International SOS Foundation

ACTION PLANNING TOOL

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

affinity
health at work

Kingston University London

BUSINESS TRAVEL CAN BE AN ISSUE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

As a business traveller you are highly likely to work longer hours when you are away than you do at home. There appear to be at least four factors which contribute to this: i) pressure to complete work from the trip in addition to your usual workload; ii) expectation of networking and socialising with colleagues outside office hours; iii) lack of usual routine and cues around work/life boundaries; and iv) technology enabling 24/7 online connectivity. Longer hours result in poorer quality sleep, less contact with family and friends, and issues with mental health.

It is also likely that whilst away on business you may:

- Experience higher levels of stress than you would normally do at home. This can also lead to more conflict back home and lower quality sleep.

- Attend networking events or take part in other social activities with your colleagues or clients more frequently than at home. Often, these events provide opportunities to consume more alcohol than you may normally do at home. This could affect your sleep, as alcohol has been found to decrease quality of sleep.

- Be less likely to exercise, eat a balanced diet and stay in contact with friends and family. This could have implications for your wellbeing, because a healthy diet exercise and social support have been found to protect mental health.

WHAT CAN HELP IN TERMS OF MAINTAINING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH WHILST TRAVELLING FOR BUSINESS?

- Be aware of your mental health – take time to reflect on what causes your mood to decline and find ways to address it

- Take a balanced perspective – consider the positive aspects and benefits of international business travel, as well as the more challenging issues

- Set boundaries between work and non-work time (this includes the use of technology such as work email, work mobile phone etc.)

- Maintain as many 'home' routines and habits when away as possible

- Make space for down-time, rest and recuperation

- Actively take breaks throughout the working day

- Adopt healthy sleeping habits (e.g. wind down an hour before bedtime)

- Eat a well-balanced diet and minimise alcohol consumption

- Take exercise (e.g. gym, running, yoga etc.)

- Schedule in time to connect with family, friends and colleagues

- Communicate effectively with your travelling colleagues

THIS TOOL HELPS YOU TO:

- Become more aware of your behaviours, habits and work patterns while you are away on business trips

- Identify what contributes to stress/negative experiences as well as positive experiences while you are away

- Take action and plan activities that improve your mental health, while minimising stressors

THIS TOOL CONSISTS OF TWO COMPONENTS:

1. Activity diary

The Activity diary has been designed to help you become more aware of your behaviours and working habits. You are asked to fill in the relevant information every day, whilst you are away. As business travel often can lead to additional work pressures, with less opportunity to recuperate, tracking your activity can help you identify where to take action. The Activity diary also asks you to provide an overall entry with the average number of hours worked etc. for the week before and after your business trip. This is to explore how your behaviours and work habits may change as a result of your business trip.

2. Action Planning

Once you have gained awareness of your habits, behaviours, preferences and what you would like to avoid, the next step is to increase those aspects of business travel

which you find enjoyable, whilst decreasing the ones that affect you negatively. Reflecting on your entries in your Activity diary, extract the three aspects of your business trip which you enjoyed the most or made you feel better, and think of ways in which you can increase these going forward on your future business trips. Record commitments of what to do and consider any additional support you may need to make this happen. Do the same for the three aspects you enjoyed the least, looking at ways to reduce them.

Please note: If you are already aware of your behaviours and working habits on business trips, you may choose to progress straight to the action planning stage of this toolkit.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

When you have completed your Action Plan, it would be a great idea to share this with your manager in order that they can talk through your ideas for change with you, offer alternative suggestions you may not have considered and support you in ensuring the changes are implemented. If you are not able to do this, consider meeting with an HR representative, or a trusted colleague.

DURING THE TRIP

ACTIVITY DIARY	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY5	AVERAGE FOR TRIP
How many hours did you work?						
How many breaks did you take?						
How many hours did you sleep?						
What was your diet like?						
How much alcohol did you consume?						
How much did you exercise?						
How much contact did you have with friends and family?						
How much time did you have for leisure activities and what did you do?						
What did you enjoy the most?						
What did you enjoy the least or find most stressful?						

ACTIVITY DIARY	THE WEEK BEFORE THE TRIP (average of all the measures)	THE WEEK OF THE TRIP (average of all the measures)	THE WEEK AFTER THE TRIP (average of all the measures)
How many hours did you work?			
How many breaks did you take?			
How many hours did you sleep?			
What was your diet like?			
How much alcohol did you consume?			
How much did you exercise?			
How much contact did you have with friends and family?			
How much time did you have for leisure activities and what did you do?			
What did you enjoy the most?			
What did you enjoy the least or find most stressful?			

ACTION PLANNING

	What aspects of business trips make you feel better?	What could I do to increase these?	What will I commit to do?	What do I need to support me in making this change?
Example	I really enjoyed taking some time out of my busy schedule to go sightseeing	Making sure to factor in sightseeing on my next business trip, potentially take some bleisure time at the end of my trip to see more	Plan in at least a couple of hours on my next trip. Check with HR on bleisure time policy	I could check with my manager if it would be possible to tag on some holidays when I'm done with my meetings
1.				
2.				
3.				

	What aspects of business trips make you feel worse?	What could I do to decrease these?	What will I commit to do?	What do I need to support me in making this change?
Example	I felt quite lonely when I was away on my last trip, leading me to feeling a bit down.	Having more contact with friends and family	Book in 30 min to 1 hour slots every day I am away with different friends and family members	Having a well-functioning internet connection. Agreeing with people in advance, so that they will be available when I am free
1.				
2.				
3.				

International SOS Foundation

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

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THE ISSUE

As an Business travellers on international assignments, often work in unsafe or even dangerous places in the world. It is therefore crucial that family, friends and colleagues know where the business traveller is travelling to, where they will be staying during trip and how long for. It is also important for family, friends and colleagues to know who to contact in case of an emergency.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

To create a contact sheet with the necessary details. This could be in the form of a fridge magnet, laminated/rewritable form or even a compact version to keep in a wallet/purse. Although we are proposing a physical copy, it is worth considering whether this could be digitalised. If this functionality could be added to the booking system, an email could automatically be sent out to the spouse/family with these details, which then could be added to phone calendars, contact lists etc.

BUSINESS TRIP DETAILS

KEY INFORMATION

Name of Travellers:

Trip Destinations/s:

Itinerary by day to include travel to multiple destinations:

Time zone difference/s to the UK:

KEY AND EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS:

International SOS (for all medical/security emergencies):

Manager contact details (at usual office):

Local organisational contact details (at each destination office):

Hotel name/s and contact details (if multiple destinations please list all):

Outbound Flight Details from Home Country

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL
Date:	Date:
Time:	Time:
Airline:	
Flight number:	

Inbound Flight Details from Home Country

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL
Date:	Date:
Time:	Time:
Airline:	
Flight number:	

Important note: Please record details of all other flights (not including to and from home country)

International SOS Foundation

CHECKLIST FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS (IBT)

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

Kingston University London

affinity health at work

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THE IMPACT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVEL HAS ON ME?

Despite international business travel being seen as essential for growth (both individual and organisational), there is evidence that it can be deleterious for your health. The majority of research to date has focused on the physical health risks, rather than on the psychological health risks. However, research suggests that frequent travellers make three times as many claims for psychological treatment and have lower psychological wellbeing, work life balance and productivity than their non-travelling colleagues.

Within the context of increasing international business travel, it is imperative that we understand how and why business travel may be psychologically damaging to International Business Travellers (IBTs). This will allow your employer and other organisations both to support you more effectively and to sustain the success of the organisation.

KEEPING IBTS HAPPY, HEALTHY AND ENGAGED - AT HOME AND AWAY: RESEARCH PROJECT

To help you, your manager and employer, we have conducted research aiming not just to find out what the psychological implications of international business travel are, but to start to unpick why and how business travel affects IBTs, by uncovering the organisational, social and individual factors that play a part in making the experience, and outcomes, for international business travellers better or worse.

We took a rigorous three phase approach: firstly a review of both academic and practitioner literature; secondly, interviews with experts who employed international business travellers; and finally, a large survey of international business travellers themselves. The full research report,

'Keeping international business travellers healthy, happy and engaged: at home and away', includes a reference list and more information on methodology, results, and recommendations for both managers, organisations and IBTs.

WHAT THE RESEARCH FOUND

Overall, the results of this research indicate that international business travel is associated with a range of negative and potentially damaging outcomes, together with some positive outcomes. These fall into four categories, as follows:

- Emotional outcomes: negative outcomes such as stress, anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, risk taking behaviour; and positive outcomes such as empowerment, freedom, confidence and satisfaction.

- Family/social and work life outcomes: negative outcomes such as separation from family, family conflict and reduced contact with friends; and positive outcomes such as improvement of family relationships.

- Psychosocial/psychosomatic outcomes: negative outcomes such as sleep difficulties, increased alcohol consumption.

- Job and travel related attitudinal outcomes: positive outcomes such as career advancement, joy of travel, learning and development.

The research also demonstrated that there are a number of factors to which these outcomes can be attributed. Many of these are factors that need to be addressed at the organisational level, for example, through policies and practices, culture, support services, job design, and practical arrangements. Some of the factors will need to be addressed by managers, for example, through monitoring and support for IBT team members. And some of these factors are ones that IBTs, like yourself, can address, in many cases with support from your manager, colleagues, family and friends, for example through planning, preventive coping, healthy activities, seeking support and adopting a balanced perspective.

Based on the findings from the three research phases, we have developed a checklist that enables you to assess how you as an international business traveller can most effectively protect your health, happiness and engagement – at home and away. All checklist items have been developed from factors found by the research to be important.

The items in the checklist are grouped into five categories: i) control and planning; ii) mental health awareness, iii) health promoting activity, iv) attitudinal/perspective and v) communication. These are aligned with the recommendations presented within the guidance document.

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

1. Identify the behaviours and practices that you currently do and not use in relation to your business travel

2. For those that you do not currently do, consider whether they would be important for you and your experience of international business travel. Based on this, you can identify priority areas in which you want to make changes

3. Develop an action plan for the changes you would like to make, using the form provided

4. Share the action plan with your manager, your colleagues and family and friends

5. Gain more information on the psychological implications of business travel from the guidance document that has been produced to use alongside this checklist, which can be downloaded at <production team please add in this link>.

Please note, there is also a series of tools for your manager and for your employer which may be useful in ensuring your actions are consistent and complimentary with the organisational approach taken.

CHECKLIST **FOR IBTS**

Please mark the applicable box (√) on a scale from 0 'No, not at all' to 5 'Yes, completely' or 'Don't know' and provide examples.

CONTROL AND PLANNING

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you invest time in planning for each business trip – including not just work planning but also personal and home-life planning?								
2. Do you plan for what might happen (such as adverse events at home, work and on the trip) when you are away in addition to what will happen?								
2a. Do you use a tool such as a preventive planning and coping tool to help you to do this?*								
3. Do you have choice over when and how you travel?								
4. Do you discuss with your friends and family about when would be the most suitable trip times and durations?								
5. Do you feel able to speak to your manager about any aspects of the trip you might be uncomfortable with?								
6. Do you feel able to refuse to travel if that is the right thing to do?								

*Please note: if you do not currently do this, please access the Preventive Planning and Coping tool for International Business travellers produced as part of this research.

HEALTH PROMOTING ACTIVITY

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you build in respite and recovery time for yourself after each business trip?								
2. Have you used 'bleisure' (extending your trip) time or time off in lieu to enable you to recover?								
3. Do you use 'downtime' at the airport and on the plane to rest and recover rather than catch up on work?								
4. Do you schedule in time for relaxation during your business trip?								
5. Do you focus on ways to improve your sleep when away (such as keeping a regular routine, perhaps taking your own pillow)?								
6. Do you schedule in time and/or maximise your opportunities to take exercise when you are on business trips?								
7. Do you try and eat healthy food and/or maximise your opportunities to eat more nutritious food when on business trips?								

ATTITUDINAL/PERSPECTIVE

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you see international business travel as an opportunity for freedom and adventure?								
2. Have you considered using your local support network and colleagues to explore and learn more about your destination when you are away?								
3. Have you reflected upon the positive aspects of business travel for you?								
4. Have you focused on looking at ways that you can gain more enjoyment from your business travel?*								

*Please note: if you have not focused on the positive aspects of travel, please access the Mental Health awareness action planning tool for International Business travellers produced as part of this research, which can help you think about this in a more structured way.

COMMUNICATION

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you share the details of your trip with your family and loved ones?								
2. Do you seek to gain agreement before the trip about how and when you will communicate with your friends and family?								
3. Have you expressed appreciation of your loved ones' contributions to your home life, recognising the additional pressure imposed upon them by your role?								
4. Have you considered bringing your loved ones on your business trips with you?								
5. Do you discuss the way you like to travel with any co-travellers and ensure you have a level of understanding?								
6. Do you give a clear brief to your colleagues and team so that they know what is expected of them while you are away and when and how to contact them?								
7. Do you share your workload and schedule with your colleagues and manager?								
8. Do you agree contact times with your colleagues and manager back in the office?								
9. Do you make sure your team know where you are at all times and what time-zone you are in?								

ACTION PLAN

Key areas	What do I do well?	What could I improve upon?	What action shall I take to improve my experience of international business travel?	What resources do I need for this? Would I need support from anyone within the organisation?	When will this be completed?
Control and Planning					
Mental Health Awareness					
Health Promoting Activity					
Attitudinal/ Perspective					
Communication					

CHECKLIST FOR MANAGERS

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND
ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THE HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND ENGAGEMENT OF IBTS?

Despite international business travel being seen as essential for growth (both individual and organisational); there is evidence that it can be deleterious to health. The majority of research to date has focused on the physical health risks, rather than on the psychological health risks. This is despite research finding that frequent travellers make three times as many claims for psychological treatment; and have lower psychological wellbeing, work life balance and productivity than their non-travelling colleagues. This is important given that psychological ill health has been shown unequivocally to have a direct and significant impact on organisational success.

Within the context of increasing international business travel, it is imperative that organisations understand how and why business travel may be psychologically damaging to their International Business Traveller (IBT) employees. This will allow employers and organisations both to support their IBT employees and to sustain the success of their organisation.

KEEPING IBTS HAPPY, HEALTHY AND ENGAGED - AT HOME AND AWAY: WHAT THE RESEARCH INVOLVED

To help you, IBTs and your employer achieve this, we have conducted research aiming not just to find out what the psychological implications of international business travel are, but to start to unpick why and how business travel affects IBTs, by uncovering the organisational, social and individual factors that play a part in making the

experience, and outcomes for the business traveller better or worse. Within this study, a highly rigorous three phase approach was taken: firstly a review of both academic and practitioner literature; secondly, interviews with key experts who employed international business travellers; and finally, a large survey of international business travellers themselves. The full research report, *'Keeping international business travellers healthy, happy and engaged: at home and away'*, includes a reference list and more information on methodology, results, and recommendations for both managers, organisations and IBTs.

WHAT THE RESEARCH FOUND

Overall, the results of this research indicate that international business travel is associated with a range of negative and potentially damaging outcomes, together with some positive outcomes. These fall into four categories, as follows:

- Emotional outcomes: negative outcomes such as stress, anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, risk taking behaviour; and positive outcomes such as empowerment, freedom, confidence and satisfaction

- Family/social and work life outcomes: negative outcomes such as separation from family, family conflict and reduced contact with friends; and positive outcomes such as improvement of family relationships

- Psychosocial/psychosomatic outcomes: negative outcomes such as sleep difficulties, increased alcohol consumption

- Job and travel related attitudinal outcomes: positive outcomes such as career advancement, joy of travel, learning and development.

The research also demonstrated that there are a number of factors to which these outcomes can be attributed. Many of these are factors that need to be addressed at the organisational level, for example, through policies and practices, culture, support services, job design, and practical arrangements. Some of the factors will need to be addressed by managers like you, for example, through monitoring and support you provide for IBT team members. And some of these factors are ones that IBTs can address, in many cases with support from their manager, colleagues, family and friends, for example through planning, preventive coping, healthy activities, seeking support and adopting a balanced perspective.

Based on the findings from the three research phases, we have developed a checklist that enables you to assess how you as a manager can most effectively protect the health, happiness and engagement of your international business traveller team members – at home and away. All checklist items have been developed from factors found by the research to be important.

The items in the checklist are grouped into three categories: i) control and planning; ii) support and education and iii) Reviewing and monitoring IBTs. These are aligned with the recommendations presented within the guidance document.

HOW TO USE **THIS CHECKLIST**

1. Identify the behaviours and practices that you currently do and not use in relation to your international business traveller team members.

2. For those that you do not currently do, consider whether they would be important for your international business traveller team members. Based on this, you can identify priority areas in which you want to make changes

3. Develop an action plan for the changes you would like to make, using the form provided

4. Share the action plan with your manager and with your international business traveller team members

5. Gain more information on the psychological implications of business travel from the guidance document that has been produced to use alongside this checklist, which can be downloaded at <production team please add in this link>.

Please note, there is also a series of tools for the International Business Travellers themselves which may be useful in ensuring any your actions are consistent and complimentary to those of your team members.

CHECKLIST **FOR MANAGERS**

Please mark the applicable box (√) on a scale from 0 'No, not at all' to 5 'Yes, completely' or 'Don't know' and provide examples.

CONTROL AND PLANNING

	No, not at all 0	1	2	3	4	Yes, completely 5	Don't know	Evidence and comments
1. Do you enable the IBT to have control over their travel schedule (such as deciding how and when to travel)?								
2. Do you enable your IBT to work flexibly around their travel period (for instance at home, prolonged weekends, bleisure)?								
3. Do you work with the IBT to develop a preventive coping plan enabling them to plan for and mitigate adverse situations occurring as a result of their travel?*								

*Please note: if you do not currently do this, please access the Planning and Coping Tool for International Business travellers produced as part of this research.

SUPPORT AND EDUCATION

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you have open conversations with your team members about mental health?								
2. Have you ever discussed your personal experiences around mental health?								
3. Do you work with the IBT to develop a mental health action planning tool in order that they can develop self management strategies?*								
4. Do you check in regularly with your IBT team members while they are away to see how they are getting on (not just to discuss their work)?								
5. Do you organise and facilitate local social support for the IBT for when they are away?								
6. Do you communicate with your non-travelling team members in order that they understand the pressures of international business travel and the impact on the health and family life of the IBT?								
7. Do you respect agreed contact times of the IBT so as not to add to their already heightened workload?								
8. Do you encourage non-travelling team members to respect agreed contact times of the IBT so you do not add to the already heightened workload of the IBT?								

*Please note: if you do not currently do this, please access Mental health action planning tool for International Business Travellers produced as part of this research.

REVIEWING AND MONITORING

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you regularly review the workload of your IBT team members?								
2. Do you hold 1-to-1's with your IBT team members to discuss workload and enable the reorganisation of tasks and resources?								
3. Do you take into account the whole person when you are reviewing the role of the IBT – for instance understanding that international business travel will be more challenging for some than others?								
4. Do you consider how you can enhance the role of the IBT in order to protect them against some of the more negative impacts and improve their enjoyment? (This could include travel benefits or a bonus, but it is more likely to be helpful to focus on enhancing engagement and passion, and considering career development and enhancement prospects.)								
5. Do you consider whether each trip is absolutely necessary and seek to minimise the number of unexpected trips?								
6. Do you give your IBT team members ample time to plan and prepare for their trip?								
7. Do you encourage and enable your IBT team members to push back on any trips that they see as unnecessary?								

ACTION PLAN

Key areas	What do I do well?	What could I improve upon?	What action shall I take to improve my management of IBTs?	What resources do I need for this? Would I need support from anyone within the organisation?	When will this be completed?
Control and Planning					
Support and Education					
Reviewing and Monitoring					

CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISATIONS AND EMPLOYERS OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS (IBT)

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THE HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND ENGAGEMENT OF IBTS?

Despite international business travel being seen as essential for growth (both individual and organisational); there is evidence that it can be deleterious to health. The majority of research to date has focused on the physical health risks, rather than on the psychological health risks. This is despite research finding that frequent travellers make three times as many claims for psychological treatment; and have lower psychological wellbeing, work life balance and productivity than their non-travelling colleagues. This is important given that psychological ill health has been shown unequivocally to have a direct and significant impact on organisational success.

Within the context of increasing international business travel, it is imperative that organisations understand how and why business travel may be psychologically damaging to their International Business Traveller (IBT) employees. This will allow employers and organisations both to support their IBT employees and to sustain the success of their organisation.

KEEPING IBTS HAPPY, HEALTHY AND ENGAGED - AT HOME AND AWAY: WHAT THE RESEARCH INVOLVED

To help IBTs, their managers and employers, we have conducted research aiming not just to find out what the psychological implications of international business travel are, but to start to unpick why and how business travel affects IBTs, by uncovering the organisational, social and individual factors that play a part in making the experience, and outcomes for the business

traveller better or worse. Within this study, a highly rigorous three phase approach was taken: firstly a review of both academic and practitioner literature; secondly, interviews with key experts who employed international business travellers; and finally, a large survey of international business travellers themselves. The full research report, 'Keeping international business travellers healthy, happy and engaged: at home and away', includes a reference list and more information on methodology, results, and recommendations for both managers, organisations and IBTs.

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- Job and travel related attitudinal outcomes: positive outcomes such as career advancement, joy of travel, learning and development.

The research also demonstrated that there are a number of factors to which these outcomes can be attributed. Many of these are factors that need to be addressed at the organisational level, for example, through policies and practices, culture, support services, job design, and practical arrangements. Some of the factors will need to be addressed by the IBTs manager, for example, through monitoring and support they provide for IBT team members. And some of the factors are ones that IBTs can address for themselves, in many cases with support from their manager, colleagues, family and friends, for example through planning, preventive coping, healthy activities, seeking support and adopting a balanced perspective.

Based on the findings from the three research phases, we have developed a checklist that will enable you to assess how effective your organisation's current offering is in terms of protecting the health, happiness and engagement of international business travellers – at home and away. All checklist items have been developed from factors found by the research to be important.

The items in the checklist are grouped into five categories: i) Policy and practice; ii) Organisational Culture; iii) Support Services, iv) Job Design and v) Practical Arrangements. These are aligned with the recommendations presented within the guidance document.

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

1. Identify the policies, practices, culture and behaviours that do and do not exist/occur within your organisation

2. For those that do not occur/exist within your organisation, consider whether they would be important for your international business traveller employees. Based on this, you can identify priority areas in which you want to make changes

3. Develop an action plan for the changes you would like to make, using the form provided

4. Share the action plan with colleagues from other areas of the organisation (for instance Travel team, HR, Occupational Health, Health & Safety and managers)

5. Gain more information on the psychological implications of business travel from the guidance document that has been produced to use alongside this checklist, which can be downloaded at <production team please add in this link>.

Please note, there is also a series of tools for managers, and for the International Business Traveller themselves, which may be useful in ensuring any actions are appropriately cascaded throughout the organisation.

CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISATIONS

Please mark the applicable box (√) on a scale from 0 'No, not at all' to 5 'Yes, completely' or 'Don't know' and provide examples.

POLICY AND PRACTICE

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you have clear policies, practices and behavioural expectations around business travel?								
2. Have these been developed in collaboration with stakeholders across the organisation (such as OH, HR, H&S, Procurement, Travel team)?								
3. Does any policy, practice and behavioural expectation also include discussion of risky behaviours when travelling?								
4. Does any policy, practice and behavioural expectation enable flexibility for individual differences (for instance by gender, parental responsibility, sexuality, experience)?								
5. Is a realistic role explanation given to new IBTs in the selection/onboarding process?								
6. Have you considered personal characteristics (such as global orientation, enjoyment of meeting new people) which may increase the resilience of the IBT and which may point to additional support needs?								
7. Do you monitor the workload of your IBT employees to prevent excessive travel and excessively long hours during travel periods?								
8. Do you monitor the mental health of your IBT in pre- and post- travel health checks?								
9. Is mental health and psychological experience of the IBT included in your feedback surveys?								

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
1. Do you encourage IBTs to build recovery and rest into their schedule whilst on the trip and on their return?								
2. Do you enable flexible work schedules so that the IBT can recover – for instance allowing working from home, prolonged weekends and bleisure time?								
3. Do your employees feel like the organisation cares about their wellbeing?								
4. Do employees feel safe to disclose existing conditions to colleagues and managers?								
5. Is there a culture of openness and transparency around mental health such that there is no stigma?								

SUPPORT SERVICES

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Do you offer training and education within your organisation to increase the understanding of the impact of IBT on health and family life?								
2. If you do offer training and education, is it aimed at three groups: the IBT themselves, managers of IBTs and the wider employee population?								
3. Do you build infrastructure to enable local support networks for IBTs when they are away?								
4. Have you considered the creation of an internal trip advisor for travellers to share experiences about restaurants and places to go?								

	No, not at all					Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Do you offer the following resources to your International Business Travellers:								
Booking /arrangement of travel logistics								
High quality hotel accomodation								
Bleisure time (ability to extend your trip)								
Business class flights on long trips								
Medical asssistance (psychological and physical)								
Access to airport lounge								
Real time information on security/medical issues								
Information (legal/cultural) about the destination travelling to								
24 hour assistance/tracking								
Time off lieu								
Employee Assistance Programme (EAP								
Wellness programme								
Mental health support								
Concierge services								
Corporate childcare								

JOB DESIGN

	No, not at all				Yes, completely	Don't know	Evidence and comments
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Do you enable business travellers to control their travel schedules as much as possible, including when they travel and where they stay?							
2. Do you have initiatives that aim to build engagement in IBTs? (This could range from travel benefits to those focused on improving role quality and progression and development opportunities.)							

PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

	No, not at all 0	1	2	3	4	Yes, completely 5	Don't know	Evidence and comments
1. Do you organise hotels for business travellers that support health promoting behaviours (i.e. have gym and/or pool and healthy food choices)?								
2. Do you aim to make the travel process as simple as possible for the IBT by arranging travel, including transfers and all logistics?								
3. Do you provide a checklist and summary of travel to your IBT, and their colleagues?								
4. Do you provide the spouse/family of the IBT with information and key contact details about the trip?								
5. Do you work to provide the best and fastest technology access to IBTs wherever they are?								
6. Do you provide personal calls for free whilst IBTs are away?								
7. Do you demonstrate appreciation for the sacrifice of the family/social unit resulting from the IBT role? For instance do you provide gift vouchers and/or pay for extra childcare costs incurred?								

ACTION PLAN

Key areas	What do we do next?	What could we improve upon?	What action shall we take to improve our offering to IBTs?	What resources do we need for this?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be completed?
Policy and Practice						
Organisational Culture						
Support Services and Practical Arrangements						
Job Design						
Practical Application						

International SOS Foundation

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

Kingston University London

affinity health at work

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE GUIDANCE AROUND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVEL?

Despite international business travel being seen as essential for growth (both individual and organisational), there is evidence that it can be deleterious for your health. The majority of research to date has focused on the physical health risks, rather than on the psychological health risks. However, research suggests that frequent travellers make three times as many claims for psychological treatment and have lower psychological wellbeing, work life balance and productivity than their non-travelling colleagues.

Within the context of increasing international business travel, it is imperative that we understand how and why business travel may be psychologically damaging to International Business Travellers (IBTs). This will allow your employer and other organisations both to support you more effectively and to sustain the success of the organisation.

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To help you, your manager and employer, we have conducted research aiming not just to find out what the psychological implications of international business travel are, but to start to unpick why and how business travel affects IBTs, by uncovering the organisational, social and individual factors that play a part in making the experience, and outcomes, for international business travellers better or worse.

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WHAT ARE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BUSINESS TRAVEL?

The literature review and interviews conducted in Stages One and Two of the project identified four categories of outcomes of international business travel. These are summarised in the diagram opposite.

Psychological outcomes of International Business Travel

Emotional Outcomes:

Negative:
Stress • strain • fatigue • exhaustion • 'crankiness' • loneliness • isolation • lack of control • hopelessness • guilt • burnout • risk taking behaviour (sexual, drugs, danger) • feeling unsafe

Positive:
Work satisfaction • work drive • vigour and energy • empowerment • feeling free • self confidence • feeling at ease • feeling uninhibited

Family/social/work-life Outcomes:

Negative:
Diminished relationship and communication with friends and family • spousal dissatisfaction/ conflict • separation from family • loneliness • missing critical family events and routines • disruption of family planning • family resentment • role strain

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Improvement of spousal relationship • enhanced parent-child relationship • spousal career advancement

Psychosocial/Psychosomatic Outcomes:

Negative:
Musculoskeletal pain • gastrointestinal problems • sleep difficulties • increased alcohol consumption

Positive:
Adrenaline rush

Job and Travel related Attitudinal Outcomes:

Positive:
Task fulfilment • career advancement • wealth/status • learning and development • connection with others • building international networks • travel itself • feeling productive • problem solving • closing deals/bringing in new business • transferring and building knowledge • decision making • fresh perspectives • seeing how other organisations work
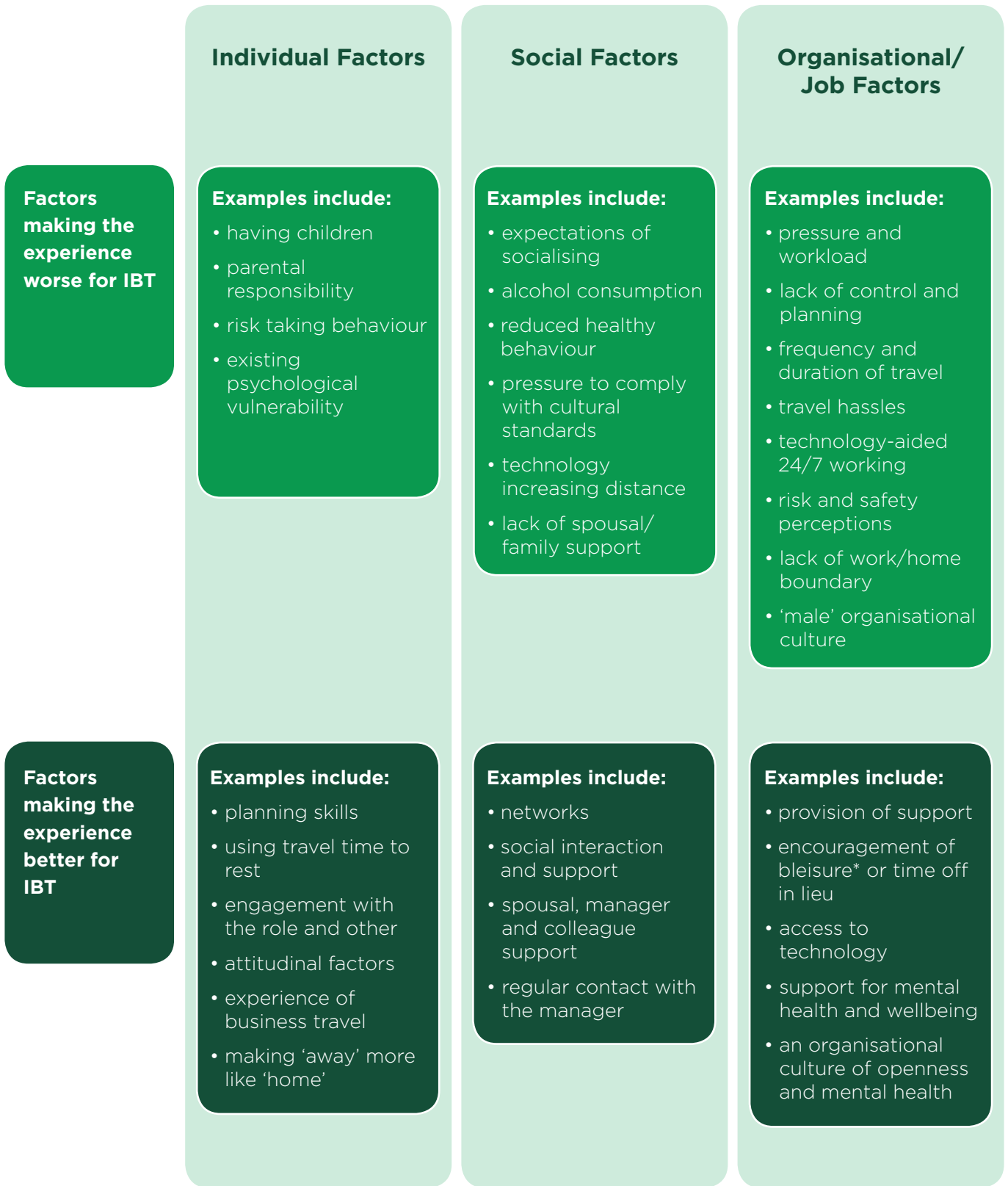
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WHAT FACTORS CAN AFFECT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BUSINESS TRIP AND OUTCOMES FOR IBT?

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FACTORS IMPACTING ON THE EXPERIENCE OF BUSINESS TRAVEL

Individual Factors	Social Factors	Organisational/ Job Factors

Factors making the experience worse for IBT

Examples include:
- having children
- parental responsibility
- risk taking behaviour
- existing psychological vulnerability

Examples include:
- expectations of socialising
- alcohol consumption
- reduced healthy behaviour
- pressure to comply with cultural standards
- technology increasing distance
- lack of spousal/ family support

Examples include:
- pressure and workload
- lack of control and planning
- frequency and duration of travel
- travel hassles
- technology-aided 24/7 working
- risk and safety perceptions
- lack of work/home boundary
- 'male' organisational culture

Factors making the experience better for IBT

Examples include:
- planning skills
- using travel time to rest
- engagement with the role and other
- attitudinal factors
- experience of business travel
- making 'away' more like 'home'

Examples include:
- networks
- social interaction and support
- spousal, manager and colleague support
- regular contact with the manager

Examples include:
- provision of support
- encouragement of bleisure* or time off in lieu
- access to technology
- support for mental health and wellbeing
- an organisational culture of openness and mental health

*Bleisure time refers to extending the business trip to enable IBTs to spend some leisure time in their destination, typically before or after their work duties are completed.

The findings from Stage One and Two were used to create a model of both the psychological outcomes of international business travel, and factors affecting those outcomes. This was then used to create the Stage Three survey. The data gathered in Stage Three of the project corroborated and built on the findings from the literature review and interviews.

HOW COMMON ARE THESE PSYCHOLOGICAL OUTCOMES FOR IBTS?

This section pulls out the key findings from Stage Three of the research.

EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES:

- 41% of business travellers saw their mood decrease, 31% were emotionally exhausted and 45% experienced stress increase due to business travel. 1 in 4 respondents displayed more than usual levels of depression and anxiety. These figures were higher for those with pre-existing mental health diagnoses

- 78% worked more than usual when travelling

- 37% of business travellers did not feel they had sufficient choice and control over their business travel

- 15% felt more unsafe when travelling

- There were positives: 67% were engaged with their jobs, 75% saw business travel as an opportunity for adventure and exploration, and 59% saw business travel as an opportunity to enjoy freedom from home life. These positive outcomes were particularly prevalent in younger/less experienced workers.

RISK BEHAVIOURS:

- 1 in 3 IBTs were more likely to visit clubs and bars, and engage in certain risky behaviours such as eating in unhygienic places, travelling to unsafe areas and travelling without adequate protection

- 1 in 10 were more likely on business trips to start a sexual relationship with a new partner

- 2% were more likely to have unprotected sex whilst away

- 2% were more likely to use drugs when away

- These risk behaviours were more prominent in males, in those with less parental responsibility and in younger IBTs.

FAMILY/SOCIAL AND WORK LIFE OUTCOMES:

- 67% of IBTs experienced work family conflict with around 3⁄4 feeling it was difficult to fulfil family obligations and needing to make changes to family activities as a result of business travel

- 81% had less connection with the family and friends than usual

- 39% did not have sufficient work-life balance

PSYCHOSOCIAL/PSYCHOSOMATIC OUTCOMES:

- Approximately half drank more alcohol when away than at home

- 3/4 were less likely to eat well, and took less exercise when away

- 3/4 said that their quality of sleep suffered as a result of international business travel.

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS THAT ARE LIKELY TO AFFECT THE OVERALL OUTCOME FOR IBTS?

Overall, the results of this research indicate not only that international business travel is associated with a range of negative and potentially damaging outcomes, together with some positive outcomes, but also that there are a number of clear factors to which this can be attributed.

Many of these are factors that need to be addressed at the organisational level, for example, through policies and practices, culture, support services, job design, and practical arrangements. Some of the factors will need to be addressed by your manager, for example, through monitoring and support they provide for you and your team members. And some of these factors are ones that you can address for yourself, in many cases with support from our manager, colleagues, family and friends, for example through planning, preventive coping, healthy activities, seeking support and adopting a balanced perspective.

WHAT CAN YOU AS AN IBT DO TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE YOUR HEALTH AND HAPPINESS?

Based on the findings from all three research phases, we have developed a series of recommendations that describe actions that you can take to protect and promote your wellbeing and engagement – both at home and away. These recommendations are grouped into five categories: i) Control and planning; ii) Mental health awareness; iii) Health promoting activity; iv) Attitudinal/ perspective; and v) Communication. Please note, there is also a series of tools for managers, and for the International Business Traveller themselves, which may be useful in ensuring any actions are appropriately cascaded throughout the organisation.

To help you to reflect on and implement these recommendations, please see the checklist produced as part of this research project.

RECOMMENDATION	EXAMPLE
CONTROL AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	
Invest time in planning	It has been shown consistently that planning is a key protective factor in terms of mitigating the psychological risk of international business travel and in reducing the pile up of work upon return.
Take control of your business travel	Having choice over when and how you travel is particularly key in reducing negative psychological implications of business travel. Discuss with your friends and family about the most suitable trip times and durations. Speak to your manager about any aspects of the trip you are not comfortable with and be prepared to refuse to travel if that is the right thing to do.
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS RECOMMENDATIONS	
Become aware of your mental health and the mental health of others	Recognise the strain that international business travel can put upon you, your colleagues and your loved ones. If your mood suffers when travelling, take time to reflect upon what causes this and put in place ideas to address it – for instance if isolation or lack of social support are a key factor, build a social network of colleagues abroad, or arrange activities whilst on the trip to maintain social contact.
HEALTH PROMOTING ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS	
Build in respite and recovery before, during and after the trip	Use 'downtime' at the airport and on the plane to rest and recover rather than working. Whilst on the trip, build in and schedule downtime and relaxation into your time. Following the trip, take time to recuperate, either at home on leave, working from home or at the destination by taking 'bleisure' time.
Increase health promoting activities	It has been shown that business travel often results in IBTs taking less exercise, having low quality sleep, eating less nutritious food and drinking more alcohol. Many of these behaviours are associated with poorer mental health outcomes. By finding ways to ensure you eat and sleep better, and exercise more, you are likely to reduce the negative impact of international business travel.
ATTITUDINAL/PERSPECTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS	
Channel your feelings of freedom and adventure to exploring with local colleagues	For some IBTs, international business travel provides a feeling of freedom and adventure. Rather than channelling this enthusiasm on risk taking behaviours such as travelling to unknown places, eating street food and visiting clubs and bars; consider engaging with your local support network and colleagues to explore and learn about the new destination.
Adopt a balanced perspective	Although international business travel can be stressful, it is useful to consciously focus on the positive aspects of travel (in addition to the negative). For instance, reflect upon the opportunity that the role provides to build an international network and travel; or it may be that it is on your international trips that you have the opportunity to do work that you enjoy, such as meeting colleagues, closing deals and making key decisions. Taking a balanced perspective will enable you get more enjoyment from your travel.
COMMUNICATION RECOMMENDATIONS	
Communicate with your family and loved ones	Share the details of your trip with your family and loved ones, and have an agreement before the trip about how and when you will communicate. Express appreciation of your spouse's/loved ones' contributions to your home life and recognise the additional stress and pressure imposed on you all by your IBT role. It is also helpful to consider bringing your loved ones on the trip with you if you can.
Communicate with your travelling colleagues	Discuss the way that you like to travel with any co-travellers and ensure that you have a level of understanding (such as respecting privacy and not talking to each other on the plane if that is what either of you wish). By acknowledging individual differences in the way we like to travel, conflict and stress will be reduced.
Set expectations and communicate with your non- travelling colleagues and manager	Give a clear brief to your colleagues and team so that they know what is expected of them while you are away and when and how to contact you. Share your workload and schedule and clarify your contact windows within this. Let your team know where you are at all times and what time-zone you are in.

International SOS Foundation

GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

Kingston University London

affinity health at work

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Within the context of increasing international business travel, it is imperative that organisations understand how and why business travel may be psychologically damaging to their International Business Traveller (IBT) employees. This will allow employers and organisations and managers both to support their IBT employees and to sustain the success of their organisation.

KEEPING IBTS HAPPY, HEALTHY AND ENGAGED - AT HOME AND AWAY: WHAT THE RESEARCH INVOLVED

To help you, IBTs and your employer achieve this, we have conducted research aiming not just to find out what the psychological implications of international business travel are, but to start to unpick why and how business travel affects IBTs, by uncovering the organisational, social and individual factors that play a part in making the experience, and outcomes for the business traveller better or worse.

Within this study, a highly rigorous three phase approach was taken: firstly a review of both academic and practitioner literature; secondly, interviews with key experts who employed international business travellers; and finally, a large survey of international business travellers themselves. The full research report, *'Keeping international business travellers healthy, happy and engaged: at home and away'*, includes a reference list and more information on methodology, results, and recommendations for both managers, organisations and IBTs.

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WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS THAT WE NEED TO CONSIDER THAT WILL AFFECT THE OVERALL OUTCOMES FOR THE BUSINESS TRAVELLER?

Overall, the results of this research indicate not only that international business travel is associated with a range of negative and potentially damaging outcomes (together with some positive outcomes) but also that there are a number of clear factors to which this can be attributed.

Many of these are factors that need to be addressed at the organisational level, for example, through policies and practices, culture, support services, job design, and practical arrangements. Some of the factors will be to be addressed by you as the manager, for example through monitoring and support you provide to your IBT team members. And some of thee factors are ones that IBTs can address for themselves, in many cases with support from you, colleagues.

WHAT CAN YOU AS A MANAGER DO TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH AND HAPPINESS OF YOUR IBT TEAM MEMBERS?

Based on the findings from all three research phases, we have developed a series of recommendations that describe actions that you can take to protect and promote your wellbeing and engagement – both at home and away. These recommendations are grouped into five categories: i) Control and planning; ii) Mental health awareness; iii) Health promoting activity; iv) Attitude/ perspective; and v) Communication. Please note, there is also a series of tools for managers, and for the International Business Traveller themselves, which may be useful in ensuring any actions are appropriately cascaded throughout the organisation.

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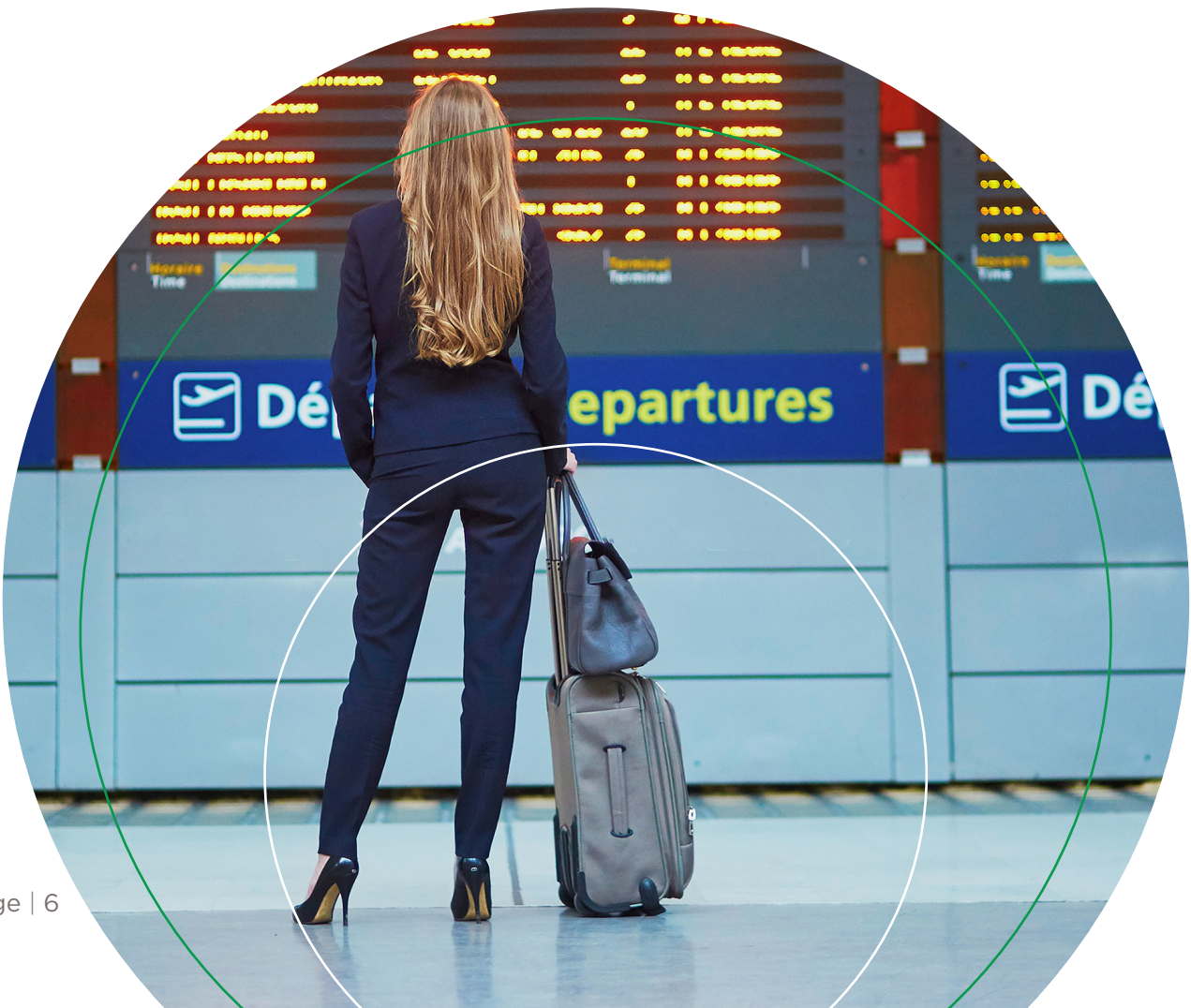
RECOMMENDATION	EXAMPLE
CONTROL AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	
Provide the IBT with control over their travel	Enable the IBTs to have control over their travel schedule (how and when), and to work flexibly around the travel period (at home, prolonged weekends, bleisure). The more choices the IBT is given, the more likely they are to be able to create balance between home and work.
Encourage planning	Work with the IBT to develop a preventive coping plan, enabling them to plan for and mitigate adverse situations occurring as a result of travel – in terms of the individual, work and family situations.
SUPPORT AND EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS	
Prompt IBTs to consider their mental health	Enable an open discussion about mental with your team members and work with the IBT to develop a personal coping plan in order that they can develop self management strategies to cope with the impact of frequent travel. Role model this openness around mental health by discussing your personal situation.
Provide support to the IBT whilst away	Frequent international business travel can be an isolating experience. Checking in regularly to see how the IBT is getting on will be helpful; as will organising and facilitating local social support for the IBT when they are away.
Educate the non-travelling team about the pressures of IBT	Communicate with the IBT's non-travelling colleagues in order that they understand the pressures of international business travel and the impact on the health and family life of the IBT. This will also encourage colleagues to respect agreed contact times and not add to the already heightened workload for the traveller.
REVIEWING AND MONITORING IBT RECOMMENDATIONS	
Monitor the workload of your IBT	Research has consistently found that IBT involves significantly higher workloads than usual – which can impact negatively on the psychological health. Managers should regularly review the workload of the IBT, setting 1-to-1s to discuss workload and enable the organisation of tasks to monitor workload.
Review the role of the IBT on a regular basis	Recognise that frequent international business travel may not be sustainable for all employees and may be particularly deleterious to the health of some compared to others. Consider the whole person in this review - their family situation, gender, experience in the role and mental health. From a positive perspective, consider how you can enhance the role of the IBT in order to protect them against some of the more negative impacts – for instance their career prospects and enhancement and their engagement and passion for the role.
Challenge the need for each trip	Consider whether each trip is absolutely necessary and minimise the number of unexpected trips in order that the business traveller can have as much opportunity to plan as possible. Empower the IBT to push-back on any trips that they may not see as necessary/may not want to attend.

International SOS Foundation

GUIDANCE FOR ORGANISATIONS AND EMPLOYERS OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS (IBT)

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

affinity
health at work

Kingston University
London

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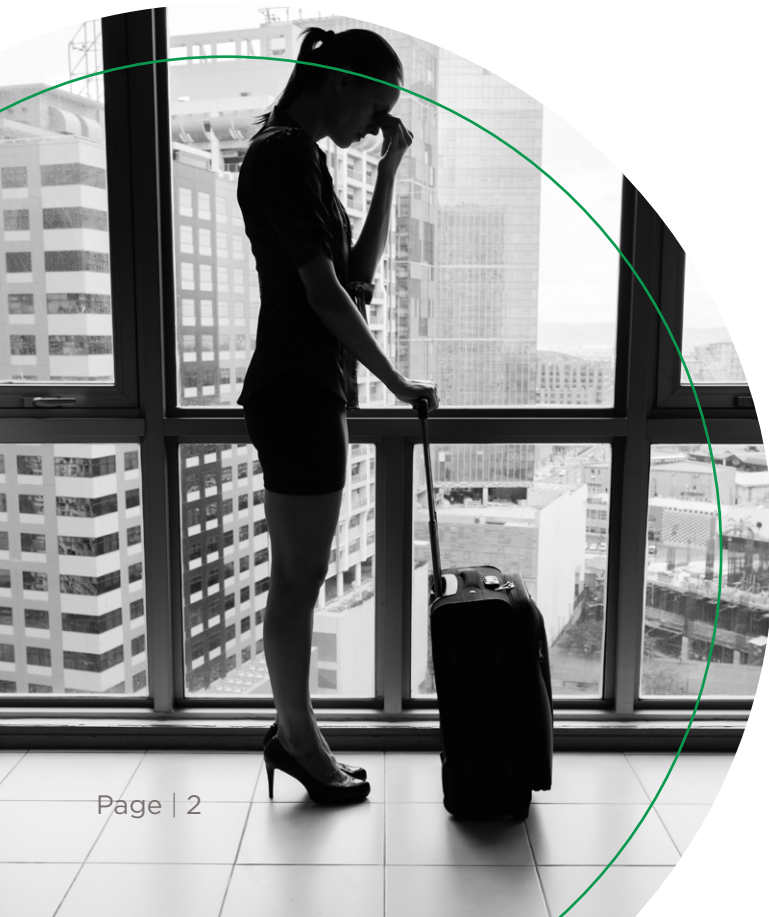
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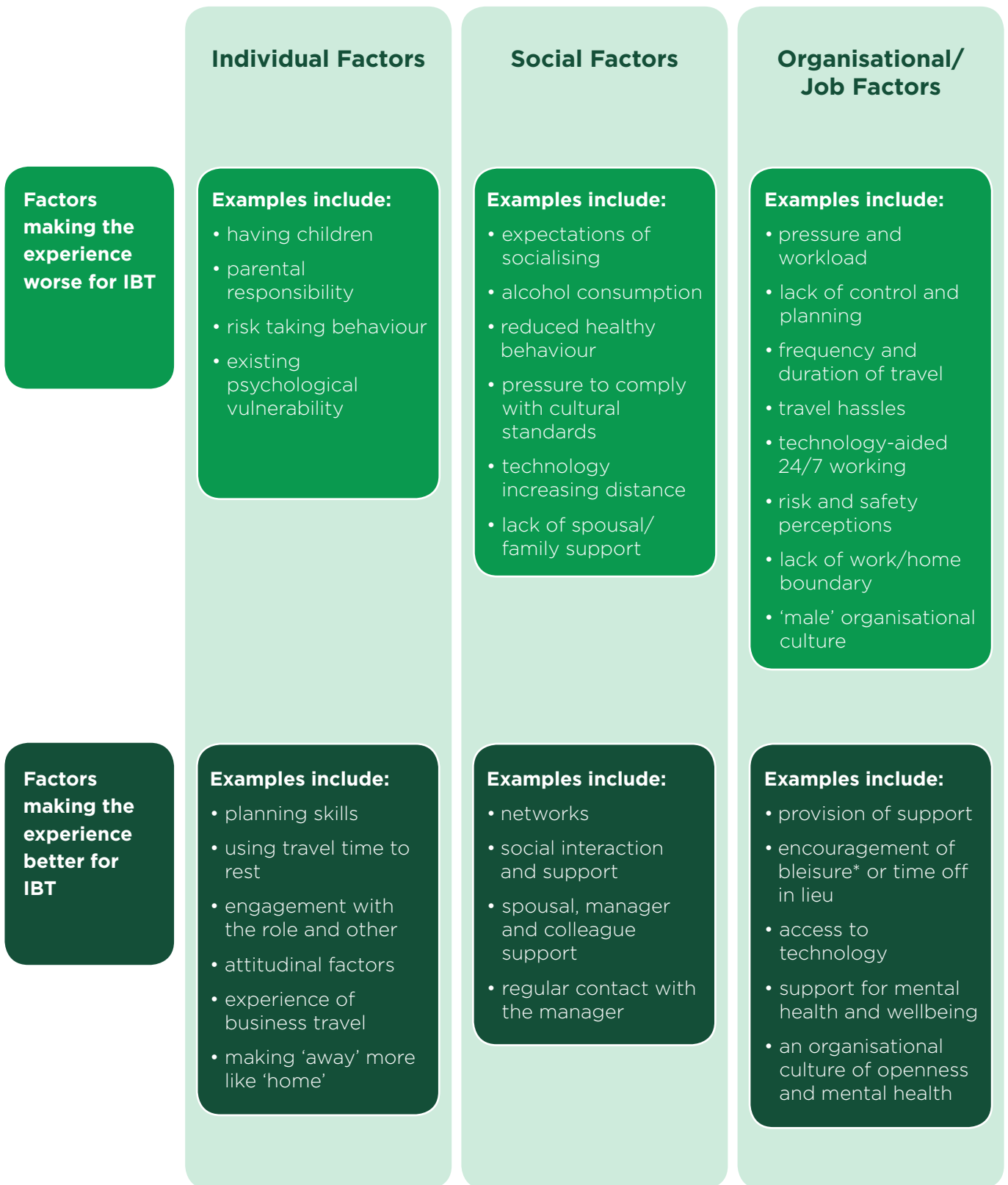
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FACTORS IMPACTING ON THE EXPERIENCE OF **BUSINESS TRAVEL**

	Individual Factors	**Social Factors**	**Organisational/ Job Factors**

Factors making the experience worse for IBT

Examples include:	**Examples include:**	**Examples include:**
• having children	• expectations of socialising	• pressure and workload
• parental responsibility	• alcohol consumption	• lack of control and planning
• risk taking behaviour	• reduced healthy behaviour	• frequency and duration of travel
• existing psychological vulnerability	• pressure to comply with cultural standards	• travel hassles
	• technology increasing distance	• technology-aided 24/7 working
	• lack of spousal/ family support	• risk and safety perceptions
		• lack of work/home boundary
		• 'male' organisational culture

Factors making the experience better for IBT

Examples include:	**Examples include:**	**Examples include:**
• planning skills	• networks	• provision of support
• using travel time to rest	• social interaction and support	• encouragement of bleisure* or time off in lieu
• engagement with the role and other	• spousal, manager and colleague support	• access to technology
• attitudinal factors	• regular contact with the manager	• support for mental health and wellbeing
• experience of business travel		• an organisational culture of openness and mental health
• making 'away' more like 'home'		

*Bleisure time refers to extending the business trip to enable IBTs to spend some leisure time in their destination, typically before or after their work duties are completed.

HOW COMMON ARE THESE PSYCHOLOGICAL OUTCOMES FOR IBTS?

The findings from Stage One and Two were used to create the Stage Three survey. The data gathered in Stage Three of the project corroborated and built on the findings from the literature review and interviews. Key findings were as follows:

EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES:

- 41% of business travellers saw their mood decrease, 31% were emotionally exhausted and 45% stress increase due to business travel. 1 in 4 respondents displayed more than usual levels of depression and anxiety. These figures were higher for those with pre-existing mental health diagnoses

- 78% worked more than usual when travelling

- 37% of business travellers did not feel they had sufficient choice and control over their business travel

- 15% felt more unsafe when travelling

- There were positives: 67% were engaged with their jobs, 75% saw business travel as an opportunity for adventure and exploration, and 59% saw business travel as an opportunity to enjoy freedom from home life. These positive outcomes were particularly prevalent in younger/less experienced workers.

RISK BEHAVIOURS:

- 1 in 3 IBTs were more likely to visit clubs and bars, and engage in certain risky behaviours such as eating in unhygienic places, travelling to unsafe areas and travelling without adequate protection

- 1 in 10 were more likely on business trips to start a sexual relationship with a new partner

- 2% were more likely to have unprotected sex whilst away

- 2% were more likely to use drugs when away

- These risk behaviours were more prominent in males, in those with less parental responsibility and in younger IBTs.

FAMILY/SOCIAL AND WORK LIFE OUTCOMES:

- 67% of IBTs experienced work family conflict with around 3⁄4 feeling it was difficult to fulfil family obligations and needing to make changes to family activities as a result of business travel

- 81% had less connection with the family and friends than usual

- 39% did not have sufficient work-life balance

PSYCHOSOCIAL/PSYCHOSOMATIC OUTCOMES:

- Approximately half drank more alcohol when away than at home

- 3/4 were less likely to eat well, and took less exercise when away

- 3/4 said that their quality of sleep suffered as a result of international business travel.

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT THE OVERALL OUTCOME FOR A BUSINESS TRAVELLER?

Overall, the results of this research indicate not only that international business travel is associated with a range of negative and potentially damaging outcomes (together with some positive outcomes) but also that there are a number of clear factors to which this can be attributed.

Many of these are factors that need to be addressed at the organisational level, for example, through policies and practices, culture, support services, job design, and practical arrangements. Some of the factors will need to be addressed by the IBTs manager, for example, through monitoring and support they provide for IBT team members. And some of these factors are ones that IBTs can address for themselves, in many cases with support from their manager, colleagues, family and friends, for example through planning, preventive coping, healthy activities, seeking support and adopting a balanced perspective.

WHAT CAN ORGANISATIONS AND EMPLOYERS DO TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF THEIR IBTS?

Based on the findings from all three research phases, we have developed a series of recommendations for how you can keep your international business traveller employees healthy, happy and engaged – both at work and away. These recommendations are grouped into five categories: i) Policy and practice; ii) Organisational culture; iii) Support services, iv) Job design and v) Practical arrangements.

To help you to reflect on and implement these recommendations, please see the checklist for organisations and employers produced as part of this research project. This can be downloaded at <production team please add in this link>. Please note, there is also a series of recommendations for managers, and ones for the IBTs themselves that may be useful in ensuring these recommendations are appropriately cascaded throughout the organisation.

SUMMARY OF FACTORS	EXAMPLE
POLICY AND PRACTICE	
Create clear policies, behavioural expectations and practices around business travel that encompass individual differences	These should include policies covering risky behaviour and practices. The recommendation is that these policies are developed in collaboration with various stakeholders in the organisation to ensure that they address and tackle the real issues (such as OH, HR, Travel Team, Health and Safety, Procurement). It is important that any policy or practice created is not 'a one size fits all' in the recognition that business travel affects individuals differently depending on many aspects of their self.
Consider the role of the IBT in selection	Recognise the impact of international business travel when selecting new employees into the role. Provide realistic role explanations to the new IBT and ensure that behavioural expectations are clearly articulated. Consider personal characteristics (such as enjoying unpredictability, sense of adventure, global orientation, enjoyment of meeting new people) which may decrease the likelihood of negative outcomes and therefore increase the resilience of the IBT.
Monitor workload of IBTs	The vast majority of IBTs work significantly longer hours when away on business. Consider the use of an IT monitoring system for the number of days travelling and checks to be put in place to prevent excessive travel and excessively long hours during travel periods.
Monitor mental health of your IBT population	It is recommended that mental health monitoring is included in pre- and post-travel health checks, in addition to the physical checks. This will encourage making mental health discussions to become part of the 'normal' conversation within the organisation. Ensure that any feedback surveys post trip include not just logistics but also feedback on mental health and psychological experience.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Build an organisational restitution culture	Encourage IBTs to build recovery and rest into their schedule whilst on the trip and after returning. Enable flexible work schedules so that IBTs can recover – which may include allowing them to work from home, take prolonged weekends and book bleisure time.
Create an organisational culture of openness around mental health	The aim of this recommendation is to reduce the stigma around mental health and create a culture where employees feel that the organisation cares about their wellbeing, and where they feel safe to disclose existing conditions, and talk to colleagues and managers if they are suffering from or at risk of mental health issues.

SUPPORT SERVICE

Review your organisational support resources to IBTs	This research has indicated a wide range of resources (such as high quality hotel, access to business class travel/lounges, real time information) that can protect the IBT against the negative outcomes of business travel. In addition, consider adding mental health support such as EAPs and wellness programmes to your offering. Use the checklist to identify any resources that you may not currently offer.
Provide training and education to increase understanding of the impact of international business travel on health and family life	Training and education should be aimed at 3 groups: 1) the IBTs themselves to enable them to develop self management and preventive coping strategies, focused on both mental health and time management 2) Managers of IBTs in order that they can better support IBTs and recognise the vulnerabilities of some 3) The wider employee population in order that they can recognise and respect the impact of travel on the IBT; and be mindful of their workload and pressure
Create local support networks	Focus on building infrastructure to enable there to be local support networks for IBTs when away. Consider the creation of an internal 'TripAdvisor' for travellers within the organisation to share experiences such as restaurants and places to go.

JOB DESIGN

Provide control and flexibility to IBTs	Enable IBTs to control their travel schedules as far as possible – the more choices, the more it is likely that balance will be achieved between work and home.
Focus on building employee engagement in IBTs	Engagement was found to be one of the key protective factors against negative health outcomes for IBTs; therefore, initiatives to improve engagement are important. These could include travel benefits, but are likely to be more effective if the focus is upon improving the quality of the IBT's role, the way IBTs are managed and their progression and development prospects.

PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENT

Choose and organise hotels which support health promoting behaviours	Research demonstrates that the majority of IBTs reduce their exercise and consumption of healthy food when abroad – but that these two things can protect an IBT against negative mental health outcomes. Ensure that hotels where IBTs are placed enable health promoting behaviours such as having a gym and/or pool, and a range of health food choices.
Make the trip as seamless as possible for the IBT	Aim to make the travel process as simple as possible for the IBT by arranging travel including transfers and by providing the IBT (and potentially the family of the IBT) with a checklist of everything they need.
Enable as much access to technology as possible	Ensure that IBTs have access to the best and fastest technology and consider providing personal calls free whilst IBTs are away.
Demonstrate appreciation for the IBT's spouse and family	Recognise the impact on the wider family/social unit resulting from the IBT role. Demonstrate appreciation for this by providing the spouse/family with gift vouchers, and offer payment for extra childcare costs incurred. Provide spouse/family with information and contact details about the trip.

PLANNING AND COPING TOOL

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELLERS HEALTHY, HAPPY AND ENGAGED AT HOME AND AWAY

WHY IS PLANNING FOR MY BUSINESS TRIP IMPORTANT?

As an international business traveller, there will be times when you are away from your family, friends and colleagues at work. When you are on business trips (or about to go on one), you might have less control over things at work or in your private life than you would normally do; for instance, what happens if there is an unexpected crisis within your team back at the office or if your children get ill.

Taking a pro-active approach, by planning for potential events, could help you by making such events less likely to happen, and/or by mitigating the impact of the events if they do occur. These events are not necessarily adverse or serious, but are anything that might cause you to more pressure and distress whilst away.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL?

This tool aims to help you to plan for the things that could go wrong, or things that you anticipate might become challenging, whilst you are away. This process is called preventive coping or planning. The different sections of the tool encourage you to consider preventive planning in different areas of your life. You will find three sheets: one for the trip itself; one regarding your work and colleagues back at the office; and one regarding your family and friends.

Each trip and situation is different, so we would recommend that you complete the sheets with reference to your next business trip; and we would recommend that you go through this process for each trip you go on.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

When you have completed your Preventive Planning sheets, it would be a great idea to share them with your manager, colleagues and friends/family in order that they can talk through your ideas with you, offer alternative suggestions you may not have considered and support you in ensuring the plans are put in place.

YOUR TRIP

Important note: When completing this sheet, please think and respond with reference to your next business trip. We would recommend that you go through this process for every international business trip.

PLANNING SHEET REGARDING YOUR TRIP

1. Based on your previous experience with business travel, and your knowledge of this particular destination and assignment, what might happen/go wrong when you are on this business trip? Please list as many issues as possible and consider situations at the destinations rather than at home.

Examples could include a dangerous/high risk assignment, not getting adequate sleep, poor communications/technology meaning it is difficult to keep in contact with home, lack of knowledge of safe areas, lack of opportunity for healthy eating.

2a. What can you put in place now to mitigate that risk/prevent these from happening?

2b. What would support you in this? For instance systems, tools, resources, manager

3a. Are there any potential risks that you have identified that you cannot mitigate against or prevent from happening?

3b. Are there any resources you do not currently have which would enable you to mitigate or prevent the risks identified in 3a.? What support needs do you have? For instance systems, tools, resource, manager

YOUR WORK AND COLLEAGUES BACK AT THE OFFICE

Important note: When completing this sheet, please think and respond with references to your next business trip. We would recommend that you go through this process for every international business trip.

PLANNING SHEET REGARDING YOUR WORK AND COLLEAGUES BACK AT THE OFFICE

1. Based on your previous experience with business travel, and your knowledge of this particular destination and assignment (for length of time away, intensity of your schedule), what might happen/go wrong with your work and colleagues when you are on this business trip? Please list as many as possible and consider situations at home with your work, team and colleagues

Examples could include work not getting done and piling up for your return, an unexpected client situation/event, key team members falling ill, an unexpected request from the senior management team

2a. What can you put in place now to mitigate that risk/prevent these from happening?

2b. What would support you in this? For instance systems, tools, resources, manager

3a. Are there any potential risks that you have identified that you cannot mitigate against or prevent from happening?

3b. Are there any resources you do not currently have which would enable you to mitigate or prevent the risks identified in 3a.? What support needs do you have? For instance systems, tools, resource, manager

YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Important note: When completing this sheet, please think and respond with references to your next business trip. We would recommend that you go through this process for every international business trip.

PLANNING SHEET REGARDING YOUR FAMILY/FRIENDS

1.Based on your previous experience with business travel, and your knowledge of this particular destination and assignment (for instance time zone, length of time away), what might happen/go wrong in terms of your family/friends or relationship with them when you are on this business trip – or as a result of this trip? Please list as many as possible and consider situations at home with your family and friends

Examples could include conflict with your spouse, missing key family events, childcare problems, children getting sick and being unable to attend school, lack of communication with friends and Family

2a. What can you put in place now to mitigate that risk/prevent these from happening?

2b. What would support you in this? For instance systems, tools, resources, manager

3a. Are there any potential risks that you have identified that you cannot mitigate against or prevent from happening?

3b. Are there any resources you do not currently have which would enable you to mitigate or prevent the risks identified in 3a.? What support needs do you have? For instance systems, tools, resource, manager

We are most grateful for the support from all the participating organisations and individuals who were involved in this research.