

Do I really need to travel?

We often need to travel to do our jobs properly. Some activities really need to be done in person, especially if you've never met the other people before. But travelling is just a 'means to an end'. It serves no purpose in itself and often uses up time unproductively.

Before you decide to travel, ask yourself if there is a practical business alternative. Could you do an audio or video-conference? Might a telephone call or email do the job just as well? If you're holding regular meetings with the same people, do you really need to meet up in person every time?

How should I get there?

Sometimes we do need to travel. In these cases, you will need to think about the best way to get to your destination. It's important to strike a balance between three things: **Cost**, **Convenience** and **Carbon**.

Cost

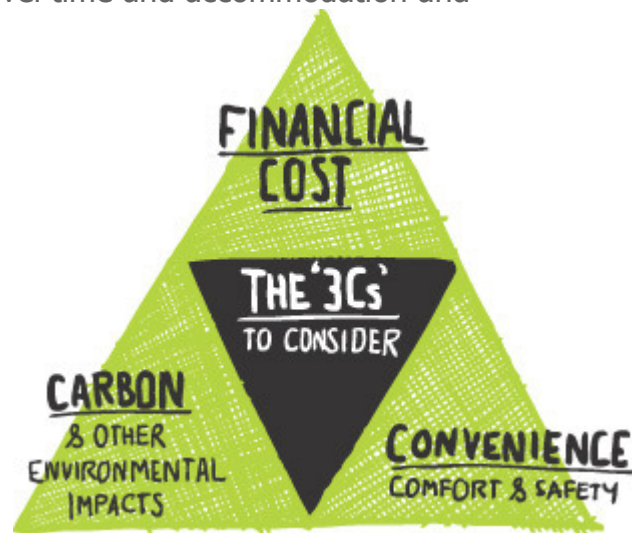
How much will the journey cost? Think about direct costs like fares and fuel, but also indirect costs such as excess travel time and accommodation and subsistence.

Convenience

How long will the different journey options take? Will the journey be comfortable and safe? Can I be productive while I'm travelling? How will it affect my work-life balance?

Carbon

Different sorts of vehicles emit different amounts of CO₂ (a greenhouse gas). Trains and buses emit less CO₂ than cars and aircraft and walking and cycling emit no CO₂ at all!



There is no one right answer on how to balance Cost, Convenience and Carbon, it will depend on your specific circumstances.

If I do need to use a car...

If you do need to travel by car, there are still things you can do to improve the sustainability of your journey.



If other colleagues need to travel to the same, or nearby destinations, share the car. You can share the driving and cut your CO² footprint.

Smaller engines generally emit less CO² than larger ones; and a diesel engine emits less than a petrol one. Choose diesel over petrol where you have a choice – except if you'll be doing mostly urban driving (diesel is less good for local air quality). Think about using a hire car rather than your own vehicle.

If you hire a car, it's better to use a small one (1.4l petrol or 1.7l diesel or less), unless there are several travellers or you've got lots of extra luggage to carry.

Try 'greener driving':

- don't over rev the engine
- change gears at lower revs
- don't drive at excessive speed
- don't carry unnecessary luggage
- ensure the tyres are properly inflated.

Better Meetings = Greener Meetings

For many of us, meetings are a common reason to travel. Consider if there are practical business alternatives to meeting in person, such as video or audio-conferencing.

However if there is a need to meet in person, here are some things to think about:

- Only staff with a real business need should attend a meeting.
- Agree the agenda in advance and try to cover all agenda items – to avoid the need for follow-up meetings.
- Try to choose meeting locations that are close to public transport links; and choose meeting times that allow staff to make full use of public transport.
- If you need to stay overnight, try to make the meeting location and your accommodation close together.

Did you know?

You can source video and audio conferencing facilities through the Buying Solutions frameworks. Please visit the website for further details or contact the Customer Services Desk on 0845 410 2222.

Counting the miles

Clearly, some teams need to travel more than others. But all teams should think about their monthly data, and what they could do to reduce unnecessary travel. Why not make it a team objective?

Putting it all together

Before you travel for work, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I really need to travel?
- How should I get there?
- What are my journey options - and how could I balance Cost, Convenience and Carbon?



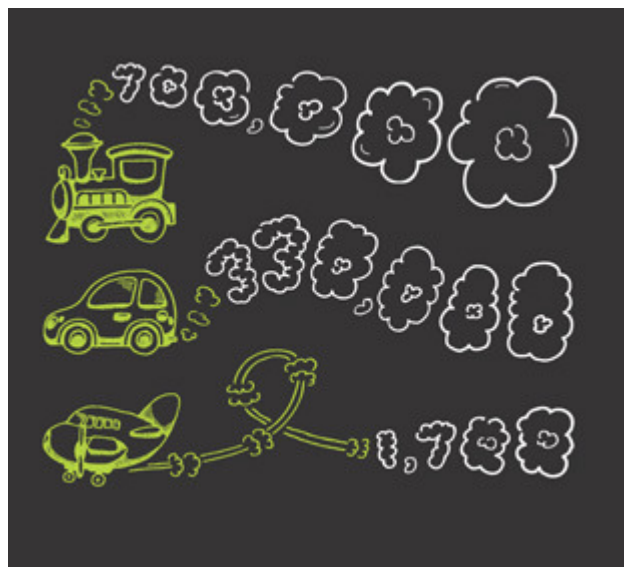
Travel is important to your business. But what **really** matters is delivering your business objectives and looking after the welfare of your staff. Sometimes travel is not the way to go!

Top Tips

➡ Do you **really** need to travel? Could you achieve the same results in other ways - perhaps by video or audio-conferencing instead?

➡ Planes and cars emit a lot more CO₂ than other forms of travel. Trains or coaches are recommended for all journeys in the UK mainland between places with, or near, stations. Consider Eurostar rather than flying for travel to Europe.

Remember: it is important to consider the “holistic cost of travel” taking into account the following:



- ▶ Cost of ticket
- ▶ Commission refunds
- ▶ Transaction fee
- ▶ Shadow cost of carbon (carbon offset)
- ▶ Unproductive time of traveller (a traveller can be more productive on a two hour rail journey than they be on a two hour flight)
- ▶ Total lapsed time and loss of productivity (a one hour flight will also involve unproductive time at airports checking-in, boarding and disembarking, reclaiming baggage etc. Rail journeys involve much less unproductive time).

➡ For local journeys, think about using public transport. Only use a taxi where time, convenience or safety make public transport impractical. If you feel it's convenient and safe, and you have the time, think about walking. If you have to travel by car, use a small one.

Questions, Questions...

Am I allowed to travel?

Sometimes you will need to meet up face to face with other people to do your job effectively.

Must I always choose the most 'sustainable' journey option?

No. Travelling by train or walking is not always practical. But when you're making your journey decisions, do think about each of the 3 Cs – cost, convenience and carbon.

Won't I get criticised if I don't travel?

For most of us, there will be situations when travel is necessary for our jobs. In these cases not travelling might not be an option. But, there are also times when you could do your job just as well, or even better, without the need to travel. If this is the case you should not feel that you must travel. You will not get criticised if you don't travel when there is a practical business alternative.

I'm a line manager, how does this affect me?

Consider your own travel behaviours and the example you are setting to your colleagues. Talk to your staff about their travel behaviours, and look for ways to reduce unnecessary travel. Don't require staff to travel when there are practical business alternatives.