

Subject: Week 107 learnings - About Travel  
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Dear All

Google sent me some numbers of my travel in the year 2019.

I am using the data from the google note of my travel for this week's learnings.

1. In 2019, I travelled 2,75,000 kms by flights. This is equivalent of going around the world 7 times. During the course of these flights, I visited 12 countries, 66 cities and 141 places.
2. Taking about 700 kms per hour as average flying speed, I spent 393 hours in airplanes, which is 16 full days of 24 hours each. I am a nervous flyer since my dad passed away in an air accident in 1994 but flying is still the fastest and safest way to travel. I rarely watch any movies in flights.
3. I travelled 18,000 kms by car, this includes all travel, in each city plus also travel in Mumbai to office and back. This travel according to Google too 634 hours. So, I spent 26 days in cars.
4. So, my travel days is a total of 16 plus 26 which is 42 full days in travel.
5. Google also told me that I did 17 hours of walking during the year( this does not include any running or treadmill exercise since the phone is not in your pocket then).
6. In some of the travel, I've had colleagues on the flight or car. This also gives us an opportunity to chat as friends and get to know each other. I have learnt a lot about people on journeys.
7. Travel robs us of our prejudice. Cities change, markets change, people change, traveling and meeting the city or place or people gives new perspective every time. Travelers notice more about a city than residents who have been in the city for a long time.
8. John Le Carre, the famous novelist said " the desk is a dangerous place from which you see the world". I do believe in this. Travel gives me the opportunity to see for myself what our people are going through, what they are saying, it gives me the opportunity to interact with all our customers to get a feel of what the real issues are. One of the most challenging tasks for a senior manager is to calibrate the feedback that comes. Travel to the market and meeting customers helps me get to that calibration.
9. Travel to the market also helps me judge who is committed and how much as I tend to have open qualitative discussions with the team. You can easily make out who is trying hard and who is giving you excuses. Travel also helps me judge the culture in a team. When you sit around a table, you can get a very clear sense of the power distance, the friendships, the friction etc.
10. Travel helps me use time. Most travel is dead time – i.e. you cannot do work, make a phone call etc. etc. Travel in airplanes helps me do a lot of my reading and book summaries.

I have always travelled a lot in every role. The challenge is to manage sleep, tiredness, jet lag and the diet and that's not easy. I cannot say I have any formula for it except that I try as far as possible to be a light eater and exercise as much as one can.

Enjoy, feedback welcome

Wr  
shiv