

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRAVELER

I love to talk with travelers because the profession tends to attract people who are curious, and full of adventure. Over the years, I have noticed a few personality traits many travelers have in common. If you are thinking about traveling, consider whether you fit this general profile. I am generalizing, but I am going to list a few characteristics....and as you read them, count how many apply to you.

Adaptable

Most travelers adapt easily to new situations. If they didn't adapt well, they probably wouldn't like to travel. I would say..... the ability to adapt quickly is one of the most vital characteristics of a traveler. You are practically thrown into completely new situations and expected to function with confidence. Working in surgery, I have literally shown up to places and been told... "Here are your scrubs. You are expected in room 5....let us know if you have any questions." I have been taking patients to the recovery room as the anesthesiologist tells me which way to turn because I don't know where it is located. This is an extreme scenario and rarely happens. However, as a traveler, you must always be prepared for the unexpected. You just never know what will happen.

Get bored easily

Don't get me wrong. I have known some travelers to value routine and stability and manage to stay in one assignment for a year or more, but in general, travelers like variety. Change and the challenge of adapting to change can become addictive. I used to actually search for 8 week assignments so I could see and do more in a shorter period of time.

Go getter

Most travelers are "go getters." They don't like to wait around for instructions. If there is a job to be done, they are all over it. What they don't know....they will ask or figure out.

Fearless

Nobody is really fearless, but some are more fearful than others. The fearful person stays home. It takes courage to venture into the unknown, adapt to new situations, and face challenges without instructions. You have to be sure of yourself.

If you have 3 out of 4 of these characteristics, you will probably enjoy traveling. On the other hand, what if you don't fit this profile? Should you still travel? Should you try to become more adaptable and courageous? No, you should be who you are. Everyone is different and that is beautiful. If you are curious about traveling, you have to try it. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

If you don't really fit the profile of a traveler, you can tailor traveling to fit your personality. You may want to take traveling a little slower. For example, during your interviews, I suggest you inquire about the depth of the orientation. Also, travel to places that have a consistent need so you can extend your assignments for a longer period of time. Finally, show up to your assignments early and get accustomed to the new living arrangements before you start work.

Whether you were born to travel or not, taking action can teach you a great deal. The only way to know whether something is for you is to try it. Each time you try something, you learn more about yourself and what works for you.