

Travel Agent Careers



Travel agents help travelers sort through vast amounts of information to help them make the best possible travel arrangements. They offer advice on destinations and make arrangements for transportation, hotel accommodations, car rentals, and tours for their clients. They are also the primary source of bookings for most of the major cruise lines. In addition, resorts and specialty travel groups use travel agents to promote travel packages to their clients.

Travel agents are also increasingly expected to know about and be able to advise travelers about their destinations, such as the weather conditions, local ordinances and customs, attractions, and exhibitions. For those traveling internationally, agents also provide information on customs regulations, required papers (passports, visas, and certificates of vaccination), travel advisories, and currency exchange rates. In the event of changes in itinerary in the middle of a trip, travel agents intercede on the traveler's behalf to make alternate booking arrangements.

Travel agents use a variety of published and computer-based sources for information on departure and arrival

times, fares, quality of hotel accommodations, and group discounts. They may also visit hotels, resorts, and restaurants themselves to evaluate the comfort, cleanliness, and the quality of specific hotels and restaurants so that they can base recommendations on their own experiences or those of colleagues or clients.

Travel agents who primarily work for tour operators and other travel arrangers may help develop, arrange, and sell the company's own package tours and travel services. They may promote these services, using telemarketing, direct mail, and the Internet. They make presentations to social and special-interest groups, arrange advertising displays, and suggest company-sponsored trips to business managers.

Agents face increasing competition from travel and airline websites for low-cost fares, but travelers still prefer using travel agents who can provide customized service and planning for complex itineraries to remote or multiple destinations. To attract these travelers, many travel agents specialize in specific interest destinations, travel to certain regions, or in selling to particular demographic groups.

Job Outlook

Employment of travel agents is expected to change little through 2016. Travel agents who specialize in a travel destination, type of traveler, or mode of transportation will have the best chances for success.

There are many consumers who still prefer to use a professional travel agent to plan a complete trip; to deal with more complex transactions; to ensure reliability; to suggest excursions or destinations that might otherwise be missed; to save time; or, in some cases, to save money. In addition, higher projected levels of travel, especially from businesses and retiring baby boomers will offset the loss of routine transactions. Furthermore, luxury and specialty travel is expected to increase among the growing number of Americans who are seeking out exotic and unique vacations and a growing part of travel agents' business is organizing and selling tours for the growing number of international visitors.

Earnings

Experience, sales ability, and the size and location of the agency determine the salary of a travel agent. Median annual earnings of travel agents were \$29,210 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$23,020 and \$36,920. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$18,100, while the top 10 percent earned more than \$46,270. Median earnings in May 2006 for travel agents employed in the travel arrangement and reservation services industry were \$29,160.

Salaried agents usually enjoy standard employer-paid benefits that self-employed agents must provide for themselves. When traveling for personal reasons, agents usually get reduced rates for transportation and accommodations. In addition, agents sometimes take "familiarization" trips, at lower cost or no cost to themselves, to learn about various vacation sites. These benefits often attract people to this occupation.

Tourism Careers

Educational Opportunities in Tourism at LCCC

Associate of Applied Business in Hospitality and Tourism Management

As our world expands globally, the tourism industry remains one of the largest industries in the United States. To meet the demand for trained professionals in this exciting and fast-paced field, Lorain County Community College offers a two-year associate of applied business degree with a major in tourism. A travel industry focus and hospitality industry focus are offered, providing students with the training and skills needed in each of these areas. A special emphasis is placed on customer service, marketing, sales and cultural diversity.

Note: Some of the courses offered as part of the Associate of Applied Business in Tourism program apply to professional certification from the Educational Institute of the American Hotel and Motel Association.

Related Educational Opportunities in other Business Programs at LCCC

Certificate of Completion in Customer Service

The customer service certificate of completion will provide participants with the knowledge and skills needed to work in a growing field and to effectively deal with the public as customers. Customer service positions are found in many areas of business including manufacturing, banking, retail stores, travel and tourism, and hospitals.

Certificate of Proficiency in Entrepreneurship

This certificate offers opportunities for individuals to learn about and develop entrepreneurial skills. The entire certificate of proficiency in entrepreneurship is accepted in the associate of applied business - entrepreneurship major.

Associate of Applied Business Administration in Entrepreneurship

This program is designed to prepare individuals for possible transfer or employment in a variety of management, business development and entrepreneur positions. The focus of the program is skill building in the area of entrepreneurship.

Educational Opportunities through LCCC's University Partnership

Kent State University

Bachelor of Business Administration-Business Management (Optional International Business Minor)

Kent's Business Administration (major in Business Management) degree provides students with credentials that are important to getting that first job in business as an entry-level manager or manager trainee.

The program is designed so that approximately three years of this partnership is LCCC coursework and the final year (33 semester hours) is Kent coursework. Kent courses are taught by Kent faculty either in person or via distance learning. Students can complete the business degree with a business management major in its entirety on LCCC's campus.

International Business Minor Option

Global business is fast becoming an important part of the U.S. economy. The world that college graduates are facing will essentially be a triad of powers (the United States and, perhaps, Canada and Latin America; Europe; and Japan and its Asian neighbors) and a "borderless" world. This suggests a need to be trained for employment that will have international implications. Whether the student takes a major in business, fashion design and merchandising, the hard sciences, English or education, some training in global outreach, cultural diversity, and "business cultures" will be necessary. The International Business minor will introduce students to cultural issues of a broad, global nature.

Master of Business Administration (PMBA)

The mission of the Kent State MBA program is to prepare students for management and staff positions in regional, national and international organizations through an emphasis on ethical leadership, teamwork, creative problem solving, global perspectives and skilled applications of information technology. This mission is achieved through offering a variety of coursework covering all the disciplines of business and by utilizing teaching techniques that help the student to develop and refine skills in these areas.

About Lorain County Community College

Lorain County Community College is one of Ohio's leading colleges delivering distance learning education via the Internet. The College has expanded its delivery of its programs and services through the opening of the Learning Center at St. Joseph Community Center in Lorain, the LCCC Wellington Center, Lorain County Growth Partnership in downtown Elyria and the Midpoint Campus Center in Brunswick. Partnerships with Lorain County's K-12 school districts have also led to important developments for the community. More than 1300 high school students participate in the Post Secondary Enrollment Options program by enrolling in LCCC classes, making LCCC the state's largest community college provider of PSEO. More than 35 percent of Lorain County's top high school graduates choose to attend LCCC.

LCCC is one of Ohio's fastest growing colleges because of the variety of learning opportunities it provides. Students can choose from more than 80 educational programs. Students can complete the first half — and sometimes more — of a bachelor's degree. The University Partnership brings eight universities to the LCCC campus offering 37 bachelor's and master's degree programs. With the University Partnership at LCCC, the College partners with the state's finest universities to bring the best in bachelor's and master's degree programs right to the LCCC campus. Students can earn degrees that get them jobs immediately. Students can upgrade, retrain and improve current life skills. Students can learn in the classroom, at home and over the Internet.

LCCC offers a complete college experience. We understand that there's more to college life than attending classes. We offer many of the programs, sports, and activities available at large four-year universities and colleges. But, students will not have to stand in line behind juniors and seniors in the classroom, on the playing field, or in leadership positions. Students can immediately act in a play, sing in a musical group, serve as editor for the college newspaper, plan social activities, compete on the playing field, or set policy as a student government member.

In addition to providing a great education for those who enter college with aspirations of a degree, LCCC helps those who have changed their career goals, who want to broaden their horizons, and who want to return to work. LCCC provides learning and training for those who want to move up but find they need new or improved skills for the kind of professional opportunities they seek.

LCCC faculty is recognized locally and nationally for their work as professors and in other areas. They all have advanced degrees and real-world experience and understand their primary responsibility at LCCC is to teach classes. Classes are small. Individual attention is plentiful.

An LCCC education, prepares students for real jobs and real futures. To find out more, call (800) 995-LCCC or visit LCCC's Connections Center, the Learning Center at St. Joseph Community Center in Lorain, the LCCC Learning Center in Wellington, the Lorain County Growth Partnership in downtown Elyria or the Midpoint Campus Center in Brunswick for all of your enrollment service needs, including admissions, registration, advising and counseling.



**Lorain County
Community College**



**The University
Partnership**

of Lorain County Community College

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