

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

JUDY COLBERT

Foreword by
DEE MINIC,
Executive Director, Tourism Works for America,
Travel Industry Association of America (TIA)

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CONTENTS

Foreword vii
Industry Outlook viii
How to Use This Book ix
Acknowledgments x

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

Airline Pilot 2
Aircraft Mechanic 5
Airport Manager 7
Flight Attendant 9
Air Courier 11
Air Traffic Controller 13
Train Conductor 16
Train Engineer 18
Tour Motorcoach Driver 20
Car Rental Manager 23

CRUISE TRAVEL

Ship Captain 26
Purser, Cruise Ship 28
Cruise Director 30
Entertainer, Cruise Ship 32
Deckhand 35
Boat Pilot 37
Gentleman Host 40

LODGING

General Manager, Hotel 44
Chief Engineer 46
Rooms Division Manager 48
Reservations Manager 50
Front Office Manager 52
Concierge 54
Maitre d' 56
Recreational Instructor 58
Bellhop 60
Executive Housekeeper 62
Laundry Manager 65
Bed-and-Breakfast Owner 67

Innsitter 70
Casino Manager 72

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Restaurant Manager 76
Food and Beverage Director 78
Catering Sales Manager 80
Chef 82
Bartender 84
Banquet Manager 86

TOUR AND TRAVEL SERVICES

Receptive Tour Company Manager 90
Tour Operator 93
Tour Guide 95
General Manager, Attraction 97
Executive Director, Convention and Visitors Bureau 99
Executive Director, Travel Trade Association 102
Travel Agent 104
Incentive Travel Agent 107
Travel Academy Instructor 109
Corporate Travel Manager 111
Meeting Planner 114

SALES AND PROMOTION

Sales Manager, Meeting Facility 118
Retail Supervisor 120
Public Relations Manager 122
Advertising Director 125
Market Researcher 128

EXECUTIVE AND MANAGERIAL

Human Resources Director 132
Security Director 134
Credit Manager 136
Night Auditor 138
Purchasing Agent 140

Executive Assistant 142
Audiovisual Supervisor 144
Director of Information Technology 146

HEALTH CARE

Dietitian 150
Spa/Health Club Manager 152
Traveling Nurse 155
Maritime Physician 158

SPECIALTIES

Travel Photographer 162
Travel Writer 164
Travel Attorney 167
Professor of Travel, Tourism, and
Hospitality 169
Interpreter/Translator 171
Entertainer 173
Web Designer 175
Interior Designer 177

Landscape Architect 179
Animal Keeper 181
Astronomer 183

APPENDIXES

- I. Associate's Degree Programs in Travel,
Tourism, and Hospitality 186
- II. Bachelor's Degree Programs in Travel,
Tourism, and Hospitality 197
- III. M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in Travel,
Tourism, and Hospitality 207
- IV. Certificate Programs in Travel, Tourism, and
Hospitality 212
- V. Professional Associations and Unions 218
- VI. Professional Periodicals 226
- VII. Major Cruise Lines 229
- VIII. Major Hotel Chains 230
- IX. Websites of Interest 232

Bibliography 233

Index 241

FOREWORD

The travel and tourism (T&T) industry is the USA's second largest employer (after health services) with one out of every seven people (or nearly 18 million) working in this important service industry, which generated a payroll of \$174.5 billion in 2002. As you will learn in this publication, T&T is a good industry for preparing young people for future careers and upward mobility in a wide-range of jobs from entry level to CEO and from accountants to zookeepers.

According to research conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America, spending by resident and international travelers in the U.S. averages \$1.5 billion a day, \$61 million an hour, \$1 million a minute, and \$17,000 a second. Based on expenditures, T&T continues to be the nation's third largest retail sales industry after automotive dealers and food stores. Projected domestic and international expenditures for 2002 were \$537.2 billion, a 5.8% decrease from 2000's \$570.5 billion.

Each state feels the impact of travelers and the latest data available by state shows that the top five states with travel-generated employment in 2001 were California (931,700 jobs); Florida (801,300 jobs); Texas (566,100 jobs); New York (440,300 jobs); and Nevada (357,700 jobs). In a state where tourism is the number one industry, such as Florida, job creation can be tremendous; however, T&T does not have to be a state's largest industry for its impact to be felt. For example in Michigan, T&T is the sixth-largest industry, but more than 173,000 jobs are directly attributable to the

dollars spent by domestic and international travelers. Overall, the T&T ranks as the first, second, or third largest employer in 29 of the 50 states. The industry is particularly attractive to students and seniors looking for part-time and seasonal work. It helps the nation where employment needs to grow: 50% of T&T employees are women, 23% of T&T businesses are owned by women, 14% of T&T businesses are owned by minorities, and 95% of T&T businesses qualify as small businesses.

According to statistics from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce's Office of Travel & Tourism Industries, 42 million international travelers spent \$88 billion in the U.S. in 2002, supporting over one million jobs, generating nearly \$16 billion in tax revenues and \$6 billion in travel trade surplus. International travel to the U.S. is an export for the nation. Technically, it is considered a service export just like freight, insurance, telecommunications, royalties, and education.

Travel is a freedom cherished by citizens throughout the world. The U.S. travel and tourism industry supports just measures that protect this freedom for everyone, everywhere. Travel fosters understanding and understanding creates a climate that nurtures peace, stability, economic growth, and democratic rights.

For more information go to www.tia.org.

— Dee Minic
Executive Director, Tourism Works for America
Travel Industry Association of America (TIA)

INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

There is no doubt that the travel industry has had a bumpy ride since September 11, 2001, with continued terrorism attacks worldwide and the downturn in the U.S. and world economies aggravating the situation. Domestic and international travel expenditures amounted to \$525.1 billion in 2002, down from 537.2 billion in 2001. Despite this fact, the 2003 projection is for \$560.1 billion and for \$588.2 billion in 2004.

According to the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), travel and tourism combined form the nation's largest services export industry, the third largest retail sales industry, and one of America's largest employers. It is the first, second, or third largest employer in 29 states. Nearly 8 million people, earning nearly \$174 billion in payroll, are employed in some field related to travel and tourism. That is about one out of every 18 U.S. residents in the civilian labor force employed due to direct travel spending in the United States in 2001. It is one area where we generate a trade surplus, amounting to almost \$9 billion.

One of the appealing aspects of a travel-related career, other than the possibility of free or reduced-price travel to all corners of the world, is that so many positions do not require advanced degrees. People who have had on-the-job training and experience can fill even some of those positions that call for a college education.

According to TIA surveys, some of the basic changes in travel since 9/11 include more last-minute travel, fewer international visitors, more car travel, lower travel expenditures, and travel closer to home. To foster business and take advantage of these factors, travel providers have lowered prices, or at least not raised them, and added benefits. They are promoting their services to a more local market. They are also using the Internet for publicizing and advertising their products. To do so, they have increased their advertising and marketing budgets. Although 68 percent of the TIA members surveyed indicated they think business will

improve in 2003, some 40 percent indicate they have had reductions in staff, salaries, or bonuses in the previous year. Yet, in the gloom of predictions saying that travel probably will not bounce back until sometime in 2004, there are bright spots.

Businesses such as hotels, resorts, restaurants, and cultural and family attractions that have changed their focus in awareness of family and business budgetary constraints, the increased inconvenience of air travel, and other factors are seeing the rewards of those changes with increased business. Those offering perceived safety and value for the dollar spent will benefit, as these are two of the main criteria travelers are now seeking.

Cruising, RV travel, and senior and leisure travel have improved in the past year. Cruising is up nearly four percent, RV rentals are up 30 percent, and leisure travel was up two percent in the first half of 2002. Business travel, while it has declined sharply overall, has picked up in more local and shorter trips.

It will be up to those who are entering travel-related businesses to revise and update the old ways of marketing and providing services. Those with creative thinking, a solid education in the travel and hospitality fields, and computer skills are sure to succeed.

Employees who approach their jobs with enthusiasm and provide clients and guests with a positive experience—whether they are security guards or general managers, flight attendants or railroad conductors, animal keepers or astronomers—will be rewarded with continued employment and promotional opportunities. Those with computer skills who can create user-friendly web pages and spreadsheets, operate audiovisual equipment, and use navigational and other software and hardware will also see plenty of opportunities in the travel industry. Those who have an excellent and knowledgeable background in the hospitality industry will benefit greatly when a strong economy returns.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Career Opportunities in Travel offers information about a wide variety of occupations directly or indirectly related to travel and tourism and jobs in which travel plays a major part of the job responsibilities. The education, training, skills, and personality traits of those in many of these jobs, particularly those in travel and tourism, can transfer from one aspect of the travel industry to another. A chef can work for a restaurant, hotel, cruise ship, or spa. The same is true for a laundry manager, housekeeper, sales manager, purchasing agent, or retail supervisor. The book is designed for people just starting in the business world as well as those who have been there, done that, and want to do something different.

For each of the more than 70 jobs described in *Career Opportunities in Travel*, you will learn what you need to enter that job field, the salary range, job opportunities, and advancement prospects, and what associations or unions are available as a resource for training and job openings.

Sources of Information

The information in *Career Opportunities in Travel* comes from the following sources:

- Organizations and unions that represent the various occupations
- Major job banks
- Interviews with individuals in the various professions
- Personal experience observing the occupations
- Newsletters, books, and magazines.

Organization of Material

Career Opportunities in Travel is divided into nine employment sections: travel and transportation; cruise travel; lodging; food and beverage; tour and travel services; sales and publicity; executive and managerial; health care; and specialties. There are two parts to each career profile. The first part provides job information in chart form, giving a thumbnail idea of prerequisites; other job titles; a career ladder illustrating the common career path to a position; licensing or certification requirements; and a salary range. The second part presents more details in narrative form, including:

- The “Position Description” details a job’s major responsibilities, daily tasks, and duties and provides information about working conditions.
- “Salaries” gives a general idea of the wages that workers may earn. Many salary details come from the U.S. Bureau

of Labor Statistics, salary surveys done by professional associations, various state and college employment boards, and a variety of job postings.

- “Employment Prospects” lists what type of companies hire people in that career and the job outlook for today and the future.
- “Advancement Prospects” briefly covers the prospects for promotion within the field and suggestions for alternative career paths.
- “Licensure/Certification” includes any license, certification, or registration that may be required or recommended for a profession.
- “Education and Training” describes the type of diploma or degree that is needed or recommended to enter a career. This section also discusses training programs that may need to be completed.
- “Experience, Skills, and Personality Traits” itemizes the minimum experience, skills, and personality traits required for a job.
- “Unions and Associations” lists the names of some national professional organizations or unions that are open to people in each career.
- “Tips for Entry” lists suggestions for finding jobs and more information about each job.

An exhaustive list of organizations and unions, with phone and fax numbers and website URLs point to areas where you can find more detailed information. Appendixes are provided to help locate additional information about career choices. They include organizations and unions; schools that offer certificates and associates, bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees in travel, tourism, and hospitality; lists of major hotels, cruise lines, and airlines with contact information; a bibliography; and a list of websites of interest.

Notice

Hundreds of addresses, phone numbers, and website URLs are listed in *Career Opportunities in Travel*. They are current as of this writing, but remember that associations, organizations, unions, schools, and companies move, change their phone numbers or access codes, change their names or their domain names, or cease to exist. When a connection does not work (mail is returned, phone numbers are wrong, a 404 URL error code appears), then go to a good search engine, such as Google.com or AskJeeves.com, and enter the name of the organization.

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