

A guide to writing your own business travel policy

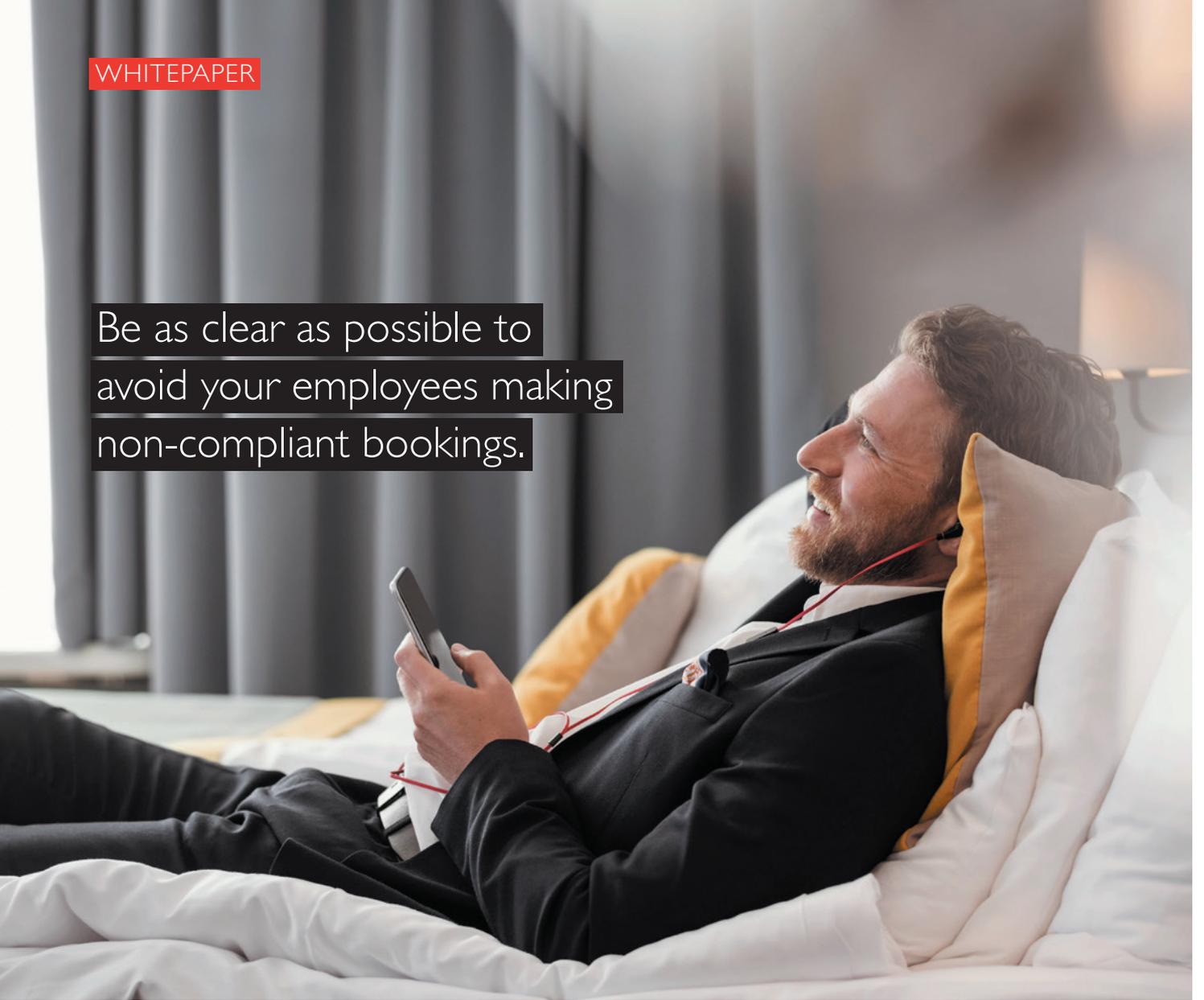
If you've never heard of a company travel policy, or you think it's time you updated the policy you have, here is a guide from Flight Centre Business Travel to help you write a simple business travel policy.

A travel policy guides your employees through the travel booking process. By ensuring your employees book their travel according to your process, you can take back the control when it comes to how much they spend, reducing travel costs and ensuring duty of care. By defining procedures for business travel and guidelines for reimbursement you can monitor your travel expenses and make sure your budgets are accurate.

Small things like booking in advance can save you a lot on your travel spend. By working with your FCBT Travel Manager to implement an advance purchase strategy and including it in your travel policy, your business can ensure access to the best fares every time and reduce the bottom line impact from seasonal and market fluctuations.

Business travellers can pay a lot more for airfares purchased one day out from travel.

Be as clear as possible to avoid your employees making non-compliant bookings.



WHO SHOULD YOU INVOLVE IN WRITING YOUR TRAVEL POLICY?

When creating your travel policy you need to think about how strict your control should be to suit your company culture and business objectives. If your business has a fairly relaxed culture then your policy should be more flexible.

Speak to all your stakeholders who are affected by travel and consider how it may impact them. For example your accountant will worry about the travel costs and spend where as your general manager will be more interested in risk management and keeping your most frequent travellers happy.

Don't forget to speak to your travellers too! Speaking to your travellers will help you understand how business travel impacts on their business and their personal lives, which is crucial when deciding what travellers should be entitled to. Consider factors like frequent flyer programmes, upgrades or added extras for long haul flights, lounge access etc.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Keep it simple! There aren't many staff who want to read a 20 page document that's written like a legal contract. Use simple English and clear details.

Your basic travel policy should include:

- Where your employees can book travel
- How to pay for their travel
- How the approval process works
- How to claim their expenses
- Flights, hotels and ground transport guidelines – what they can and can't do
- How to use any travel apps or booking tools

An easy guide to create these for your company

WHERE TO BOOK TRAVEL

The first question to ask is how much do you use your Travel Management Company (TMC) Flight Centre Business Travel vs how much you let your employees make their own bookings online or offline.

If you use FCBT then we can track and report on a lot of your employees' travel which gives you a better overall view of your travel costs. It provides you with the additional security of knowing you have an expert to help in keeping travellers compliant by booking with those hotels, airlines or travel providers that have the right price or preference for you.

A TMC like Flight Centre Business Travel will be on hand to update any travel plans when those last minute business changes come up. If you don't use a TMC you will need to outline in your policy how you will keep track of all the different bookings, what hotels, trains and rental car companies travellers may use at what price and how to manage emergencies and last minute changes.

HOW TO PAY?

How you pay for your business travel will vary depending on whether you use a TMC like Flight Centre Business Travel or if you book online or offline direct.

If you are a customer of FCBT you will have a variety of flexible payment options which may include payment on account or charging back. This is a service where we cover all your travel costs for accommodation and car hire, consolidate the costs for you and then bill it back to your company so you don't have the hassle of dealing with lots of little expense claims after a business trip. It's a great way to reduce any fraud and control your travel spend because you can set limits on the extras that employees are allowed to spend during a business trip.

If you don't use a TMC then your travel policy will need to state company credit card limits, personal card limits and travel expenses that you will and won't cover and how to recoup all those costs and how to do reconciliations.





THE APPROVAL PROCESS

Give your employees a clear process to follow when booking their travel. This should include everything from authorisation required before they are allowed to book, to their choices of supplier and the approval of their expense claims.

One of the benefits of using Flight Centre Business Travel is that we can enforce your policy for you. We ensure your employees only book with service providers you allow, at the right price and prevent over spending, especially in the case of last minute changes or emergencies.

If you manage your travel in-house, you'll probably have an internal process where someone in the business approves all the trips.

Don't forget to include links to any forms travellers may have to complete prior to booking and make sure there is an audit trail of approvals for your records.

HOW TO CLAIM THEIR EXPENSES

It's vital to include your policy on expenses and how you will handle them. This section of your travel policy must include the expense your company will and won't cover as well as the claiming process, how long they must keep receipts for and how long employees will wait to be reimbursed.

When using a TMC such as Flight Centre Business Travel you can use chargeback to assist with this, where possible. For example, when staying at a preferred hotel, your employee's hotel charges (meals/incidentals) will be charged back to your company by us. This means you will have no receipts to hold onto and it gives you a consolidated view of your travel expenses making it easy for reporting and eliminating mountains of paperwork.

BOOKING GUIDELINES

Your company travel policy should include how to book the below:

- Flights
- Hotels
- Trains/Bus/Transfers
- Car Rentals

Here is what to outline for each of these categories:

Flights

You should specify what class your travellers may book and for what kind of destination. Do you have a policy for using low cost carriers? Full service carriers? Business class? Premium Economy? Economy?

For example:

TICKET A \$80

Economy low cost carrier – no refunds, no changes, no bags.

TICKET B \$120

Economy regular full service airline – no refunds, changes for a fee. Bag included.

TICKET C \$360

Economy regular full service airline – fully refundable, free changes, bag and meal included.

If your travel policy says the traveller must travel in economy class, the traveller could legitimately book ticket C and the cost to the business for option C is \$240 more than option A to the same destination for the same trip. But if your business does make a lot of last minute changes, or suddenly needs to take some sales collateral or heavy bags, you may prefer this cost up front.

Hotels

Be clear on the maximum limit your travellers may spend for a hotel, taking into consideration that a 3 star hotel can often cost the same as a 4 star:

State your negotiated rate if you have one, with any preferred hotel chains and what the benefits are of using them. If you use Flight Centre Business Travel your employees could benefit from getting FREE added value options when booking our added value hotels such as late checkout, free Wi-Fi and breakfast inclusions.

Don't forget to include your added expenses that your company will allow – for example, can your employee get room service? Mini bar? Use the in-house laundry?

Ground Transport

Your business travel policy should include;

- Car rental agreements or what car companies your travellers can book through
- The class of the car they may hire (there can be large differences between a 4WD vs a small economy car)
- How to claim petrol costs and toll charges
- How you will manage the insurance and any deposits paid at pickup
- If you will cover a taxi or an Uber

Flight Centre Business Travel already have agreements in place to manage car rental companies on your behalf which ensures your employees don't incur extra costs around things like insurance and pickup deposits.

Travel apps

Does your company have any preferred travel apps that your employees may book through? Trip Advisor and other online booking tools can be handy but how do you know which one is good as there are so many to choose from. Can you check-in online with your app? Can you see your transfers? Does it account for any time differences between countries?

DUTY OF CARE

This section needs to include vital information on what your employees can do to ensure their safety while travelling.

It should outline:

- How will you keep in touch with your employee and vice versa when they are travelling (if you are a customer of FCBT this information would be automatically added to every booking)
- How you will keep track of everyone's whereabouts
- The process to follow in case of an emergency
- How many travellers can fly on the same flight
- Travel insurance and if its mandatory

Consider the destination your business travels to and classify which are high risk for your company. Our travellers need to know about these risks before they travel.

We've made it our business
to know exactly what you need.
We're confident that we'll find
the right fit for you, every time.



DEDICATED TRAVEL MANAGERS

Your personal travel manager provides the best advice specific to your business needs.



DELIVERABLE SAVINGS

Helping you make smart travel decisions for your business, saving you time and money.



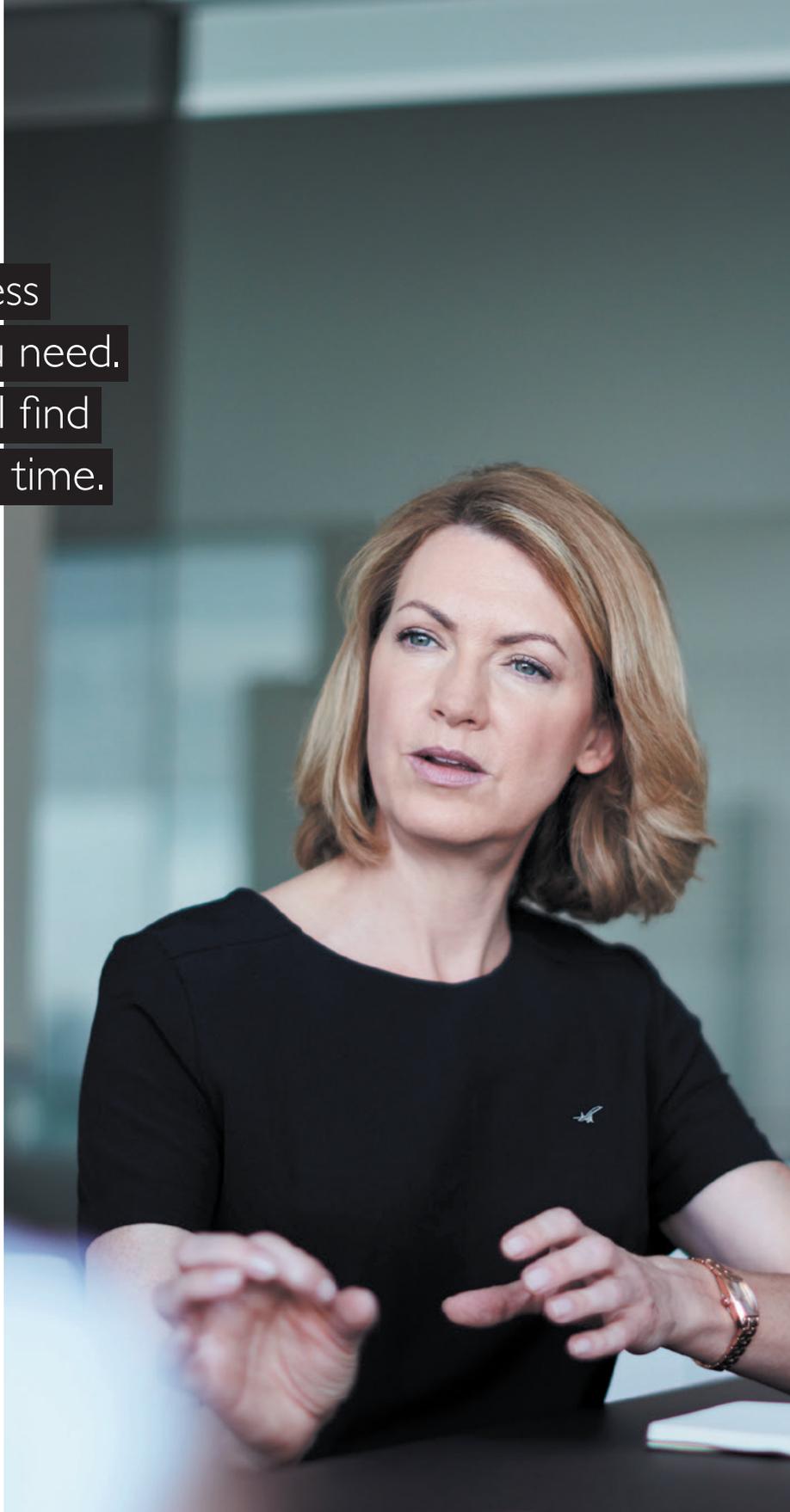
24/7 WORLDWIDE CUSTOMER CARE

Whenever and wherever you are, we're here for your business 24/7.



NO LOCK-IN CONTRACTS

Business travel made easy with no lock-in contracts and multiple payment options to suit you.



For more information please contact
Flight Centre Business Travel on
fbt.com.au or 1300 797 826