

BEST PRACTICES, Controller's Office - Travel

Title: Audit Expense Reports # 66

Source: Book by Steven M. Bragg **Co Area:**

Addl Info: [Accounting Best Practices - Chpt 3, pg 38 - Contact Dianne Parkerson, 561 297-3946](#)

Abstract: The book suggests that the cost/benefit of the time and effort expended in checking/auditing expense reports is not justified. Rather than checking each line, a sample be reviewed for problems or inaccuracies. If necessary certain employees or types or expenses could be flagged. It also suggests this be done by the Internal Auditors

Accounting Best Practices - 3-14, page 39 - continues on to suggest that the expense reimbursement be automated using a customized "smart" computer program. It flags items that require supporting documentation or may be troublesome.

Accounting Best Practices - 3-16, page 42 - suggests that a program be set to check items - was correct airline used, or were meals/hotels within time frame of travel or conference. Checks the validity of expenses.

Accounting Best Practices - 3-17, page 43 - submit reports by e-mail.

Title: Transmit Expense Reports by E-Mail # 69

Source: Book by Steven M. Bragg **Co Area:**

Addl Info: [Accounting Best Practices - 17, pg 43 - Contact Dianne Parkerson, 561 297-3946](#)

Abstract: If we have a fully operational on-line travel reimbursement, then this suggestion can be skipped - if we don't, contact Dianne Parkerson, 7-3946

Title: Eliminate Cash Advances for Employee Travel # 89

Source: Book by Steven M. Bragg **Co Area:**

Addl Info: [Accounting Best Practices - 3-15, pg 22 - Contact Dianne Parkerson, 561 297-3946](#)

Abstract: Many employees with few funds on hand will come to accounts payable asking for cash advances so they can go on company trips. By doing so, the department may be handing over more cash than the employee really needs, which can make it difficult to collect any unspent cash. In addition, employees who have already been paid for their expenditures have no incentive to submit an expense report, especially when the report may reveal that they must pay some of the original advance back to the company. The usual result is a prolonged process of asking employees for expense reports, while the amount of the original advance remains, incorrectly, on the accounting books as a prepaid asset.

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Title: Link Travel Policies to an Automated Expense Reporting System # 90

Source: Book by Steven M. Bragg

Co Area:

Addl Info: [Accounting Best Practices - 3-16, pg 42 - Contact Dianne Parkerson, 561 297-3946](#)

Abstract: The typical set of travel policies used by a company is quite detailed - and accounts payable staff has little time to review prohibited expenses. In addition it may be hard for the staff to keep up with policy changes. Problems can be eliminated by converting the travel policies into rules that can be used by a computer to automatically spot problems with expense reports that have been submitted through an automated expense reporting system.

For example, input from a corporate travel card into an automated expense reporting system can tell if an airfare is for a first-class seat, which may be prohibited by company travel policy. If the first-class purchase can be set up as a flagged field, then the computer system can automatically spot this issue and either note it on a report or (more proactively) send an e-mail to the appropriate person, who makes note of the issue. Examples of other rule violations are to verify that the correct airline was used (since there may be a bulk-purchase agreement in place) and that restaurant bills were actually incurred during the period spanned by a business trip (rather than before or after, which would be suspicious). However, this sort of early warning system can be quite expensive to create. There are no standard software packages that perform this task, so the programming staff must be called on to convert policies into rules that can be understood by the computer system, and then set up an interface between the rules database and the expense report database that will spot rule violations. In short, this can be an expensive option to install, and so should only be considered if there is a clear likelihood that there will be significant resulting cost savings.

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Title: Accounts Payable Best Practices - Travel and Entertainment # 363

Source: Book by Mary S. Schaeffer **Co Area:**

Addl Info: [Book Available from Edwin Bommel or at FAU Library HF 5681.A27 S3 2004](#)

Abstract: This appears to be a very good book. Each section gives background information, best practices, almost best practices, reality checks, worst practices and a case study.

Chapter 6 Travel and Entertainment
Formal Policy
Cash Advances
T&E Report Form
Verifying Data
Handling Receipts
Reservations
Reimbursing Employees
Unused Tickets
Case Study: Making the Most of Direct Deposit
Case Study: TransUnion's Successful Low-Tech, Low-Budget T&E Solution
Case Study: Follow IBM's Lead: 21 Steps to an Award-Winning T&E Process
Case Study: How Zurich America Developed Its Own Electronic T&E Report

Title: Buying Airfare: Best Practices # 399

Source: University of California Berkeley & UC San Diego **Co Area:**

Addl Info: <http://controller.berkeley.edu/travel/Air/BestPracticesBuyAirfare.htm>

Abstract: Costs for UCB business travel must be contained as much as possible. Use this guide to buy the best fares, avoid high service fees, take advantage of state fares, and discern the advantages and disadvantages of booking on the Internet.

University of California San Diego also has an excellent site with a check list on this topic.
http://blink.ucsd.edu/Blink/External/Topics/How_To/0,1260,12394,00.html?coming_from=Content

(I would like to see are a site with PM's and links to various policies and procedures such as the one in this website.)

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Title: Electronic Submission and Processing of Travel Authorization Requests # 615
Source: Georgia Institute of Technology **Co Area:**
Addl Info: <http://www.orgdev.gatech.edu/bp/gtbor/2006TravelAuthorizationRequests.ppt>
Abstract: View PowerPoint presentation

Title: Is This Trip Really Necessary? # 856
Source: Inside Higher Ed **Co Area:**
Addl Info: <http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2007/11/26/appleby>
Abstract: The World War II slogan, "Is this trip necessary?," should be revived for all Americans now that we know the disastrous effects of air travel on global warming. Just as patriotic Americans then cut back on unnecessary trips, so should we now limit ours.

Such a commitment should come from nearly all organizations and individuals, but would be especially appropriate for American colleges and universities because they have produced much of the research demonstrating the threat posed by global warming. Yet colleges and universities contribute significantly to the burden of travel with their conference-going, yearly recruitment, and fund-raising activities.

Title: Claim Rewards: How the University of Arkansas' Electronic Travel Claim Pays Off For Everyone # 903
Source: University of Arkansas **Co Area:**
Addl Info: http://www.sacubo.org/sacubo_resources/best_practices/2008.html
Abstract: An electronic travel claim developed by the University of Arkansas has replaced the cumbersome excel spreadsheet process. This new electronic travel claim alleviates dual entry of data by populating the claim with information already entered from the original request to travel. This process also brought together all of the various travel payments made by the University, such travel related purchase orders and administrative travel card charges. The travel claim may be created via the administrative system or the web.

Additionally, we were able to incorporate state and university travel regulations within the travel claim to aid in validating information prior to its submission for electronic signatures of appropriate personnel.

This new process also allowed us to incorporate the use of a traveler travel card (TCard) for athletic coaches and other frequent travelers. The traveler TCard allows our frequent travelers to charge all meals (including team meals), hotels, car rentals, and miscellaneous items on a University paid credit card which alleviates using their own personal credit card or carrying large amounts of cash, in the instances of group travel.

A checklist is also generated that instructs the user what receipts are required to be attached and sent with the hardcopy of the travel claim to the Travel Office for processing.

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Title:	CSU Travel & Expense Best Practice Initiative	#	934
Source:	California State University	Co Area:	
Addl Info:	http://www.calstate.edu/FinancialServices/travelproject/documents/20080721_Future_State_Design_Validation.ppt		
Abstract:	Large PowerPoint presentation on automating their travel operations using PeopleSoft.		

Title:	Travel Best Practices	#	995
Source:	University of Pennsylvania.	Co Area:	Purchasing Department
Addl Info:	http://travel.upenn.edu/travel/travel-best-practices/		
Abstract:	3 Best Practices relating to traveling on the pCard.		

Title:	Boston College Travel Program Best Practices	#	997
Source:	Boston College	Co Area:	
Addl Info:	http://www.bc.edu/offices/travel/meta-elements/pdf/BC_Travel_Program_Be1.pdf		
Abstract:	Handy two page file with tips, FAQ's Phone #s, etc related to travel.		

Title:	Travel and Conference Best Practices	#	1016
Source:	University of Rochester	Co Area:	
Addl Info:	http://www.rochester.edu/adminfinance/audit/travel.doc		
Abstract:	File covers - Travel Expenses Airline Tickets Lodging Expenses Mileage and Gasoline Expense Food Expense Foreign Currency Conversions Use of Travel and Conference Form (F – 3) H. Authorized Signers for Expenses		