

5A

Skills

## Personal requirements

Travel agents need to have:

- strong sales, customer service and people skills
- knowledge of other countries and their transport systems, accommodation options and tourist attractions
- the ability to find information that is accurate and up to date
- time-management and planning skills
- problem-solving skills
- knowledge of airlines' safety and security regulations
- knowledge of airline route networks and alliances
- knowledge of passport and visa requirements, and insurance and foreign currencies
- knowledge of current affairs, including areas where travel may be dangerous or government warnings have been issued
- the ability to work with computer reservation systems, prepare itineraries, and finalise manual and electronic tickets
- mathematical skills.

Travel agents need to be:

- good at listening and understanding a client's needs
- friendly, patient and helpful
- professional and responsible
- methodical, accurate and able to work unsupervised
- enthusiastic about their work
- able to work well under pressure
- able to work well as part of a team.

Travel agents must have a tidy and professional appearance.

## How to get into this job

There are no specific entry requirements to become a travel agent. However, travel experience is an advantage and many employers prefer you to have completed an Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (ATTTO) course to at least NZQA Level 3, although Level 4 is preferred. This qualification can be gained while working in the job.

**Secondary education:** There are no specific secondary education requirements to become a travel agent. However, some employers may prefer their trainees to have at least Sixth Form Certificate or NCEA equivalent. Useful subjects include English, maths, geography and languages.

## Pay and job outlook

Salaries vary, but travel agents usually earn between \$18,000 and \$50,000 per year. They may work on a base salary with commission. Travel agents often have sales targets to meet, with sales incentive bonuses included in the salary package.

The outlook for travel agents is good and the number of people employed in this occupation is expected to remain stable or increase moderately over the next two to three years. There were 5,500 travel agents employed in New Zealand in January 2005. The Aviation, Tourism & Travel Training Association (ATTTO) predicts that 55 new positions will be created in 2005 and each year after until 2009.

## Related jobs

Hotel/Motel Receptionist, Sales Representative, Travel Wholesaler/Consolidator

## Further contacts

**Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (ATTTO)**

WELLINGTON, (04) 499 6570, info@attto.org.nz, www.attto.org.nz/

**NZ Institute of Travel and Tourism Inc (NZITT)**

WELLINGTON, (04) 496 4884, eo@nzitt.co.nz, www.nzitt.org.nz

**Travel Agents Association of NZ (TAANZ)**

WELLINGTON, (04) 496 4898, info@taanz.org.nz, www.taanz.org.nz

## Travel Agent

### Māngai Whakarite Haerenga

#### Other names for this job

Corporate Travel Agent, Leisure Travel Agent, Travel Agent – Leisure/Corporate/Retail, Travel Broker, Travel Consultant – Leisure/Corporate/Wholesale, Travel Co-ordinator

#### What people in this job do

Travel agents prepare and advise on travel arrangements for corporate or leisure clients, and make transport, accommodation and other bookings.

Travel agents:

- consult with and advise the public and businesses on their travel or holiday plans
- give information on accommodation, transport and places of interest
- book accommodation, transport, tours and cruises
- prepare itineraries
- issue tickets and collect payment
- perform general administration duties
- advise and assist the public with their visas, passports, insurance and other travel-related documents
- may organise and book conferences
- may visit clients.