

THE ETIQUETTE OF FLYING – TIPS FOR YOUR NEXT TRIP

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I have been lucky in my early career to have a few jobs in which I have been on the road and through airports about once per month, or even more often. As compared to some of our readers, that is nothing! They're on the road weekly. For others, that is much more often than they travel, either for business or pleasure.

In my relatively frequent travels, specifically through airports, I have noticed a number of things that non-travelers and some experienced travelers do, that to say the least, annoy me. Some might just be personal pet peeves, but I am guessing that many of my fellow frequent travelers feel similarly.

So, I thought it might be fun to talk a little about travel etiquette, and provide you with tips about the appropriate things to do in certain situations you may find yourself in at the airport. I'll be using some of the common mistakes non-travelers continue to make in my personal experience.

This story in no way is meant to call out any one particular person. However, if you can see yourself in some of these situations that follow each of the tips, I hope you'll think about this story the next time you travel! All of us regular travelers would appreciate it!

AIRPORT ETIQUETTE TIP #1
When you're in line to get your boarding pass and check your luggage, step up to the next available

kiosk/screen instead of waiting for the person behind the counter to call "Next person in line!!"

Being that this is the first thing that happens most times when people get to the airport, it can be a frustrating beginning to people's trips if they have to wait behind people that don't understand this simple concept. If there is a kiosk open for you to walk up and use, just do it as opposed to waiting for the people behind the counter. They are busy putting the luggage tags on other passengers' luggage and checking their IDs, so waiting for them to call on you causes unnecessary delays.

AIRPORT ETIQUETTE TIP #2
When approaching security, be prepared when you make it to the x-ray belt.

So you've gotten your boarding pass and luggage claim ticket... Now it's time for security. Since 9/11, everyone now must remove their shoes, have their liquids in less than 3 oz bottles and in no bigger than a quart sized bag, and remove computers from their bags to go through the x-ray machine separately. You can have all of this ready BEFORE you get to the belt with a little planning.

Before getting into line, I remove everything from my pockets and put them in my computer bag, untie my shoes, unzip the compartment in my computer bag where my computer resides, and remove my jacket if I have one on. When I get up to the

x-ray machine, I have everything already prepared to go through the machine. Seems simple, right? By just putting a little planning in place before you get in line, you help the other passengers move through quicker.

One more thing relating to security... After your belongings come out the other end of the x-ray machine, don't stand in everyone's way putting your shoes back on, etc. Take your things to one of the nearby seats that are at every airport, and put your things back together there. Again, you will be saving the other travelers from backups, helping everything move more smoothly.

AIRPORT ETIQUETTE TIP #3
If you receive a cell phone call after you make it to your gate, kindly take it in a less congested area (or talk softer!)

We've all been there... We're sitting in the airport, and the guy next to us picks up a cell phone call. Instead of retreating to a less congested area of the airport, he proceeds to practically yell into his phone about his upcoming surgery, his mother's health problems, and his recent partying escapades. Don't be that guy!!!

If your phone happens to ring while you're at your gate and you need to take the call, you should head to a less congested part of the gate area or into the main walkway of the terminal so as not to disturb your fellow travelers. Believe me, no one sitting at the

gate wants to hear all the personal items about your life or the deals you're making in your business.

Oh yeah, one other thing. Don't sit in the gate area trying to decide on a new ringer for your phone. No one at the gate wants to hear all of the different options for a ring tone that your phone has – especially all at one time as we're waiting for our delayed flight to get off the ground. *I'm not bitter... I have just run into it far too often...*

AIRPORT ETIQUETTE TIP #4 **When getting on a plane, listen to the flight attendants and their instructions.**

When they say put the smaller carry on underneath the seat in front of you, that means that your computer bag, coat, or whatever the smallest thing you're carrying on should go there to save room in the overhead bins for the other passengers. With overhead bins being fuller these days, be courteous of your fellow travelers by using the space under the seat in front of you for your small stuff.

When the flight attendants say that it's time to put away all electronic devices for the flight, don't stay on

the phone until they have to ask you personally two or three more times. There are reasons why they don't allow cell phone usage as the plane is moving out onto active runways, so by not putting your phone away when they ask, you are delaying everyone's flight and quickly becoming everyone's frustration on the flight. *(Thanks to fellow staff member Beau Hanger for this specific tip!)*

AIRPORT ETIQUETTE TIP #5 **When the plane lands and you turn on your cell phone, wait until you are in the terminal before calling the people picking you up.**

The people picking you up can wait five minutes until you get into the terminal to know that you have landed. One of the biggest frustrations for many people is when people next to them on the flight call someone while they're still on the plane and don't use their inside voice. They yell "We just landed!!! I'll be down in a little bit!!!" Do us all a favor and wait the five minutes until you are in the terminal to make your call.

AIRPORT ETIQUETTE TIP #6 **When you arrive at your destination, let the people in seats ahead of you get off before you (unless you are late for a connection).**

Everyone is trying to get off the plane also, so there is no need to rush ahead of the people sitting in front of you to get off. By doing so, you are causing unnecessary backups for the people behind you. Just be a gentleman, and allow those in front of you to get off before you do. I know it sounds simple, but all too often, people are racing ahead to get off two people ahead of where they would have...

Now, an exception to this is if you have a close connection. For the most part, flight attendants will know that there are close connections on board,

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and will say over the loud speaker "please allow those who have a connection to make get off before everyone else." In some cases, you should let your flight attendant know that you are concerned that you're going to miss your connection just to prime the pump and let them know you have a tight connection. They are then more likely to make the announcement.

Well, I'm sure these six travel tips are just the tip of the iceberg, so if you have any additional tips you'd like to share, let us know! Send me an e-mail at Hammond@deltasig.org to share your tips. We'll follow up in the next issue with some of your travel tips.

