

'Flying? I've been to almost as many places as my luggage.'
Bob Hope (1903–2003), American humourist

OVERVIEW

VOCABULARY

British and
American English

LISTENING

Hyatt Hotels

READING 1

What business
travellers want

READING 2

Videoconferencing

SKILLS

Telephoning: making
arrangements

CASE STUDY

Business Travel
Services



STARTING UP

A Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1 How often do you travel by air, rail, road and sea?
- 2 Do you enjoy travelling? What don't you enjoy about it?
- 3 Put the following in order of importance to you when you travel.

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|-------|-------------|-------|
| comfort | safety | price | reliability | speed |
|---------|--------|-------|-------------|-------|

Does the order of priorities change for different types of travel?

B Choose the correct words from the box to complete the following list of things which irritate people when flying.

| | | | | |
|---------|---------------|--------|-------|----------|
| cabin | cancellations | checks | food | jet |
| luggage | queues | room | seats | trolleys |

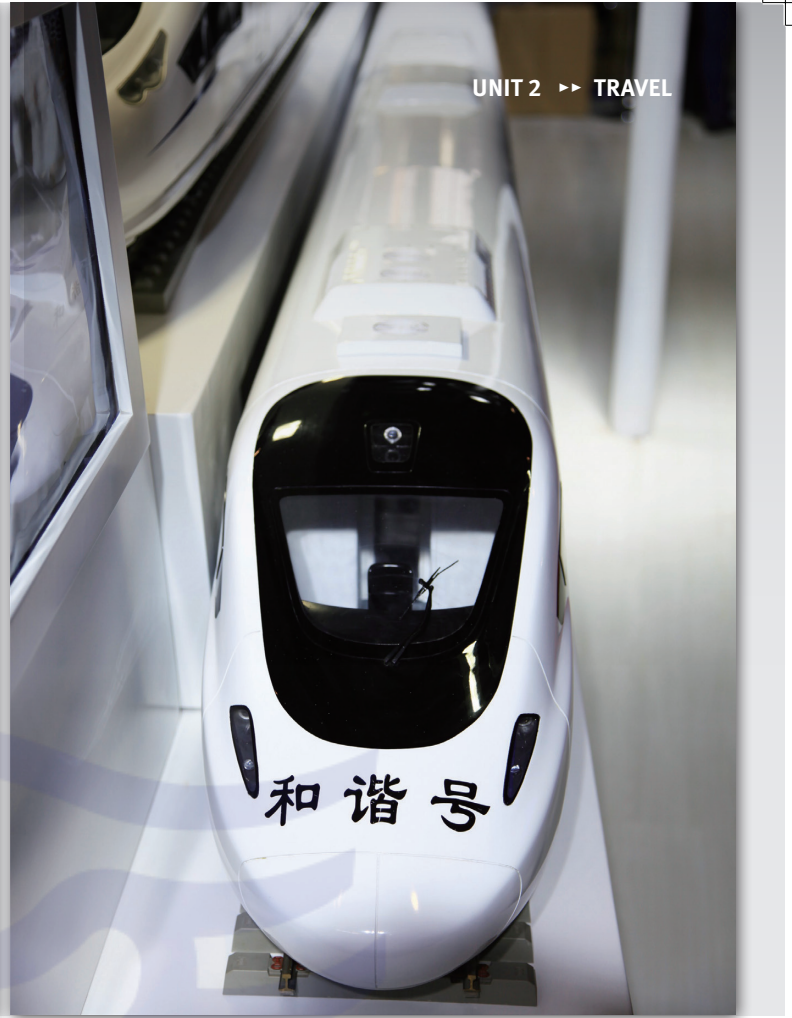
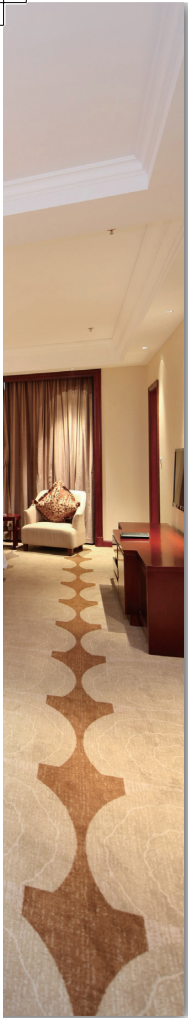
- 1 not enough leg
- 2 lost or delayed
- 3 long at check-in
- 4 poor quality and drink
- 5 no baggage available
- 6 overbooking of
- 7 flight delays and
- 8 tiredness and lag
- 9 delays for security
- 10 oversized hand luggage in the

Audio
2.1



C 2.1 Listen to three people talking about their travel experiences. Tick the problems in Exercise B that they mention.

D Which of the things in Exercise B irritate you most? Which irritate you least? Discuss your ideas with a different partner.



VOCABULARY

British and American English

A Match the words and phrases which have the same meaning. For each pair, decide which is British English and which is American English.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 subway | a) line |
| 2 city centre | b) lift |
| 3 carry-on baggage | c) public toilet |
| 4 one way | d) schedule |
| 5 return | e) economy class |
| 6 freeway | f) single |
| 7 rest room | g) first floor |
| 8 elevator | h) bill |
| 9 coach class | i) booking |
| 10 timetable | j) round trip |
| 11 car park | k) downtown |
| 12 queue | l) motorway |
| 13 check | m) underground |
| 14 reservation | n) hand luggage |
| 15 ground floor | o) parking lot |

B Work in pairs. Use the American English words or phrases from Exercise A to complete this text.

My last overseas business trip was a nightmare from start to finish. First of all, there was a delay on the way to the airport, as there was an accident on the freeway.¹ When I got there, I found the lower level of the airport.....² was flooded. Next, my.....³ was too big and heavy, so I had to check it in. When we arrived, the.....⁴ was closed, and there were no cabs at all. After a long time trying to figure out the.....⁵ and waiting in.....⁶ for 40 minutes, we finally got a bus.....⁷ and found the hotel. Then there was a problem with our room.....⁸ and, would you believe it, the.....⁹ wasn't working, and our rooms were on the fifth floor.

Audio
2.2



C 2.2 Listen to the recording and check your answers to Exercise B.

LISTENING

Hyatt Hotels



Sholto Smith

Audio
2.3 – 2.5

- A** 2.3 Listen to Sholto Smith, Area Sales Director for Hyatt Hotels, talking about how the company meets the needs of business travellers. Listen to the first part and tick which of the following he mentions.

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| location of hotels | good links with underground networks | close to the airport |
| totally non-smoking | good restaurant | close to client's office |
| technology | Internet | business centre |
| swimming pool | translation services | free transport to hotel |

- B** 2.4 Listen to the second part and complete the notes on the ways hotels are adding value to their guests' stay.

-¹ on a daily basis
- Membership to the²
- Newspapers
- Transportation to and from the³
- A shuttle service to:
 - a) the⁴
 - b) the⁵ in which the client works

- C** 2.5 Listen to the third part and summarise the future developments in the business travel market that Sholto mentions.

- D** In groups, discuss what is important for you when staying in a hotel, for either work or pleasure.

READING 1

What business travellers want

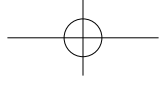
- A** What factors do you consider when choosing an airline?

- B** Work in pairs. Complete the table below for your article. (You may not be able to answer every point.)

Student A: Read the article on page 19.

Student B: Read the article on page 152.

| | Edmond Moutran | John Cox |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| job | Chairman of Memac Ogilvy & Mather | |
| nationality | | British |
| travel destinations | | |
| amount of air travel | | |
| choice of class | | |
| choice of airline | | |
| likes | | |
| dislikes | | |
| travel to airport | | |
| hotel requirements | | |



Article A

FT

Counting the ways to bridge the gulf

by Jill James

As more carriers open up more routes, travelling to and around the Middle East has never been easier.

Edmond Moutran, the 63-year-old Chairman and Chief Executive of Mema Ogilvy & Mather, the multinational advertising and communications company, should know. The Lebanese executive reckons he spends 60% of his working week in the air. 'I spend 200 days in Beirut, 40 days in Dubai, 40 days in Bahrain and 25 in the UK. I also spend one week in each of Cairo, Jordan, Jeddah, Riyadh, Kuwait, Tunis and Algeria. I go to South Africa once a year, Barcelona once or twice a year for conferences and I go to Paris four times a year.'

He says his choice of airline is dictated by convenience, but his preference is for Middle East Airlines and its 'new aircraft and equipment, and well-trained, fresh and energetic staff'. His second choice is Gulf Air, with Emirates third, followed

by British Airways and Air France.

He always travels with his wife, Liliane, who worked with him until very recently, and prefers to travel first class. He also uses business class. He says he will travel economy 'in an emergency'.

He uses airline lounges. 'I want good chairs, plenty of newspapers and television. Airlines that spend millions on décor and have uncomfortable chairs really need to look at themselves.'

'MEA gets me a car to the airport and they open a special counter for me as an individual,' he says. 'Staff take your boarding pass, check you in and walk you through to the lounge.'

The airline saves me about an hour of standing in line. It shows real respect. You don't really get this extra-special treatment on other airlines. With MEA, it's the whole process – that's why I'm so loyal to them.'

So what annoys him most about flying? 'The attitude of crew and



staff sometimes,' he says. 'If they're tired of their jobs, they should give it up. I also dislike the casual attitude of ground staff. Employees should be trained to cope with customers who have problems.'

Mr Moutran says that problems with ground staff are one of the reasons he hates travelling to the US. 'No one ever has time to answer a question there,' he says. He also doesn't like the lack of openness shown by airlines when there are problems and delays.

C In pairs, share information about the two articles. Compare the attitudes of the two travellers. Whose point of view is closest to yours?

D Match the sentence halves to complete the definitions of the words in bold.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 Peak travel happens | a) a change to a better seat or level of service. |
| 2 When you check in, | b) a room in a hotel/airport where people can sit and relax. |
| 3 Frequent-flyer points are | c) a card you must show in order to get on a plane. |
| 4 An upgrade is | d) all the people who work at an airport, but not the pilots or cabin crew. |
| 5 A lounge is | e) awarded by airlines to reward customer loyalty. |
| 6 A boarding pass is | f) at times when the largest number of people are travelling. |
| 7 Ground staff are | g) you go to desk at a hotel/airport to say you have arrived. |

E Complete the text with the phrases from Exercise D.

I don't always pay a lot of money and I try to avoid¹. However, I do travel a lot, earn² and usually get an³ to first class. The airline gets me a car to the airport. I am met by helpful⁴. They take my⁵ and help me⁶. Then they take me to the⁷, where I read the newspapers.

READING 2

Videoconferencing

A Before you read

Do you consider the environmental effects of travel when planning:

- a) business trips? b) private trips and holidays?

Why? / Why not?

FT

Reluctant users slow to take up videoconferencing

by Danny Bradbury

The public relations executive was enthusiastic on the phone. The IT company he represented had started installing green data centres and energy-efficient computers. Would I like to fly to California to see for myself? That would be a 2,500-mile round trip from my home in midwestern Canada. According to the online calculator from Terapass, the trip would release 1,132 pounds (about 500 kilos) of CO₂ into the atmosphere. 'If you're really into green technology, couldn't we do a videoconference instead?' I asked. 'Sure,' said the PR person. 'We are totally into green issues.' He promised to arrange it. Months later, nothing had happened.

The high-tech industry is quick to praise the benefits of flexible communication, but

videoconferencing is one area where things have failed to live up to the hype. 'Videoconferencing has not significantly displaced travel,' says Frank Modruson, CIO for global technology consulting firm Accenture. As the IT sector continues to push its green values, this mismatch between rhetoric and reality is becoming harder to ignore. So why are relatively few people using videoconferencing?

Andrew Davis, managing partner at online collaboration market research firm Wainhouse, says the technology is let down by usability. For many people, videoconferences are just too difficult to set up. This is why Nortel is emphasising the services side. 'The barrier isn't the technology,' says Dean Fernandes, the company's General Manager of Network

Services.

Nortel is one of several companies getting into a relatively new segment of the videoconferencing market called telepresence. Specially equipped rooms enable people to appear as if they are sitting across the table, with life-size video representations of remote colleagues in high-definition video. Customers pay to use Nortel's facilities, which can also handle video filming, enabling the room to double as a production facility for corporate TV, for example. Nortel will also handle post-production tasks such as editing. Accenture, on the other hand, opted for the capital investment route. Mr Modruson said it is installing telepresence systems, creating rooms in Chicago and Frankfurt, and hopes to roll out another 11 cities in the next few months.

B Match the terms 1–6 to their meanings a)–f).

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 corporate TV | a) people in your company who work in another place |
| 2 high-definition video | b) electronic pictures of people that are as big as in real life |
| 3 life-size video representations | c) the things that have to be done on a film before it can be shown |
| 4 post-production tasks | d) the place where the things in c), above, are carried out |
| 5 production facility | e) very high-quality electronic pictures |
| 6 remote colleagues | f) television programmes made and shown within an organisation |

C Look at the expressions in *italics*. True or false?

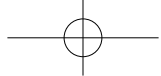
If ...

- something does not *live up to the hype* (lines 24–25), reality is just as good as what people say about it.
- something *displaces* (line 26) something else, they both exist together.
- someone *pushes* (line 29) a particular idea, they encourage people to believe in it, use it, etc.
- you are *let down by the usability* (lines 37) of something, you can rely on it.
- there is a *barrier* (line 41) to using something, it is easy to use.

D Over to you

Would you like to talk to a life-size video representation of a colleague sitting opposite you across the table instead of going to see them face to face?

Why? / Why not?



SKILLS

Telephoning:
making
arrangementsAudio
2.6 – 2.7

A 2.6, 2.7 Jennifer North, Sales Director at Madison in New York, makes two telephone calls to Cristina Verdi, a fashion buyer in London. Listen and note a) the purpose of each call and b) the result.

B 2.6 Listen to the first call again and complete this extract.

Jennifer: I'm calling because I'll be in London next week and
.....¹ to see you. I want to tell you about
our new collection.

Cristina: Great. What²? I'm fairly free next
week, I think.

Jennifer:³? In the afternoon? Could
.....⁴ then?

Cristina: Let me look now. Let⁵. Yes, that'd
be no problem at all.⁶ two o'clock? Is that OK?

C 2.7 Listen to the second call again and complete this extract.

Receptionist: Thank you. I'm putting you through ... Hello, I'm afraid she's engaged at
the moment.¹ or can I put you through to her
voicemail?

Jennifer: Would you be able to take a message for me, please? I'm in a bit of a hurry.

Receptionist: Yes, certainly.

Jennifer: The thing is, I should be meeting Ms Verdi at 2 p.m.,
.....². My plane was delayed, and I've got to reschedule my
appointments. If possible,³
tomorrow,⁴ in the morning.
.....⁵ here at the hotel, please, to confirm?

Receptionist: Certainly. What's the number?

Jennifer: It's⁶.

D Role-play these two telephone situations.

- 1 Student A, you are a company employee who has arranged to meet Student B, a colleague from one of your subsidiaries. Explain that you cannot keep the appointment and give a reason. Suggest an alternative day.
- 2 Student B, you are on a business trip to Singapore and need to stay an extra day. Your hotel is full. Telephone the airline office. Talk to the representative, Student A, to arrange a different flight and a night at another hotel.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

ANSWERING THE
PHONE

Hello, Carla
Rodríguez speaking.
Good morning,
Tiger Ltd.

MAKING CONTACT

I'd like to speak
to Martin Krause,
please.
Could I have the
sales department,
please?

IDENTIFYING
YOURSELF

This is / My name's
Karin Nordby.
Karin Nordby
speaking.

STATING YOUR
PURPOSE

I'm calling about ...
The reason I'm
calling is ...

MAKING
ARRANGEMENTS

Could we meet on
Monday at 11:00?
How/What about
June 12th?
Is 9:30 convenient/
OK?

RESPONDING

That's fine/OK for me.
Sorry, I can't make it
then.
No problem.

CLOSING

Good. So, I'll see you
on the 8th.
Thank you. Goodbye.
Right. / OK, then.
That's great, I'll see
you ...

CHANGING
ARRANGEMENTS

I'm afraid I can't come
on Friday. I'm very
busy that day.
I'm sorry, I can't make
it on Tuesday. I've got
something on that
morning.
We've got an
appointment for ten
o'clock, but I'm afraid
something's come up.
Could we fix another
time?

BUSINESS TRAVEL SERVICES



A specialist travel agent has to work hard to retain a key client.

Background

Business Travel Services (BTS) is based in Philadelphia, USA. One of its most important clients is the large multinational corporation NeoTech, whose head office is also in Philadelphia. Recently, NeoTech's senior executives have had problems when they have been on business trips organised by BTS.



Stage 1

The Head of Travel at NeoTech phones the Account Manager of BTS to set up a meeting, so that they can discuss the problems that executives have had while on business trips.

In pairs, role-play the telephone conversation to set up the meeting.

Student A:

You are Head of Travel at NeoTech. Turn to page 153 to read the information in your diary and check when you are available for a meeting.

Student B:

You are the Account Manager for BTS. Turn to page 158 to read the information in your diary and check when you are available for a meeting.

Stage 2

NeoTech's Head of Travel phones BTS's Account Manager to change the time of the meeting. Some equipment has been stolen from their office, and the police are investigating. The Head of Travel suggests meeting in two weeks' time on a Wednesday.

BTS's Account Manager cannot meet on the Wednesday – he/she is giving a speech at an international travel conference. He/She suggests an alternative day and time.

Role-play the telephone conversation.

Stage 3

Following a request from BTS's Account Manager, NeoTech's Head of Travel sends summaries of four problems which senior executives at NeoTech had during recent business trips (see page 23).

Hotel Problem

Last Thursday, I checked into the Excelsior Hotel. The receptionist told me I had been upgraded and my room was on the 16th floor. Well, I stayed there for an hour or so, then asked to move to another room. The 'upgraded' room had no safe for my money, and the lighting was very bad. Also, there was a group of noisy people next door.

The new room was no better. I couldn't take a shower because there was no water for four hours. The coffee machine didn't work, the ice machine was out of order and the desk was too small. I called the receptionist to get some action, but she seemed too busy to do anything.

This hotel simply isn't up to standard. What can you do about it for me?

Lost Luggage

Three months ago, I travelled to Atlanta, Georgia. Two pieces of luggage didn't arrive. I reported the loss to the airline. They promised to find the bags and send them to me. Some weeks later, they wrote saying they couldn't find the bags and asked me to fill out a claim form. I didn't hear from them for another month, then they asked me to send receipts for all the missing articles. I didn't have receipts for the lost items.

It's three months later, and still no news from the airline. My e-mails and letters get no response. The airline has recently merged with another company, and I wonder if this is part of the problem. Can you help?

Car Rental Problem

The rental office at the airport couldn't give me the car I had reserved. It was in the medium price range at \$250 a week. Instead, they offered me a choice:

- a smaller car, which was uncomfortable and had a small trunk;
- a bigger car for an extra \$20 a day.

I was expecting a free upgrade, but the clerk on the desk refused to do that. His attitude was 'take it or leave it'. So I hired the bigger car. When the company billed me, I ended up paying \$490 for the car.

Diverted Flight

I was on a flight to Moscow, but the flight was diverted to Helsinki because of bad weather. There was a lot of confusion at Helsinki because the airline sent all the passengers to the same hotel for the night. Some passengers became very aggressive when they tried to get a room. I had to share a room with another passenger. The hotel made all passengers pay for their rooms. The next morning, we had to wait six hours in a cold terminal for the flight to Moscow.

The airline wouldn't pay for our hotel expenses. They said the circumstances were 'beyond their control'. I think we should be compensated for all the inconvenience.

Task

Work in groups of four. One of you is BTS's Account Manager, the other three are travel consultants who work with the Account Manager.

- 1 Each member of the group (Account Manager/travel consultants) reads one of the problems above and makes notes about it.
- 2 Each person summarises the problem for his/her colleagues, and answers any questions they may have.
- 3 After each summary, the groups discuss the following:
 - Did the executive in each case deal with the problem effectively? Why? / Why not?
 - What can BTS do to help to solve the problem?
 - What is the best solution for each executive? What, if anything, should he/she hope to get from the company concerned?

Writing

As the Account Manager for BTS, write an e-mail to NeoTech's Head of Travel, apologising for the inconvenience. Offer some compensation and explain what steps BTS has taken to make sure a similar problem does not happen again.

➔ Writing file page 145

Watch a Case study commentary.

