

# TRAVEL

Beyond The Obvious

## Lessons I've learned the hard way

Madeline Jhavar, Italy Beyond the Obvious

*Of all the things that can boost emotions, motivation, and perceptions during a workday, the single most important is making progress in meaningful work*

- Teresa Amabile

*These Lessons Learned are all things that have cost me money or caused the most stress over the 10+ years I have been in business*

# Under promise and over deliver



- The amazing guide you think is a perfect fit? Ask the guide's availability before telling the client.
- The ideal hotel you'd love to book for them? Find out availability and rates before telling the client.
- The incredible experience you think they'd love? Make sure it fits their 'perfect day' and is really a match
- Setting expectations correctly is the **SECRET** to **SUCCESS!**

# Do not jump to conclusions



- When booking.com tells you 99% of the hotels are booked for your dates, do not panic. You need 1 hotel.
- When the client calls with a problem, do not panic. You may be able to resolve it in 1 minute.
- When the hotel that the client wants looks like it's about to sell out, and they haven't yet given you their cc information, don't use your cc to "hold" the room.

# Do not offer refunds quickly



- If you make a mistake, don't immediately offer to refund the client's planning fees. Instead:
  - See whether you can upgrade their room at the next hotel
  - Try to understand how mad they are. Sometimes jet-lag makes people cranky.
  - Sometimes a bottle of wine sent to their room fixes a lot!

# Be careful with non-refundable bookings

- The client can often save 10% by booking a pre-paid and non-refundable hotel.
- Get their authorization in writing before you proceed
- Triple check all details before booking
- Ask them whether they'd like to cover non-refundable amounts with travel insurance
- If you make a mistake, it will cost you real money



# Have a strategy for communicating with the client while they are on the trip

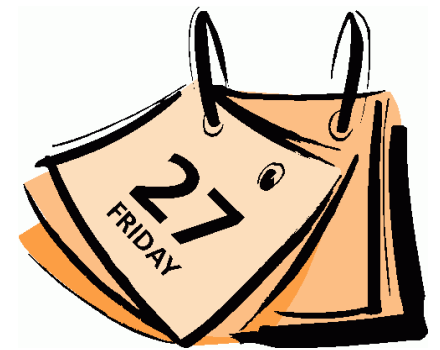
- You cannot personally handle phone calls 24/7. You could:
- Hire someone in a different time zone so between the two of you, you cover 24/7
- Only create trips where the client always has a local guide, concierge, etc that they can rely on
- Tell the client they are on their own while you are asleep





# When dates change, triple check details!

- Changing dates of anything (hotel, tour, transfer) in the middle of the planning can create havoc.
- If the private guided tour scheduled for Tuesday gets moved to Wednesday, make sure everything is updated.
  - Update client itinerary
  - Check that hotel (location) still works
  - Check that logistics still work



*Remember that  
you are the expert*



*But also remember that you can't possibly know everything.*

*It's okay if a client asks you about a tour, activity, or destination that you don't know about. Tell them you'll look at it and get back to them.*



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