

Career Opportunities

You: A Travel Agent?

(NAPSA)—For many Americans, becoming a travel agent could be a big step in the right direction when it comes to choosing a rewarding career that's fast paced and offers wonderful incentives. In fact, travel is one of the largest industries in the world and offers many benefits to hard-working individuals.

Job Description

Travel agents assess individual's and businesspeople's needs to help them make the best possible travel arrangements. An agent may specialize by type of travel, such as leisure or business, or destination, such as Europe or Africa. Travel agents also promote travel packages on behalf of cruise lines, resorts and specialty travel groups.

Travel agents held about 88,600 jobs in 2005. While most travel agents work in agencies, a growing number are home based or work for themselves.

Educational Requirement

In order to become a travel agent, one must have, at least, a high school diploma or the equivalent. Increasingly, because of the use of computers and technology, employers prefer job candidates who have received vocational training. Some employers look for job candidates who have taken college courses in computer science, foreign languages, geography and world history.

On a typical day, a travel agent will:



Many travel agents visit the hotels and locations they are recommending to evaluate service and quality.

- Give advice on destinations;
- Make arrangements for transportation, hotel accommodations, car rentals, tours and recreation;
- Advise on weather conditions, restaurants, tourist attractions and recreation;
- Provide information on customs regulations, required papers (passports, visas and certificates of vaccination) and currency exchange rates to international travelers;
- Consult published and computer-based sources for information on departure and arrival times, fares, and hotel ratings and accommodations;
- Visit hotels, resorts and restaurants to evaluate comfort, cleanliness and quality of food and service.

To learn more about the profession, visit www.astanet.org.