

International SOS
Foundation

**PLANNING AND
COPING TOOL**

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND
ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY



WHY IS PLANNING FOR MY BUSINESS TRIP IMPORTANT?

As an international business traveller, there will be times when you are away from your family, friends and colleagues at work. When you are on business trips (or about to go on one), you might have less control over things at work or in your private life than you would normally do; for instance, what happens if there is an unexpected crisis within your team back at the office or if your children get ill.

Taking a pro-active approach, by planning for potential events, could help you by making such events less likely to happen, and/or by mitigating the impact of the events if they do occur. These events are not necessarily adverse or serious, but are anything that might cause you to more pressure and distress whilst away.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL?

This tool aims to help you to plan for the things that could go wrong, or things that you anticipate might become challenging, whilst you are away. This process is called preventive coping or planning. The different sections of the tool encourage you to consider preventive planning in different areas of your life. You will find three sheets: one for the trip itself; one regarding your work and colleagues back at the office; and one regarding your family and friends.

Each trip and situation is different, so we would recommend that you complete the sheets with reference to your next business trip; and we would recommend that you go through this process for each trip you go on.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

When you have completed your Preventive Planning sheets, it would be a great idea to share them with your manager, colleagues and friends/family in order that they can talk through your ideas with you, offer alternative suggestions you may not have considered and support you in ensuring the plans are put in place.



YOUR TRIP

Important note: When completing this sheet, please think and respond with reference to your next business trip. We would recommend that you go through this process for every international business trip.

PLANNING SHEET REGARDING YOUR TRIP

1. Based on your previous experience with business travel, and your knowledge of this particular destination and assignment, what might happen/go wrong when you are on this business trip? Please list as many issues as possible and consider situations at the destinations rather than at home.

Examples could include a dangerous/high risk assignment, not getting adequate sleep, poor communications/technology meaning it is difficult to keep in contact with home, lack of knowledge of safe areas, lack of opportunity for healthy eating.

2a. What can you put in place now to mitigate that risk/prevent these from happening?

2b. What would support you in this? For instance systems, tools, resources, manager

3a. Are there any potential risks that you have identified that you cannot mitigate against or prevent from happening?

3b. Are there any resources you do not currently have which would enable you to mitigate or prevent the risks identified in 3a.? What support needs do you have? For instance systems, tools, resource, manager

YOUR WORK AND COLLEAGUES BACK AT THE OFFICE

Important note: When completing this sheet, please think and respond with references to your next business trip. We would recommend that you go through this process for every international business trip.

PLANNING SHEET REGARDING YOUR WORK AND COLLEAGUES BACK AT THE OFFICE

1. Based on your previous experience with business travel, and your knowledge of this particular destination and assignment (for length of time away, intensity of your schedule), what might happen/go wrong with your work and colleagues when you are on this business trip? Please list as many as possible and consider situations at home with your work, team and colleagues

Examples could include work not getting done and piling up for your return, an unexpected client situation/event, key team members falling ill, an unexpected request from the senior management team

2a. What can you put in place now to mitigate that risk/prevent these from happening?

2b. What would support you in this? For instance systems, tools, resources, manager

3a. Are there any potential risks that you have identified that you cannot mitigate against or prevent from happening?

3b. Are there any resources you do not currently have which would enable you to mitigate or prevent the risks identified in 3a.? What support needs do you have? For instance systems, tools, resource, manager

YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Important note: When completing this sheet, please think and respond with references to your next business trip. We would recommend that you go through this process for every international business trip.

PLANNING SHEET REGARDING YOUR FAMILY/FRIENDS

1. Based on your previous experience with business travel, and your knowledge of this particular destination and assignment (for instance time zone, length of time away), what might happen/go wrong in terms of your family/friends or relationship with them when you are on this business trip – or as a result of this trip? Please list as many as possible and consider situations at home with your family and friends

Examples could include conflict with your spouse, missing key family events, childcare problems, children getting sick and being unable to attend school, lack of communication with friends and Family

2a. What can you put in place now to mitigate that risk/prevent these from happening?

2b. What would support you in this? For instance systems, tools, resources, manager

3a. Are there any potential risks that you have identified that you cannot mitigate against or prevent from happening?

3b. Are there any resources you do not currently have which would enable you to mitigate or prevent the risks identified in 3a.? What support needs do you have? For instance systems, tools, resource, manager

We are most grateful for the support from all the participating organisations and individuals who were involved in this research.

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