

Professional Career Development

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CAREER PATH

Career development is the practise of directing learning activities, including job experience, toward desired professional outcomes. The development of career competences is another aspect of career development.

Personal and professional development are combined in professional development. The practise of improving yourself with a focus on career advancement is called professional development. In your present organisation, it usually has to do with your current role or discipline. It usually has a heavy focus on review because it is interwoven with human resources operations like performance reviews. The practise of directing learning activities, including job experience, toward desired professional outcomes is called career development. The development of career competences is another aspect of career development.

I have been a business travel consultant for most of my professional life and it is time to make some changes and progress. Career path was interrupted by unforeseen events and looking to get back to it as thing went back to normal. Travel is a very dynamic industry, though there are aspects that always stay the same, there are specifics that are changing. Going back to be a travel consultant after 2 years gap, will be very challenging as many things have changed and I would have to bring myself up to date, travelling restrictions in place, closed countries, suspended flights, technically things have mostly stayed the same, however, they developed, and I will have to keep on top of it.

CURRENT SKILLS

As a business travel consultant, I was responsible for the operational sales of all travel related products and services, Identifying the needs of the client and planning all facets of domestic and international travel. In over 25 years of travel experience I've learned to use all the booking platforms that travel agencies and airlines use. Gained excellent inter-personal skills, GDS skills (very proficient Amadeus), also Finance, Admin and typing skills.

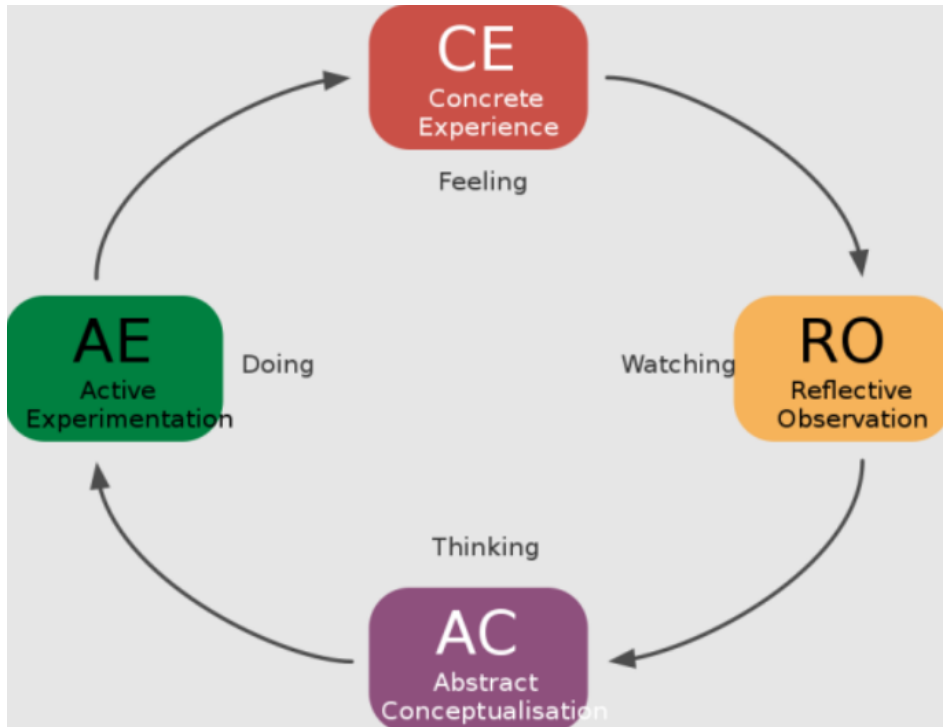
Business travel consultant duties include, but is not limited to booking flights, arranging transportation to and from the airport, and booking hotel rooms. They also help with entertainment, such as getting tickets for shows and sports events and getting into popular restaurants. I had to spend a lot of time on the phone or online during a workday searching for the best offers and making arrangements for my clients. Always keep a professional manner throughout the day as I interact with high-level business clientele. When dealing with last-minute travel arrangements or issues during a corporate trip booking, the work can occasionally be stressful.

I've been working both office hours and out of office hours jobs and even though the, it is the same job, working out of office hours involves solving mostly emergencies and last-minute requests. This requires a lot of empathy and the capacity to keep calm when things get out of control.

Currently working for a big company as HR consultant. It helped me improve my admin skills; however, I came to realize that this field is not for everybody. If my job requires a lot of empathy, as a HR consultant I had to see things from business perspective.

Kolb's reflective cycle has four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.

Gibbs' reflective cycle has six stages: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan



Make it happen:

- Aspire
- Investigate
- Reflect
- Decide
- Plan
- Personalise
- Achieve

GAP IN SKILLS

Since I was missing two years, and many things have changed, I need refresh trainings and do a lot of research to bring myself up to date with the latest rules and regulations regarding travelling. It might take up to one month to catch up with everything to be able to perform my duties.

I will enrol online training sessions with the booking tools providers. Also, Government websites are always up to date with latest travel restrictions.

The emphasis on workplace learning is due in large part to three factors:

- The first and most obvious reason is to enable to properly perform, by ensuring that the values are in line with those in the workplace organisation.
- Second to make it possible to grow professionally in the short to medium term, whether within or outside the organization
- Third, for the long-term career advancement and employability – maximizing the long-term potential to achieve the goals

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

I have applied for jobs on several recruitment websites and have been invited to a few interviews. The roleplay showed me that this task is difficult for both parties, as an interviewer you need to make sure the candidate is welcomed and comfortable. You need to lead the conversation to get as much information as possible to make sure you have the right person for the job, but also be very careful with the kind of questions you ask, so that they are not too personal, discriminatory and overall uncomfortable. I used real questions I was asked in interviews, and it seems that employers are not always on the path with the type of questions they should or should not ask.

As an interviewee, I would have point out my strengths more clearly, highlighting specific skills, that even though are evident and crucial for the job, they should be mentioned to be reminded. I should not assume that experience only will recommend me for the job. There are many skills I can add to my portfolio to help me go further.

Reflecting

The person reflecting will also need to develop a range of skills. They will need:

- to be able to feel comfortable with the other person
- to be able to describe their practice in a thoughtful, reflective way
- to be able to articulate what they are thinking about
- to commit to the process and to trust the other person.

While researching this I stumbled upon the below 20 tips in John Neugebauer and Jane Evans-Brain book, which matches my believes:

1. Start work preparations early
2. Manage own career – be part of a talent management programme
3. Recognise that probably have more than one ‘career’ during working life
4. Qualifications are important; how we work with others is usually more important
5. Even after a degree – or after further study and years of work experience – we may need to undertake short-term contracts or lower-level work
6. Keep all employment resources up to date
7. Embrace learning throughout the working life
8. When we are doing what matters to us, we must be proud of it
9. Get a mentor
10. Make and take opportunities to network
11. Understand stereotypes; don’t be derailed by them
12. Understand that change is inevitable – be ready to adapt
13. Understand your psychological contract
14. Manage work–life balances
15. Keep an eye on changing horizons
16. Understand own personal values
17. It may not always be good – play the long game (emotional intelligence)
18. Enjoy it, don’t endure it
19. Manage those who work for us without falling into poor practice traps
20. Relish our own field of dreams

I don’t want to stop here, my goal is to get a management position and while I am already on a growth process, starting University and studying Leadership Management, I am working hard to develop myself on a personal level to. Make myself aware of my on flaws and qualities, what can be changed, what can be improved and what should stay as it is.

Knowledge is what must be improved, we never have enough knowledge.

“Wisdom is not a product of schooling but of the lifelong attempt to acquire it.” – Albert Einstein

REFERENCES

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<https://www.differencebetween.com/what-is-the-difference-between-kolb-and-gibbs-reflective-cycle/>

<https://work.chron.com/corporate-travel-consultant-job-description-15670.html>

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The Challenges, Benefits and Possible Solutions to using Reflection in a Professional Context. By Peter Tarrant

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/47817db10d8f860afbb168a92f54b732/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=49142>

DANIELA MARCU

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Professional experience

Experience by departments

Airline: 3 years and 5 months

Travel agency/TMC: 19 years

Retail: 3 years

Cargo agent – Swissport

Jul 2021 – present – Heathrow Airport

Prepare airline and customs documentation

Comply with company's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and paperwork is prepared timely and accurately

Make sure paperwork related to the cargo is correct before release

Assure proper compliance with local and international laws and regulations

Follow Dangerous Goods Requirements and Regulations

Comply with other general office duties as assigned

Deliver a high-quality customer service to all internal and external customers

Site support – Adecco

Sep2020 – May 2021 – Amazon STN8- Milton Keynes

Attending mandatory integration and/or "on-boarding" session and assisting the Temporary Worker with the induction sessions for new starters;

checking the working attendance of the Temporary Workers;

monitoring safe/unsafe behaviours and reporting any safety incidents

attending to the "good bye process" (Amazon process to release and thank the Temporary Workers during ramp-down)

Conduct all other on-site pastoral and administrative tasks including Return to Work reports, Exit Interviews, annual leave recording, exceptions management, shift and overtime communications and general reporting.

Business Travel Consultant OOH – Fello Travel

Jan 2020 – August 2020 UK based remote homeworker

Out of office hours assistance and support for emergencies (flight delays and cancellations)

Planning itineraries

Advising clients

Booking hotels, air, rail or sea travel, private jets and car rentals

Assistance and support for emergencies (flight delays and cancellations)
Researching travel information
Assuring client satisfaction
Acquired skills and knowledge: Microsoft Office, Amadeus

Business Travel Consultant OOH - Aero24 – Collinson Group

Dec 2017 – Jan 2020 UK based remote homemaker

Out of office hours assistance and support for emergencies (flight delays and cancellations), for TMCs
Planning itineraries
Advising clients
Booking hotels, air, rail or sea travel, private jets and car rentals
Assistance and support for emergencies (flight delays and cancellations)
Researching travel information
Assuring client satisfaction
Acquired skills and knowledge: Microsoft Office, Amadeus, Galileo, Sabre Microsoft Outlook

Business Travel Consultant - AVP Services GVA

Jun 2013 - Jan 2017, Geneva

AVP (Association des Agences de Voyages Privées de Genève - Geneva Private Travel Management Companies Association)
Out of office hours assistance and support for emergencies (flight delays and cancellations)
Planning itineraries
Advising clients
Booking hotels, air, rail or sea travel, private jets and car rentals
Researching travel information
Assuring client satisfaction
Acquired skills and knowledge: Microsoft Office, Amadeus, Microsoft Outlook

Manager Assistant - The Dune Group - House of Fraser

Sep 2009 - Aug 2012, Bournemouth, UK

Applying commercial skills to meet sales and cost budget
Recruiting, developing and training staff
Ensuring your team deliver good customer service
Meeting operational expectations by implementing and maintaining high retail standards
Motivating staff
Dealing with enquiries and complaints
Serving customers
Effective store merchandising

Business Travel Consultant - Happy Tour

Feb 2006 - Jul 2009 - Bucharest

Individual and group air tickets issue, hotel bookings, rent-a-car, visa
Planning itineraries
Advising clients
Billings and cash
Taking the clients request and answer them according to the rules and according with their request
Bidding participation for ministry, public and private institutions
Client assistance
Back office activities
Period reports to company managers
Acquired skills and knowledge: Microsoft Office, Amadeus, Tina

Business Travel Consultant -Olimpic International Tourism

May 2001 - Feb 2006 - Bucharest

Individual and group air tickets issue, hotel bookings, rent-a-car, visa
Planning itineraries
Advising clients
Billings and cash
Taking the clients request and answer them according to the rules and according with their request
Bidding participation for ministry, public and private institutions
Client assistance
Back office activities
Period reports to company managers
Acquired skills and knowledge: Microsoft Office, Worldspan

Travel and Ticketing agent - TAROM Romanian Air Transport

Jan 1998 - May 2001 - Bucharest

Front desk ticketing agent
Acquired skills and knowledge: Microsoft Office, Lieson Education

1998 - 2000 Undergraduate - Atheneum Finance | Bucharest

1991 - 1995 High School - Octav Onicescu Foreign Languages | Bucharest

Skills from work experience

Microsoft Office, Lieson, Worldspan, Amadeus, Galileo Tina, Microsoft Outlook

Foreign languages English - Advanced

Other info Certifications

Basic Galileo - Mar 2017 - Mar 2017

Basic Worldspan - Jan 2000 - Feb 2000

Interviewer: Good morning Daniela,

Please make yourself comfortable. Would you like a coffee or a glass of water?

Daniela: Good morning,

Thank you, I am good.

I: How was your journey, how did you find us, was it easy?

D: It was quite difficult and had to wonder for a while to find the building, but here I am.

I: Really sorry about that. We are not very well positioned, but we are moving to a better location by the end of the year.

We are a small TMC (travel management company), but a very well known, with a big portfolio of VIP clients, and what recommends us is the tailor made and friendly (warm) approach, tell me will you fit the requirements?

D: I have 25 years experience in travel and the last 17 only business travel, having to deal only with VIP customers, also I am a very easy going person and I connect with people quite rapidly.

I: I can see you know a lot about the industry, what made you leave it for almost 2 years?

D: Pandemic happened, as we all know our industry was the first to collapse. I would have never left if I didn't have to, but unfortunately, I was made redundant.

However, that was a blessing in disguise as it pushed me to go back to study and made me learn different skills, so even though I've missed my job, it was exciting to see there is a world out there where we can learn new things.

I: what do you think are your flaws?

D: Even though at first this might look as quality, being extremely honest doesn't always help. I am outspoken, therefore over the years I lost quite a few opportunities and I would say friends because of it.

I: We are hybrid, in terms of working from home and from the office, how would you prefer to work?

D: a mix of both is ideal. Working entirely from home might be very comfortable, and saves a lot of money and time, but I can get very lonely and isolated, so if we can arrange to work from the office once or twice a week, this would be great

I: I understand. Thank you very much for coming. I will call you later this afternoon to arrange a second meeting, where our office director attend. Is this ok with you?

D: Of course, looking forward to it, thank you for your time.