



# Operations Department



# Operations – department specific

Why be a travel consultant? And more importantly – why be a travel consultant at Wings Travel Management?

Here's why.

In most cases, a corporate travel consultant makes travel arrangements for business clients who are travelling for work purposes. We don't really focus on leisure – if our clients are flying to Hawaii, they're packing a briefcase and laptop. We handle complex airfares and accommodation in premium hotels, and our specialised teams fly clients to even more exotic or difficult locations – oil rigs, to moving targets (like a boat in the middle of the ocean!). We work miracles for our clients every day.

Here's a hint – working in travel rarely involves travelling yourself. Instead, a consultant makes airline reservations, books accommodations, car hires, transfers and anything else that the client needs. This is usually done via email or telephone – often at the last minute! Relationships are very important as consultants will build them with their clients and grow to understand their travel requirements. You'll take some measure of ownership of your clients – growing, educating and developing them.

Wings consultants go beyond the traditional travel agent role. Even though we are involved in business travel, we always find a way to make the client's experience a personal one. Our consultants deal directly with their clients, and focus specifically on delighting them. Just satisfying a client is not enough; we make their experience a positive and memorable one.

You'll hear a lot about our corporate culture. The vibe at Wings is something we've worked hard to maintain, and it is unmistakable. Our teams are young, dynamic and vibrant, and the development of our consultants is extremely important to us. If you want to grow, we make sure the opportunity is available. But we also expect our people to take that initiative and jump at those chances to learn and develop. You will be able to grow within our different teams, whether dealing with government and parastatal clients, oil and gas clients, or corporate clients. Different styles and approaches are valued. We have processes in place that give our consultants structure and guidance, but our processes work for us – not the other way around. If you bring interesting or innovative ideas, then we can adapt our processes and add more value to our clients.

*So what does it take to work as an effective travel consultant at Wings? In case the information above didn't give it away, the most important element is a strong sense of **customer focus**. You need to be able to utilise your **communication skills** effectively. We deal with global clients so being **able to deal with a variety of people** is critical. You'll notice how we spoke about teams before – this is because our consultants work closely, so **team spirit** is something we always look for. Pressure is always a part of the travel industry, so **being able to cope with stress** and **sudden deadlines** is particularly important. And while it may be really funny (in theory) to send a client to Panama City (Panama - PTY) instead of Panama City (Florida, USA – PFN), the client may not be quite as amused ... so **attention to detail** is also something we really need.*

# How to prepare for an operations interview

Our interviews with potential travel consultants tend to be specialised according to the team for which they are being considered. Before you come for an interview, confirm which team you could be joining – oil and gas, Wings24® or corporate – and ask about any additional information which could be useful to you. The hints below are universally applicable for each team:

## Be aware of what GDS means.

A GDS (Global Distribution System) is a software package used by travel consultants to book flights and liaise with hotels and similar service providers (but you knew that already... didn't you?). Wings Travel currently uses a GDS called Amadeus. Don't let this stop you from applying if you haven't used Amadeus before – our learning and development team offers training and conversion courses for applicants who have not regularly used it before.

## Know your world.

We need consultants who keep up to date with world events. We live in an exciting time of volcanic clouds and other weirdness that clients sometimes may not be aware of. It is our job to educate (and safeguard) our clients.

## Show us you care.

That customer service stuff is actually really important to us. Let us know how you've made a difference to your previous clients, and how you can add that same value while at Wings. If you were widely celebrated as the hero who saved your passengers from flying through a warzone, we'll break out the popcorn.

## Know your industry.

Our clients don't always know their options and how best to travel. We do. If you want to be a consultant with Wings, we need you to know that you'll be the person clients trust to give them the right advice. If you educate them and help them to understand what their options are, then you've done (some of) your job.

## Take accountability.

It happens eventually ... you made a mistake, and someone got on the wrong plane, or missed their flight. While it wasn't your best, shining moment, what we want to know is: What did you do about it? How did you make sure it didn't happen again?

## Have passion for the travel industry.

Maybe you've never actually left your home country. But that isn't the point. We want patriots of travel. The industry is a world all its own, with amazing potential and exciting challenges. Let us know how much you want to be here. If the idea of juggling 47 people who need to go to 16 different countries on eight different planes excites you, we'd love to hear about it (and we'd really like to hear how the heck you did it).

