

Travel Agency Manager interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for travel agency manager roles typically assess your operational leadership, commercial acumen and client-facing skills. You can expect a mix of process, behavioural and scenario questions, often with a technical component around reservations systems or supplier negotiations.

- **Process and operations:** Questions about how you manage daily workflows, rostering, and booking systems.
- **Behavioural:** Questions asking for past examples of leading teams, negotiating with suppliers, or handling difficult clients.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations such as cancelled flights, overbookings, or client emergencies.
- **Commercial and technical:** Questions on budgeting, forecasting, and proficiency with GDS tools like Amadeus, Sabre or Travelport.

The interview usually starts with an introduction and a walk through your resume. Then a mix of behavioural and scenario questions. For management roles, there may be a separate meeting with senior leadership or a practical exercise such as reviewing a budget or a supplier contract. Some agencies include a short test on a GDS or ask you to respond to a simulated client issue.

1. Walk me through how you manage the daily operations of a travel agency, from rostering to overseeing bookings.

Why they ask

This is a process question to see if you understand the end-to-end running of an agency.

How to structure your answer

Use a chronological walk-through: start with the morning briefing, then rostering based on forecast, monitoring booking queues, handling escalations, and end-of-day reconciliation.

Example answer

"I start each day with a short briefing to review bookings and priorities. I check the roster against forecast demand and adjust if needed, then monitor the booking queues for any issues. Throughout the day I handle escalations from consultants, whether that's a complex itinerary or a supplier problem. I also keep an eye on financial targets and check that all bookings are ticketed correctly. At the end of the day I reconcile the day's transactions and prepare a handover for the next shift."

2. Tell me about a time you had to negotiate a better deal with an airline or hotel supplier. What was the outcome?

Why they ask

To assess your negotiation skills and commercial judgement.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: situation, task, action, result. Focus on the specific negotiation and the measurable outcome, but avoid dollar amounts or percentages.

Example answer

"We were getting a lot of requests for a particular destination but our margins were tight. I arranged a meeting with the hotel's sales manager and presented data on our booking volume and client feedback. I negotiated a discounted rate that also included free breakfast and a room upgrade for our clients. The result was better margins for us and more repeat bookings for that destination, because clients felt they were getting extra value."

3. A client's flight is cancelled and they are stranded overseas. How do you handle it?

Why they ask

This scenario tests your judgement under pressure and your client care.

How to structure your answer

Acknowledge, assess, act, communicate, follow up. Show empathy and practical problem-solving.

Example answer

"First, I would reassure the client and let them know I am on it. I would contact the airline to find the next available flight and ask about accommodation and transfers if needed. While waiting, I would keep the client informed with regular updates. Once rebooked, I would confirm all details in writing and check if they need any other support. After the event, I would review what happened to see if we can improve our emergency procedures."

4. How do you go about setting and managing a budget for a travel agency?

Why they ask

To test your financial management and budgeting skills.

How to structure your answer

Explain your step-by-step approach: review historical data, forecast revenue, set targets, monitor monthly, adjust. Mention tools like Xero and Excel.

Example answer

"I start by reviewing last year's figures and current market conditions to forecast revenue. Then I set budget targets for each revenue stream, such as leisure and corporate travel. I use Xero to track actuals against budget and Excel for more detailed forecasting. I review the budget monthly with the team and adjust if we are ahead or behind. If costs are higher than expected, I look at supplier contracts or operational efficiencies to bring them back in line."

5. Describe your experience with reservations systems like Amadeus, Sabre or Travelport.

Why they ask

To confirm your technical proficiency with the tools used daily.

How to structure your answer

Give a direct answer, then a specific example of how you have used the system, including any training or troubleshooting you have done.

Example answer

"I have used Amadeus and Sabre extensively for both booking and ticketing. In my current role, I am the go-to person for complex reissues and refunds. I also trained three new consultants on Amadeus, creating a quick reference guide for common tasks. I am comfortable using Travelport as well, and I pick up new systems quickly."

6. How do you handle an underperforming team member?

Why they ask

Behavioural question to assess your leadership and people management.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR, focusing on the steps you took to support the person and the outcome.

Example answer

"One of my consultants was missing booking targets and making errors. I had a private conversation to understand what was going on. It turned out they were struggling with a new GDS update. I

arranged additional training and paired them with a mentor for two weeks. I set clear, achievable goals and checked in weekly. Within a month their accuracy improved and they were meeting targets again. I documented the process in case further action was needed."