

Logistics On the Field

There are several logistical things that you need to be mindful of during your mission trip. Obviously, this training manual will not prepare you for every situation or scenario, but it will give you a general overview of some of the main items that you need to be mindful of.

Practical Information for Traveling

1. Expect delays when flying.

Accept that airline schedules and the weather are out of your hands and that your team will arrive at your destination when God wants you to arrive. Keep a good attitude and remember 2 Samuel 20:15b *"...this is God's battle, not yours"*.

2. Stay with your group.

Don't walk off by yourself. If you do need to separate from the group (for bathroom, gift shop at airport, etc.) make sure your leader knows before you walk off and take a buddy with you.

3. Keep the noise level down.

Americans are known worldwide for being loud.

4. Don't wear patriotic clothing that will draw attention to you as an American.

5. Don't wear Christian slogan t-shirts when traveling.

The BMA is not asking you to hide your faith, but we don't want any airport martyrs either.

6. Know where your important items (passport, money, ticket, carry-on, etc.) are at all times.

Don't keep your passport in plain sight, but do be able to put your hands on it quickly. You can purchase a carrying pouch that goes around your neck and fits under your shirt.

7. When going through security remember this:

- Don't be an idiot! - Don't say things like, *"Hey, Matt, did they find your gun?"* or other silly statements. Just go through security quietly and do what they ask of you.
- Slip-on shoes are the easiest when going through security check points.
- Guys, if you carry a pocket knife, remember to leave it at home.

8. Answer security questions with simple answers.

Once you leave the U.S., you may have to go through additional security check points. You may be asked questions like *"who packed your bags?"*, *"have they been in your control the whole time?"*, *"where are you going?"*, *"why are you going there?"*; etc. These questions can be nerve-racking. Just stay calm, listen to the questions and answer them. Don't give elaborate details. Most of them can be answered with a simple *"yes"* or *"no"*.

9. If going out of the country, try to get some sleep on the plane.

This will help with jet-lag if you are traveling a long distance.

10. Pack snacks (crackers) in your carry-on bag.

After you get past the security check point, buy a bottle of water to put in your backpack. If your flight is delayed or if you get stuck on the tarmac for several hours (it can happen), the snacks and bottled water will help.

11. If your luggage doesn't arrive, don't panic.

Remember God is in control of everything! Let your team leader handle filling out paperwork with baggage claim. Hopefully you have prepared for lost luggage.

Practical Information on the Field

1. Traveler's diarrhea is a fact of life when traveling to a foreign country. Be prepared!

Take medication as often as needed. Pepto Bismol chewables can be taken every two hours and can also be taken before meals to coat your stomach. Make sure your leader knows if you have diarrhea for more than 24 hours and if the anti-diarrhea medicine is not slowing it down.

2. Brush your teeth with bottled water.

3. Don't get ice in your drinks at restaurants.

If the ice is not made with bottled or filtered water, it will make you sick.

4. Drink plenty of water throughout the day so that you won't get dehydrated.

5. Pack meal substitute crackers or bars.

Pack something (such as peanut butter crackers or granola bars) that can be eaten as a "meal". This will help when your stomach is messed up or for when you don't eat much. You can take other snack items like chips and cookies, but make sure you take something that will sustain you if needed.

6. Always eat what is put in front of you.

You don't have to clean your plate, but you do have to eat some of it. Don't make faces or make "ugh" sounds. Just eat it and be thankful. Keep in mind that you are a guest in this home/country and many times the family feeding you has spent a significant portion of their income to make something nice for you.

7. Serve yourself a small portion.

If you are eating in someone's home, and you can serve yourself, get a small portion. If you like, you can get more later. If you don't like it, you won't have a full plate to eat.

8. Use hand sanitizer often.

Pack plenty of hand sanitizer in your checked bag. Once you get to your destination, put it in your backpack. Use it often, especially before you eat and offer it to your team members. But don't be obvious about sanitizing to the point where you offend people.

9. Use bug spray.

Again, put it in your checked bag and then transfer it to your backpack when you get to the destination. You never know when you will have to walk through an overgrown field. Also, spray down before you go to bed, especially if there is no a/c and you have to sleep with windows open.

10. Repack your items every day.

This will ensure that you are not leaving your sleeping area in a complete mess. It will also ensure that

important items are not lost. Check your passport every day. U.S. passports go for several thousand dollars on the black market. Keep up with it! Also, keep up with the entrance paper (if given one) that you get when going through customs. You will have to give that back to them when you leave the country.

11. Be smart if you use a public computer.

If your team goes to an Internet Café or some public place to use the internet, make sure you log off of whatever personal account (email, Facebook, etc.) that you logged into. Also, it is a really good idea to change your passwords when you get home for anything you logged into at an Internet Café. And certainly do not check anything like bank accounts at a public Internet Café.

12. It is very possible that you will get homesick.

You might get homesick especially if this is your first time out of the country. Culture shock and being out of the comforts of America can take its toll on you. It will pass. Pray through it. Keep a positive attitude. It also helps to listen to praise and worship music and/or read scripture to focus on God and not on selfish things like missing your comfortable bed back in America.

13. Don't complain.

There will be a lot of silly things about the U.S. that you will miss, like ice or soft furniture or Cheetos. Don't complain, especially around the nationals. This is just a week or two out of your life. When you complain, you miss out on the experience and satan uses your negative words to affect others around you. Don't be the one that satan uses.

14. Be careful about what you say, especially around your translators.

Remember, they speak English! Also just because someone doesn't speak English, doesn't mean they don't understand it. So, be mindful of this.

15. Take candy to share.

Share candy with the kids that you are working with. They love American candy.

16. Buy local candy to bring home and share with family and friends.

17. Keep a journal during the trip.

Write in a journal daily. Write about the events of the day, funny stories, kids that touch your heart, what you feel God is doing, etc. This journal will be a treasure to you a year from now.

18. Try to disengage with America and embrace where you are.

Embrace the mission for the duration of your trip. If you are constantly texting back home and checking Facebook, you are not disengaging with America. If you need to, leave your cell phone in your luggage and only check it in the morning and in the evening.

19. Be mindful of how you interact with the nationals.

Especially if you are single. You don't want to be too friendly and end up engaged!

20. Remember why you signed up for this mission trip.

Don't complain about anything. Keep a positive attitude. Do everything without grumbling or arguing. (Philippians 2:14, NIV)