful people who can interact comfortably with strangers and remain calm under stress. Applicants usually must be at least eighteen to twenty-one years old. Flight attendants must have excellent health and the ability to speak clearly. In addition, there generally are height requirements, and most airlines want candidates with weight proportionate to height. Prospective flight attendants usually must be willing to relocate, although some flight attendants are able to commute to and from the home base.

Applicants must be high school graduates. Those having several years of college or experience in dealing with the public are preferred. More and more flight attendants being hired are college graduates. Highly desirable areas of concentration include such people-oriented disciplines as psychology and education.

Flight attendants for international airlines generally must speak an appropriate foreign language fluently. Some of the major airlines prefer candidates who can speak two major foreign languages for their international flights.

Once hired, candidates must undergo a period of training. The length of training depends on the size and type of carrier, ranging from four to seven weeks, and takes place in the airline's flight training center. Airlines that do not operate training centers generally send new employees to another airline's center.

Salaries
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Flight
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ter. Airlines may provide transportation to the training centers and an allowance for room and board and school supplies. However, new trainees are not considered employees of the airline until they successfully complete the training program. Some airlines may actually charge individuals for training.

Trainees learn emergency procedures such as evacuating an airplane, operating emergency systems and equipment, administering first aid, and using water survival tactics. In addition, trainees are taught how to deal with disruptive passengers and hijacking and terrorist situations. New hires learn flight regulations and duties, company operations and policies, and receive instruction on personal grooming and weight control. Trainees for the international routes get additional instruction in passport and customs regulations. Toward the end of their training, students go on practice flights. Additionally, flight attendants must receive twelve to fourteen hours of annual training in emergency procedures and passenger relations.

After completing initial training, flight attendants are assigned to one of their airline's bases. New flight attendants are placed on "reserve status" and are called on to either staff extra flights or fill in for crew members who are sick, on vacation, or rerouted. When not on duty, reserve flight attendants must be available to report for flights on short notice. They usually remain on reserve for at least one year, but in some cities it may take five to ten years or longer to advance from reserve status.

Flight attendants who no longer are on reserve bid monthly for regular assignments. Because assignments are based on seniority, usually only the most experienced attendants get their choice of assignments.

Advancement takes longer today than in the past because experienced flight attendants are remaining in this career longer than they used to. Some flight attendants become supervisors or take on additional duties such as recruiting and instructing.

According to data from the Association of Flight Attendants, beginning flight attendants had median earnings of about \$13,700 a year in 1998. Flight attendants with six years of experience had median annual earnings of about \$20,000, while some senior flight attendants earned as much as \$50,000 a year.

Beginning pay scales for flight attendants vary by carrier. New hires usually begin at the same pay scale regardless of experience, and all flight attendants receive the same future pay increases.

Flight attendants receive extra compensation for night and international flights and for increased hours. In addition, some airlines offer incentive pay for working holidays or taking positions that require additional responsibility or paperwork. Most airlines guarantee a minimum of sixty-five to seventy-five flight hours per month, with the option to work additional hours. Flight attendants also receive a per diem allowance for meal expenses while on duty away from home. In addition, flight attendants and their immediate families are entitled to free fares on their own airline and reduced fares on most other airlines.

Flight attendants are required to purchase uniforms and wear them while on duty. The airlines usually pay for uniform replacement items and may provide a small allowance to cover cleaning and upkeep of the uniforms.

TOUR GUIDES

Whether leading a group on a bus tour of New York or heading a boat tour through the canals of Venice, tour guides come into contact with visitors from every country. English is the international language, of course, and most people outside of English-speaking countries who study another language opt to add English to their repertoire, but just as many know only their own language. Most tourist attractions these days offer recorded tours on CDs in a variety of languages. But a tour guide who can communicate in a variety of languages will be very successful and much appreciated.

What a Tour Guide Does

Tour guides may work with one particular group for an extended period of time—for example, chaperoning a school group through Europe for a month—or with a variety of people throughout the day—providing information on historic cathedrals or castles, for example, or pointing out sites of interest as their bus or boat passes by. They may also lead walking tours, showing a group around particular neighborhoods or districts.

Becoming a Tour Guide

Most tour guides are taught on the job. Through printed material, the information passed on by other guides, and their own research, they learn enough about a particular attraction or area to answer questions.

Some tour guides start off as volunteers, in museums, for example. Others are hired directly by a tour company and are paid a salary or commission based on the number of people in a tour group.

FIRSTHAND ACCOUNTS

Mary Fallon Miller Travel Agent

Mary Fallon Miller started her career as a travel agent in 1986, when she opened her own agency. In partnership with a relative, she first focused on bus tours, transporting groups to see special events in her area. She later moved on to specialize in cruise travel.

Getting Started

"At the age of seven, I sailed across the Atlantic on the S.S. *France*, and as a young woman, I accompanied my mother throughout Europe and South

salaries
as for
Attendants

America. I fell in love with the glamour and excitement of travel. It gets in your blood; I have a real fascination for other cultures and languages. I realized that a career as a travel agent would allow me to pursue my dream to see more of the world."

**What
the Work Is
Like**

"When you're just starting out, you're tied to the office and the computer a lot, but a newcomer would get to take at least one week a year, more once you've gained some seniority. The owners of a travel agency get to go on more 'fam' trips, but if someone just starting out is seen as a productive member of the business, helping to build it, he or she would get more opportunities. You'll be the one they send on the 'Cruise-a-Thon' or to the ski shows, and then you'll become your agency's representative.

"Beginners would probably start working side by side with someone more experienced in the agency. They might be placed in a specific department handling, for example, European travel, cruises, or car rentals and airfares. Much of their time will be spent coordinating and arranging details.

"It can be tricky keeping all the details accurate and being able to deal with what we call 'grumps and whiners.' There are people who get very nervous about their travel arrangements, and they can complain and make your life miserable. But you have to be able to be compassionate—find out why they're so concerned. Maybe they had a bad experience in the past. You have to learn as much about your client as possible.

"And there are times when things go wrong. There could be a snow-in at an airport and people miss their connections, or someone in the family dies and they have to cancel their whole cruise reservation at the last minute. You have to be professional and flexible, and you have to be on the ball all the time.

"It's a demanding job, but it's satisfying. People come back and say, 'I can't believe you knew exactly what I wanted. That's the best vacation I've ever had. And I'm telling all my friends.' You start getting more and more customers coming in, and they ask for you by name. That feels really good. You're making a dream come true, and in a way, that's what you're doing—selling dreams."

**Advice
from
Fallon Miller**

"Read *Time*, *Newsweek*, and your local newspaper. Try to stay in touch with the world. Listen to National Public Radio or watch the travel channel on television. Don't be afraid of learning the computer. Study languages and, if you have the chance, participate in a language club or take advantage of a foreign exchange program. I lived in Poland for a summer. Most important, learn communication skills.

"And, at the beginning, when you're doing some of the drudgery work, it helps to remember that down the road you will receive discounts and free travel, that you are working toward something. The hard work will pay off."

Joanne Leon Assistant Director of Sales

Joanne Leon has been in the hotel and sales business for twenty years. She works at a well-known national chain hotel. In her particular property in Miami, Florida, she is responsible for 207 suites and three meeting rooms.

Getting Started

"Right out of high school I worked for a chamber of commerce, for the convention and sales department. That's where I first got into the convention end. I got to see how they booked the whole city, how they go after major conventions. I worked with booking blocks of hotel rooms citywide, versus working in one specific hotel. After about a year there, I realized I wouldn't have a chance for advancement. Hotels offer better opportunities and more money. The experience I got with the chamber of commerce translated well into hotel work.

"I took a position as a sales and catering secretary at a hotel chain in Oregon. They had about seventy-five very upscale hotels. I was there only six months and learned everything I could. Then I applied for a position in another hotel that I saw was under construction about two hours away. I sat with the general manager in the coffee shop for an hour or so. He ended up calling me and offering me the sales and convention manager position. It was on a trial basis because of my age; I was only twenty at the time. The drinking age was twenty-one, so they had legal issues to deal with about my selling liquor. That was a great job. They could seat a thousand and I pretty much ran all of that. I stayed there for three and a half years, but then an opportunity came up for me to go back to the first Oregon hotel as the sales and catering manager. It turned out to be a good move for me, more money, more knowledge. After three years I moved south, to Alabama, but there weren't as many hotel opportunities there for me, so I went into the legal field for a while and worked as a legal secretary. But I missed the hotels. It's usually something you either love or hate, there's no in between. I finally found a job in Mobile and traveled between five different states promoting the hotel.

"In 1990 I started here in Miami. My first position was as sales and catering manager, and later I moved up to my current position, assistant director of sales. The next step up for me would be director of sales, then I could even think about moving into a general manager position. The opportunities are there, and they're willing to train you."

What the Work Is Like

"Every day is different, not like in some jobs where the work can get monotonous. The hotel industry isn't like that. You might come in in the morning with a plan to work on something specific, then something comes up and you end up doing something else. The meeting planners for a large group convention might come in and want to discuss details with you, so you put your other work on hold for a while.

"Basically, the way it works in the sales end of things is that you're out looking for new business and staying on top of your current business. We look for corporate customers, and we want to stay in touch on a regular basis.

"I'm on the phone a lot, checking details, taking care of rooming lists. There are always a lot of details and you have to follow through on promises you make. For example, if you promised to hold ten two-bedded suites for them, you have to make sure that's what got booked, not ten king suites. And with conferences, you need to follow up on audiovisual equipment or registration tables, that sort of thing. I'm up and down a lot, too; I'm not just always sitting at a desk. I walk around the hotel, double-check on my groups, make sure they're happy. As I said, every day is new because you're working with different people all the time. That's what I think makes it fun.

"But, as with any job, there are always some downsides. Sometimes you get bogged down with paperwork, but if you're an organized person, you should be able to stay on top of it. It's not too bad. Another thing in this business, a hotel never closes, so your hours won't always be the best sometimes. You could be working nights, weekends. However, I think once you put in enough time, you can move into some of the positions in which you don't have such a messed up schedule. With a smaller hotel, it's a little easier.

"The advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. In sales you're working with some high-energy people in an up kind of atmosphere. We have bells on our desks and when we book something we ring our bells. We laugh and have a good time at our job. It's fun to go to work. I've never gotten up in the morning and dreaded going in."

"If you're going to be in this industry, you have to be a people person and have a happy personality. You have to be able to always have a smile on your face, and if a guest or a customer is dissatisfied, you have to be able to handle it. You don't ever want to lose business. You have to be a team player, too. If the restaurant gets busy, for example, I'll go over and help them out there. If someone needs help, then that's what you do. Our job descriptions aren't rigidly set. But it's fun to do something different once in a while.

"Miami is in a cosmopolitan area, and a lot of our customers speak a language other than English. I know a little Spanish, and I am taking a night class in German. It really makes a difference if you can exchange even a few words in the customers' native language. They appreciate your effort.

"Another thing, when you're looking for work, you'll probably be better off working for a corporate-owned hotel rather than a family-owned franchise. There'll be more opportunities for you to move up and probably better salaries. But don't get discouraged when you're starting out at the bottom. A position at the front desk might not be the highest-paying job, but it's a good way to learn."

Richard Turnwald Chief Purser

Richard Turnwald has been working in the cruise industry for more than sixteen years. He started out shoreside in the operations department, where he handled everything from personnel to ordering supplies for the ships. He went from there to positions with the cruise staff as a shore excursions director, assistant cruise director, and port lecturer providing information on the different ports of call. He then worked his way up the ranks from junior purser to chief purser.

Getting Started

"Ever since I was a little boy, I've always loved ships and the sea. I read about them and studied them, and there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to be involved in some way with ships as a profession. Later, I was in college in Michigan studying travel and tourism, and I wanted to get involved with the cruise lines. I sent out my resumé and wrote to the various cruise lines, most of which were based in Miami. I was interviewed over the telephone and offered a position in the office. It was exciting and scary at the same time. I was just out of college and I had to relocate to a place where I didn't know anyone, but it was like a dream for me to finally be able to work closely with the cruise ships."

What the Work Is Like

"The purser's office is like the front desk at a big hotel. The staff handle all the money on the ship, pay all the bills and the salaries, cash traveler's checks for passengers, provide the safes for the valuables, fill out all the documentation for customs and immigration officials in the different countries, and all the other crucial behind-the-scenes functions. The purser is the one who passengers come to for information or help with problems. Pursers are in charge of cabin assignments, and they also coordinate with the medical personnel to help handle any emergencies.

"There are various ranks for a purser: junior or assistant purser, second purser, first purser, then chief purser. As chief purser I am responsible for a staff of six people; on larger ships the purser's office might have fourteen or fifteen people.

"Promotions are based on your ability, how well you do your job, as well as the length of time you've been employed. I was fortunate; I rose up through the ranks fairly quickly. Within three months I had worked my way up from junior purser to chief purser. But that's really an exceptional situation. It usually takes a good year or so. It depends on how many people are ahead of you, if they leave or stay. It can be very competitive. You have to consider that there's only one chief purser on each ship. Some people start working on a ship and their only background is watching "The Love Boat" and thinking from that how wonderful it would be. They don't have a realistic viewpoint of the downsides of cruise work."

The
Up sides
les and
Down
Sides

"When you live and work on a ship, you're an employee, you're not there to be a passenger. The living conditions are not as luxurious as for the passengers. You might be sharing a room with one or two other crew members, and there's not a lot of privacy. The food isn't as high class; passengers might be having lobster and steak upstairs while the crew are eating fish or meatloaf below. You might be away from home for the first time and feeling homesick and cut off.

"There's a sense of confinement on a ship; you can't just go out to dinner whenever you want. Cabin fever is common. You live your job twenty-four hours a day, and there's no getting away from that. You're on duty seven days a week, and you don't have a day off for several months at a time. Some people get burned out on that, while others thrive.

"If you take a positive approach, you realize that you don't have to commute to work or worry about housing. Though you don't get an entire day off, you get several hours at a time when you're in port to see a lot of wonderful things. I've been all over the world, to places I wouldn't have had the time or money to get to otherwise. I've been to the Caribbean, Alaska, South America, Antarctica, Europe, Hawaii. If you're on an itinerary that repeats every week, you get to know that place and its people very well, so that's a plus. And there's something so relaxing and peaceful about being at sea, just to stand by the railing of the deck and see the changes in the weather and the whales and other sea life. Another advantage is the money. You work hard and very intensely for long periods of time, but typically you're paid very well and it's a good opportunity to save money. I was able to buy a house."

Advice

from
Turnwald

"Work on people skills, being friendly, being helpful and courteous. It's very important—you'll be representing the cruise line to a lot of people.

"You have to be willing and able to accept orders. It isn't as strict as the navy, but when you're on a ship you have to follow a lot of rules and guidelines. You've heard the expression 'to run a tight ship' . . . you have to have regulations to do that. If you're too independent-minded and don't like to be told what to do, then ship life isn't for you."

Andrea Gleason Flight Attendant

Andrea was a flight attendant for more than a dozen years. She's worked on domestic as well as international flights for a major airline. She has now left the industry to raise her family.

Getting
Started

"I did this on a bet. Way back when, my brother-in-law told me that America West was hiring, so I called them up. I interviewed three or four times, and I ended up getting the job. The first interview was a group interview with about thirty other applicants. You had to get up and talk about yourself and say what

you were doing at that time. Then it went to a smaller group interview and they gave you little assignments to do. What if such and such happened, what would you do? That sort of thing. Then it went to a one-on-one interview. I got the job.

"At America West at the time, we were what they called cross-utilized. That meant that not only were we flight attendants, we also worked reservations, the ticket counter at the gate, and down at the ramp. You were never just flying. Three days a week I'd fly, the other days I'd be at the gate or whatever. I also went into the training department for a while and taught reservation clerks. Later I moved across the country and went to work for an airline based on the east coast. I flew full time then; cross-utilizations had become defunct. But every once in a while I did go off the line and do in-flight training for attendants. When I started my own training, the program was three months long because we had to learn everything. Now, for flight attendants it's just four weeks long."

What the Work Is Like

"The work is exhausting—you're on your feet a lot, you have very strange hours. The time differences really affect you. At first, I flew to Chicago and Newark and my overnights were in San Diego. Then I flew from New York to London and New York to Paris.

"When you do international flights, it's not required that you know another language, but it's preferred. They try to schedule it so there's someone bilingual on every flight. I do know French, so I usually got the Paris run more often than the London one.

"Our primary role is safety; secondary is service. We see ourselves as the most important safety feature on the aircraft. That's because of our knowledge of how to get out and what to do in an emergency. But a lot of the passengers are only thinking about getting their Cokes. If they don't get it as soon as they want it, they think their lives are over. They don't look at us as the people who will save them if anything should happen. But being in the transportation business, you really have to play up the service part of it.

"During takeoff we're very busy. Probably the most exhausting part of the flight is just getting everybody on. I try to remember that when I have more than one hundred people on my flight, they're not all on vacation. Some are going for work, some have just lost somebody near to them. Or they just lost the biggest deal of their life or they're going to present the biggest deal of their life. And they're all sitting in this tiny little tube together, and the emotions are just running the gamut. Add the fear of flying to that. It's not routine for them; there is stress and a lot of nerves.

"Dealing with the passengers can be the hardest part. On a recent flight, even before we left I had a passenger who was back in the bathroom smoking. One of the other flight attendants said something to her about it, but she denied it. Later on, we were really delayed, and as we got closer to New York she came back to ask for something to drink and I could smell the cigarette smoke. I understand the addiction because I used to smoke, but it's not so much that she snuck a cigarette. It's the fact that she lied to me and I didn't know where she

put her cigarette. That's our biggest fear, causing a fire. I put on gloves and went through the trash can in the rest room. This is where the glamour comes in. It was really disgusting. I found the butt in the trash can along with nothing but paper.

"We have to serve the food. We turn the ovens on and heat up the food, then place the trays in the cart to pass them out. But passengers can get so impatient. It's not as if we can stand up right after takeoff. We have headsets to pass out, too, if there's a movie, and someone else is passing out the drinks. And in the middle of all of this, there's always a passenger asking, Can I have a pillow? Can I change seats? What about my connection? It's constant questions. And that's why sometimes passing out the food or drinks takes longer. We're constantly getting interrupted. But then that's what we're there for.

"It's easy to feel harried. It's not like you're out of control or anything, but sometimes you wish they'd just give you five minutes. And it's easy to feel unappreciated. I've been talked to horribly. The majority of people I deal with are really very nice, but you always have that handful. You have to realize they're like that to everyone. You just have to keep your sense of humor. It always feels really good to get home.

"At the beginning the travel part was great. I was single and I could go out and have fun in different cities. But as time wore on, that kind of got old. Now I'm married and I have twin daughters. My objective is different now. I could still fly, but right now I want to spend the time with my family. I can go back later maybe.

"Salaries are another downside, though. It's not like it used to be. The older attendants make anywhere from \$40,000 to \$60,000. But the airline started what they call a B scale for the new hires. They start off somewhere in the teens.

"Sometimes I sat there and wondered, What are we doing? We're a flying restaurant sailing through the sky with a hundred thousand pounds of fuel under us. Who in her right mind is going to get into this thing?

"But most of the people are really, really wonderful. You'll have someone come up to you and say that's it's been the best flight they ever had, and that makes up for everything."

"I think if you're young and have a lot of energy, it's wonderful. I always joke around and say I'm donning my rhino skin. You need thick skin to do this. I had a flight buddy who teased me and said I'm like Mary Poppins out there. That's what I'm here for. I'm not here to make these people have a miserable trip. I have a hard time saying no to them. It has to be something outlandish. I try not to get bothered by petty things. You're going to see a lot of pettiness, but you can't let it get to you. I had a gentleman who had won a lot of stuffed animals. They were all packed away in the overhead bin. Then another passenger comes in and opens up the bin. All of a sudden he starts throwing all these animals. I looked over and I saw a giraffe flying through the cabin, then an elephant goes and a monkey goes. He thinks it's his bin because it's over his seat. So, some-

times you have to go up and say, 'No, it's my bin and I'm sharing it with everyone.' Sometimes you have to treat them as if they're first graders. I know it sounds silly, but I try to give people little life lessons. If someone doesn't say please to me, instead they say, 'Hey, gimme a Coke,' I smile and say, 'What's the magic word?' I do it with a smile. I've been able to say things to people and get away with it, but you have to be able to wear that smile.

"The key to success in this industry is to be extremely flexible. Stuff happens all the time. You get canceled, delayed, diverted, and you have to be able to go with the flow. And you can't be chasing the almighty dollar to work at this job. You have to want just time off and flight benefits. That's really where the fun is. I loved it. Where else could you put in so little time and have such good benefits?"

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Hotels, Resorts, Cruises

For information on careers and scholarships in hotel management, contact:

The American Hotel and Motel Association (AH&MA)
Information Center
1201 New York Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20005-3931

For information on educational programs, including correspondence courses, in hotel and restaurant management, write to:

The Educational Institute of AH&MA
P.O. Box 1240
East Lansing, MI 48826

For information on careers in housekeeping management, contact:

National Executive Housekeepers Association, Inc.
1001 Eastwind Drive, Suite 301
Westerville, OH 43081

For information on hospitality careers, as well as how to purchase a directory of colleges and other schools offering programs and courses in hotel and restaurant administration, write to:

Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education
1200 Seventeenth Street NW
Washington, DC 20036-3097

For more information about working for cruise lines, contact:

Cruise Line International Association
500 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1407
New York, NY 10110

Restaurants

A guide to careers in restaurants, a list of two- and four-year colleges that have food service programs, and information on scholarships to those programs are available from:

National Restaurant Association
1200 Seventeenth Street NW
Washington, DC 20036-3097

Travel Agents

American Society of Travel Agents
1101 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Association of Retail Travel Agents
1745 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22202

Institute of Certified Travel Agents
148 Linden Street
P.O. Box 56
Wellesley, MA 02181

Tour Guides

Do an Internet search or look in the Yellow Pages to find associations for tour guides in the city or at the attraction you're interested in.

Reservation Clerks and Ticket Agents

For information about job opportunities as reservation and transportation ticket agents, write the personnel manager of individual transportation companies. Addresses of airlines are available from:

Air Transport Association of America
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20004-1707

Flight Attendants

Information about job opportunities at a particular airline and the qualifications required may be obtained by writing to the personnel manager of the company.

For addresses of airline companies and information about job opportunities and salaries, contact:

Future Aviation Professionals of America
4959 Massachusetts Boulevard
Atlanta, GA 30337
800-JET-JOBS