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CAREER

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CENTRAL  
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INSTITUTE

KANSAS CITY, MO.

LESSON NO. 6

RESERVATIONS AND TICKETING



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# AIRLINE CAREER TRAINING

A comprehensive course of instruction designed for ambitious men and women seeking a successful career in the field of Air Transportation. Prepared and edited by members of the resident teaching staff, Airlines Training Division, Central Technical Institute.

## RESERVATIONS AND TICKETING

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## THE SECRET OF SUCCESS IS: KEEP EVERLASTINGLY AT IT

We all want to succeed, and many of us make New Years' resolutions to do a better job in the future. Often the secret of success is not in turning over a new leaf, but in finishing some jobs that we have already started.

An old Scotch gardener at Oxford was asked by an American tourist how he could grow such beautiful lawns. "It's verra simple," he replied. "Ye plow it good and deep, and disk and harrow and rake it; and ye plant it with fine grass seed, and then ye water and roll it and weed it and reseed it and water it and roll it and fertilize it, and ye keep on cutting, weeding, reseeding, watering, rolling and fertilizing. And, of course, you must start all this a long time back."

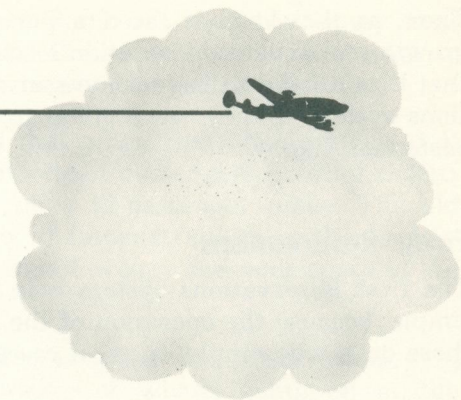
The gardener had learned how to be master in his field. As he pointed out, the success formula is simple: Keep everlastingly at it! Check up on a few masters and you will discover that he who said that genius is the capacity for making continuous effort knew what he was talking about.

The master goes on long after the ordinary man has stopped trying.

While employed as a mechanic at \$150 a month, Henry Ford spent his earnings in a barn back of his home working on a "Horseless Carriage." It took eight long years of patient work to develop a good engine. Edison conducted 50,000 experiments that were failures before he succeeded with a new storage battery.

Whatever other quality he may lack, there is one quality that is always present in the man who achieves things worthwhile. That is the persevering will and purpose to stand behind a task until it is done.

Often perserverance in the face of failure is all that stands between a man and success. Yes, the secret of success is to keep everlastingly at it.



## RESERVATIONS AND TICKETING

**N**OW we're at the point where we can take a look behind the scenes, where we'll explore two of the most interesting departments in modern commercial Aviation — Reservations and Ticketing.

Let's start by finding out just what these terms mean. Then we'll see briefly what's involved in each of these departments so that we'll wind up with a good idea of what Reservations and Ticketing are all about.

The material that we'll cover in our general discussion in this lesson will serve as necessary background material for our detailed treatment of these branches later in the course.

### *Two Big Definitions*

Here are a couple of basic definitions. Keep them in mind as you go through these lessons:

**Reservations** is the art of booking air travel space for a prospective passenger.

**Ticketing** is the art of supplying an airline passenger with the necessary forms to enable him to claim the space reserved for him.

### *How Reservations Started*

Best way to start telling you about modern Reservations procedures is to back-track a few years — back to the days when commercial flying was in its infancy. In those days, as you'll see, flying was remarkably uncomplicated.

For example, in those days, most Pilots owned the planes they flew. In addition to flying the plane, they were also their own servicemen,

refuelers, cargo men, ticket sellers, ticket takers and so on. They were everywhere at once.

Reservations?

Reservations as we know them were unheard of in those days. When a passenger wanted to make a flight, he went out to the field and dickered with the Pilot. If there was space on the plane, the passenger made his trip; if there wasn't room, the passenger was left behind.

First come, first served was the order of the day. Pilots had entirely too many other things to handle to bother about reserving space for passengers—few and far between as they were!

### *Pilot Needs Help*

As Aviation grew, however, the lot of the Pilot gradually improved. More and more people became interested in air travel and it soon became apparent that the Pilot would need some help. He couldn't handle all the ground duties and fly the plane too — he needed somebody to help him on the ground.

Thus the first ground assistants took their place in the organization of Aviation.

These first ground assistants were the forerunners of the vast system of ground personnel the airlines use today.

The number of air travelers grew constantly; so did the number of people required to handle the ground duties. Some were used to service and repair the plane between flights; some were put to work selling tickets and handling passengers. Others loaded baggage and cargo. The Pilot, at last, was left free to fly his airplane.

Then, as the Airlines faced a period of solid growth and expansion, aviation leaders realized that they'd have to have some sort of Reservations system if they were going to keep their customers happy.

### Early Reservations

The first Reservations system was necessarily simple, because the operation of the Airlines in those days was simple. In most cases, the early

handle all the Reservations for the west-east flights.

Simple procedure in those days.

### Reservations Need Arises

It's when the Airlines themselves began to cover more ground that it became obvious that a more efficient Reservations system would be necessary.

For example:



Here's a typical Airline Reservationist—alert, poised, highly skilled.

Airlines flew only between two cities — maybe two or three flights a day.

That meant, of course, that Reservations could be handled by two people — one at each end of the flight.

If a line were flying east-west, for example, one person at the eastern terminal could handle all the Reservations for the east-west flights. A second person at the western terminal could

Let's consider a little two-city airline, flying between cities A and B. Its route looks like this:



Reservationist A handled all requests for space on the east-west flights. If the airline's plane held twelve passengers, for example, only twelve seats were to be sold on each flight. When the plane was full, sales were stopped.

Reservationist B handled all reservations on the west-east flights. All she (or he) had to do was to sell twelve seats on each of her trips.

### Complications

But look what happens when that little airplane expands 50 miles in each direction and extends to two more cities. Now it looks like this:



Now let's see why a simple expansion like this would create additional problems in Reservations.

Reservationist B, not realizing how many seats Reservationist C had sold, sells nine seats to passengers who want to go from B to D.

That means that when the plane arrives at B there'll be nineteen passengers holding tickets for a flight on a 12-passenger plane. The old physical Law of Impenetrability applies here—two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time!

While all this is going on, Reservationist A, blithely unaware of what's going on at the other stations along the line of flight, is selling space from A to D at a furious rate. When the



There is lots of fun in Reservations. Here a Reservationist is rewarded for outstanding service by receiving free mid-morning coffee for a month.  
Photo courtesy National Airlines.



Let's say that we now have Reservationists at C, B, A and D, all booking Reservations on our airline's flights.

Reservationist C, on the western terminal, books ten seats to passengers who want to fly all the way to D.

plane arrives at A, there'll be another dozen disgruntled passengers.

Obviously, an airline couldn't treat its passengers that way — or they wouldn't be in business long! Some sort of control was necessary in this Reservations procedure.

## Organized Procedure Develops

That's the situation — exaggerated, of course — that led to the development of the original systems of Space Control in the Reservations procedure.

The first forms of Space Control took the shape of control offices located at strategic cities along an airline's routes. These control cities regulated the sale of space on all flights which originated in each city.

For example, TWA once operated Space Control offices in many cities along their routes; among them was an office in Los Angeles.

Let's take a minute now to see how the original system handled Space Control on a flight from Los Angeles to New York City.

When the Reservationist at Los Angeles received a call from a passenger who wanted to fly from Los Angeles to Chicago, she or he called the Space Control office in Los Angeles and the clerk issued Seat 6, let's say, to her passenger.

A few minutes later, a Reservationist at Cleveland, Ohio, might receive a request for space from Cleveland to New York City. Since the flight was originating in Los Angeles, the Cleveland Reservationist couldn't issue the space until she requested it from Los Angeles.

She'd send a message to Los Angeles to request the space; Los Angeles would issue the space — again, let's say Seat 6 — to Cleveland.

By this time, then, Seat 6 on this particular flight would be occupied from Los Angeles to Chicago and from Cleveland to New York City.

Just about this time, the Reservationist at Chicago might receive a request for space from Chicago to Cleveland. Again, the Chicago Reservationist couldn't issue the space herself; she had to contact Los Angeles by radio to request the space. Los Angeles would release the space to Chicago and thus Seat 6 would now be occupied for the entire journey from Los Angeles to New York City.

This system did a great deal to relieve the confusion in Reservations which had previously existed. Matter of fact, this system of Terminal Control is still used in isolated cases by certain airlines.

Opposed to this Terminal Control System is the Central Control System where the control office is located close to the geographical center of the airline's routes.

## Disadvantages

The big drawback in the Terminal Control System, you see, was the fact that it took time to request space from the controlling office. When a passenger made a reservation, he was never certain that the space would be available until the controlling office confirmed his reservation.

This system placed a heavy burden upon the Communications Department and, when slips occurred, the flight would be oversold — more passengers than seats.

The time lag between the request and the confirmation was an important element in the situation too. In many cases, prospective passengers were lost simply because it took too long to confirm a reservation.

## Automatic Sales

That's what led to the development of the Reservations System now in effect. It's known as "Automatic Sales," "Sell and Record," "Sell and Tell" and half-dozen other titles.

Here's how it works:

Each airline sets up a Space Control office for regulating space on its flights. In most cases, they try to locate that office as close as possible to the geographical center of the airline's routes. You'll see in a minute why this is important.

With the Automatic Sales System, Reservationists throughout the country sell space on flights until they're told by the Space Control office that the flight is sold out. That means that there's no time lost in confirming Reservations from the Space Control office.

## Control Charts

The Space Control office keeps charts on every flight their line flies. As soon as a sale is made, whether it be in New York, Los Angeles, Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, New Orleans, Miami, or wherever a Reservations Office exists, the sale can be recorded without any loss of time.

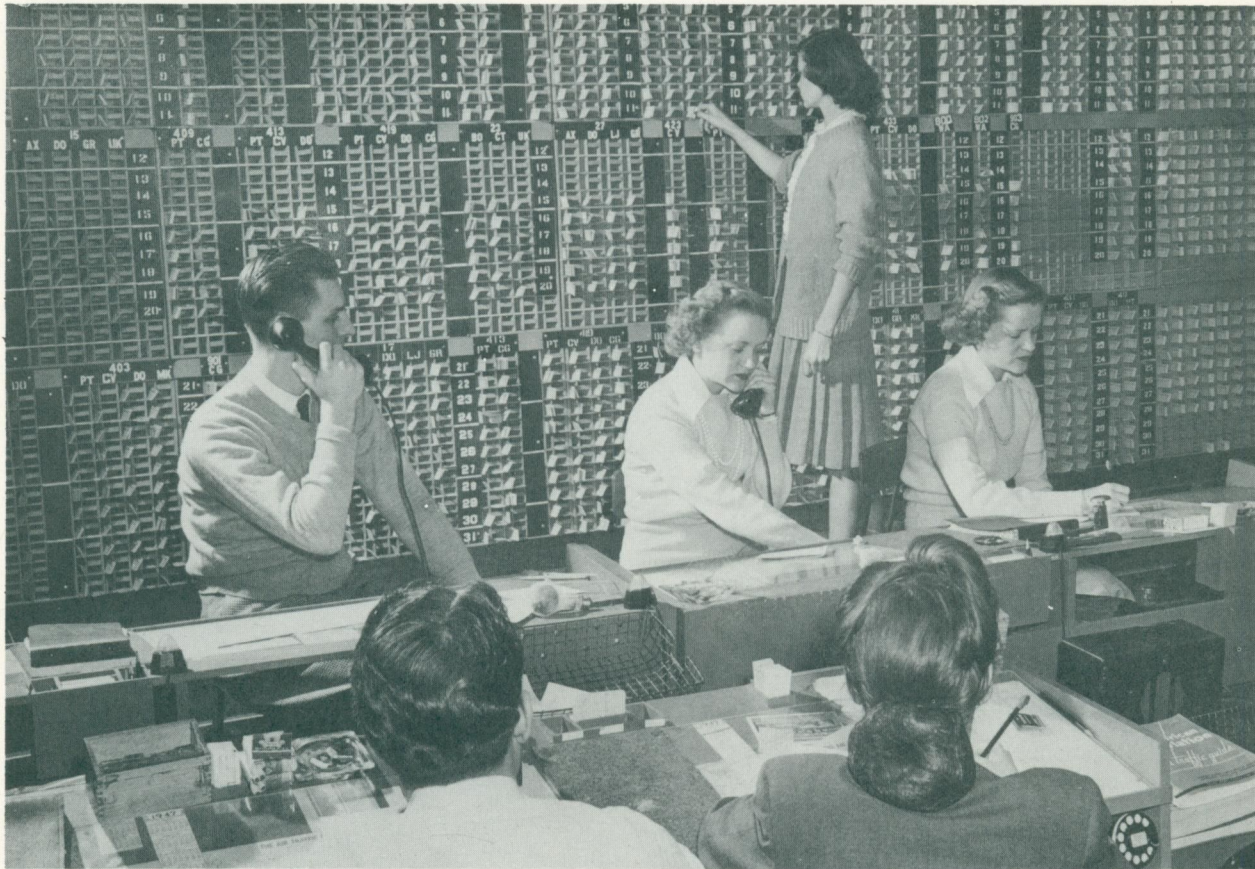
When the Reservationist sells the space, she immediately sends a teletype message to the

Space Control office to notify them that the space has been sold. A record of the sale is then made on the control charts for that particular flight.

When the plane's capacity has been almost reached, the Space Control office immediately sends a priority message to all stations, informing them to discontinue requesting space on that particular flight.

If you start with a major airline at a major airline city—such places as Kansas City, Los Angeles, New York City, Cleveland, Denver and the other important airline cities which are scattered throughout the United States—you'll probably be working in a large office with an average of fifty people as co-workers.

You'll like these people you'll be working with. You'll find them friendly, co-operative, con-



This is a section of a typical Reservations Control Office, showing Reservations Agents at work. Space Control board is in the background.

Photo courtesy Capital Airlines.

That's why a central location is desirable for the Space Control office—so that the request or stop-sales information can be relayed to all stations along the line as quickly as possible.

As we mentioned before, practically all the airlines now use this Automatic Sales System to control space on flights.

### **Let's Look!**

Now let's try to picture what your working day will be like when you actually go to work for the Airlines as a Reservationist.

genial; they'll be highly skilled in their jobs. In many cases, you'll find yourself working side by side with other Central graduates.

You'll usually work at one of the positions of a round table—or at a section of an elongated Reservations Table that may run the length of the room.

### **Your Tools**

Your tools will be your telephone, your Airlines Guide—for routes—your Tariff—for fares—your Ready Reference Guide, Space





Airline Reservationists wear the new lightweight telephone headsets so that both hands are free during telephone conversations.

Availability Charts, and Rail and Bus Guides. These important tools, which we'll study in detail later on, will be carefully indexed to make it easy for you to get the information you need from them.

You'll have a supply of Reservations Cards and an Atlas; you'll be well equipped with everything you need to do your job well.

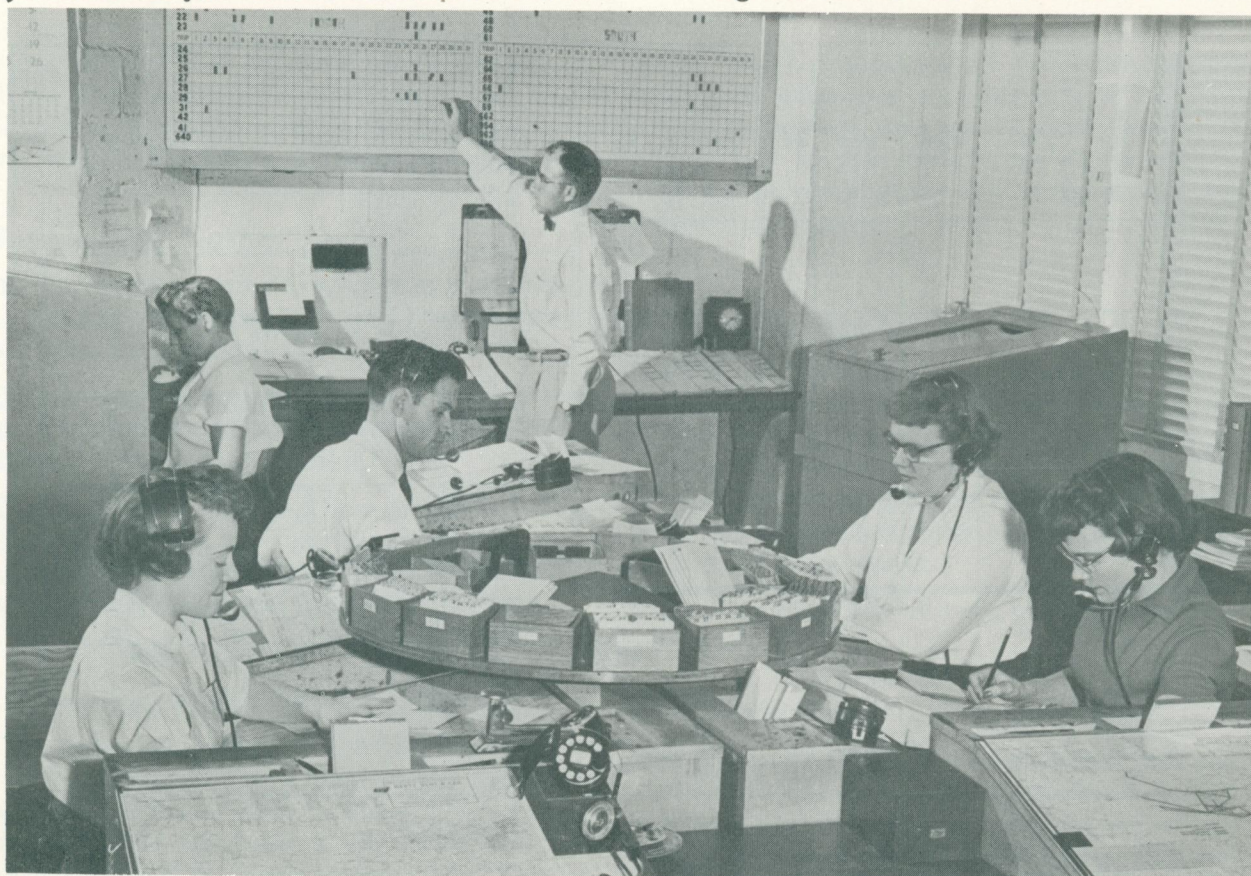
Your telephone will be your best friend while you're on the job. Most of the Airlines now use

just about the same way as calls from prospective passengers.

3. Calls from City Ticket Offices and Airport Ticket Offices.

4. Inter-office calls from other departments within your organization.

5. Calls from newspapers, public relations groups and radio stations requesting information about the arrival and



A typical reservations sales office for a smaller airline.  
Courtesy of Continental Airlines.

the lightweight head-sets that fit easily and comfortably on your head and leave both hands free during your telephone conversation.

Generally speaking, the telephone conversations you'll handle will fall into one of these categories:

1. Calls from prospective passengers who want information on Reservations. We'll discuss these in detail in a minute.
2. Calls from other airlines requesting connecting reservations. So far as procedure is concerned, you'll handle these

departure of planes carrying the celebrities who travel by air so consistently.

No matter what your calls are about—no matter where they're from—you'll soon learn to handle each type easily and capably.

### **Basic Ideas**

Naturally, the bulk of your calls will be from prospective passengers. For that reason, let's take a little time right now to outline some basic ideas for you to follow when you're handling them.



In telephone sales, which is substantially what you'll be doing when you deal with prospective passengers, the first rule to follow is to answer your phone promptly.

If you're slow in answering your incoming calls, you'll soon discover that there are plenty of competitors who are waiting to beat you to the draw. Your competition will be very happy to take this potential business away from you.

start by asking, "What time do you have a plane to so-and-so?"

### Pin-Point Your Prospect

Your line may have twenty flights a day to "so-and-so"; your first problem is to make your prospect more definite. You can accomplish this by asking the date desired and the time of day he prefers to leave.

T/L OR TKT								NBR			
STN	FLT	DTE	MONTH	CODE	NBR	FROM	TO	NAME	INITIALS		
								OTHER STN ARRIVAL INFO			
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								OTHER STN CTC INFO OR MISC			
								STN	TIME	AGT	DATE
								LOCAL ARRIVAL INFO			
								VIA	DATE	FROM	AGT
RES. OR HOTEL CTC	BUSINESS CTC			LIMO		REMARKS		CUSTOMER'S AGENT			
ROOM	EXT			IS/WAS ON							

TELEFLITE\* RESERVATIONS SALES ORDER \*REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.  
FORM RVS-1180 (5-55)  
PRINTED IN U.S.A.

This is the Reservations Card used by Central Airways.

The next step is to identify yourself promptly so that your caller will know that he has called the right number and that you're ready to serve him. If you're on a direct line, you can accomplish this by saying, "Central Airways, may we help you please?"

If your calls come through a switchboard, which is the common practice now, you can identify yourself simply by saying, "Reservations," because the switchboard operator will already have identified the airline.

In Reservations, you'll discover, the prospect calling for a reservation will almost invariably

When your prospect gives you a departure time that he prefers—early morning, late afternoon, and so on—you simply quote him your line's best schedule for that particular time. He'll usually want to know the time of arrival and fares; you supply this information quickly and accurately.

Now you go to work on him.

After you've supplied the information he's requested, ask your prospect, "May I make a reservation for you?"

If he says, "Yes," you're in!

But, suppose he says, "No!" Then there's a selling job to be done.

### **Find Out Why**

Usually the best procedure is to determine why your prospect isn't making the reservation and then take whatever steps are necessary to overcome the obstacle. This may involve suggesting alternate flights, alternate routes and so on.

If you're faced with an obstacle you can't overcome, suggest that he leave his name and address. Then send him a schedule of your line's flights so that when he does decide to travel by air, your company's name will be before him.

### **Reservations Cards**

If your prospect says, "Yes," then it is necessary to get certain information from him to record on your Reservations Card.

By this time Reservations Cards are fairly well standardized by all airlines, although they do differ in certain minor points.

The card we're showing here is that used by Central Airways, the "mythical" airline that's operated in Kansas City by the Airlines Training Division of Central Technical Institute.

### **Information You'll Need**

First thing you'll need on the "Res-Card" is, of course, your passenger's name — last name and initials. You'll also need to know where he can be reached at any hour in the event that you have to contact him before flight time. This includes his address, home and business telephone, his room number if he's staying at a hotel.

For the present, we won't go into all the entries on the Reservations Card because we'll explain them to you in detail when you're actually working with these cards later in the course. For now, let's agree that the Reservations Card contains all the information you need to book air space for your passenger.

Once you have the Reservations Card filled out completely, you confirm the arrangements for the flight, including details on how and when the passenger will pick up his ticket and get to the airport.

### **Time-Limit Reservations**

A passenger should be encouraged to purchase his ticket in advance. For this reason, Reservationists usually make it a point to advise a passenger about the location of the City Ticket Office and to ask him when it would be convenient for him to purchase his ticket. This procedure helps the airport Ticket Agent because he doesn't have to take the time to prepare tickets when passengers check in for the flight.

After you've completed all the arrangements with your passenger wait for him to hang up before cutting off your phone. It's a little mark of courtesy to your caller—one of those little points of service that discriminating airline passengers appreciate.

### **Forward to Space Control**

Soon as you've finished your conversation, contact the Space Control Office—by direct phone or teletype, depending on its location—and pass on the Reservations information to them. They record this information on their control charts and your caller is officially listed as a passenger on the flight he wants.

That completed, you sit back and wait for your next call.

### **It's Fascinating!**

The fascinating part of Reservations, you see, is the fact that every time your phone buzzes, you're confronted with a different set of circumstances—a different problem—a different personality. In one case, you might help newlyweds plan their honeymoon trip—another time you'll help a movie star get back to his studio in time to start a new picture—again, you might be called upon to get a famous statesman to an important parley.

That's why there's never a dull moment in Reservations—it's the backbone of modern aviation!

### **Let's Eavesdrop**

Before we leave this section, let's examine a typical Reservations conversation.

Let's say that you're a Reservationist for Central Airways, working in Chicago. You're sitting at your desk. Your phone rings.

You say: Reservations, may we help you please?

Prospect: When can I get a plane to Los Angeles on the twelfth? You do have planes to Los Angeles, don't you?

You say: Yes, sir, we have six flights daily to Los Angeles. (Write the date on the Reservations Card.) What time would be most convenient for you?

You say: When will you be returning, Mr. Jones?

Prospect: I'm not certain. Probably not for a couple of weeks.

You say: If you purchase a round-trip ticket, the return portion will be good until April 12. Getting your round-trip ticket here will save



Never a dull moment in Reservations work! Here's a big, comfortable Reservations Room in Seattle, Washington.  
Photo courtesy Northwest Airlines.

Prospect: Well, I guess the early morning would be best. What do you have then?

You say: We have an excellent flight departing at 9:05 AM and arriving in Los Angeles at 3:30 PM. (The control board shows that space is still available on that flight.) May I make a reservation for you?

Prospect: Yes, please.

You say: May I have your name please?

Prospect: My name is Jones—John J. Jones.

You say: Your phone number, Mr. Jones?

Prospect: Highland 3210.

you the inconvenience of purchasing a return ticket in Los Angeles, and in addition, there will be a savings of 5 per cent.

Prospect: Well, I'm not sure about my plans in Los Angeles.

You say: Mr. Jones, if your plans should change, our Los Angeles office will be glad to give you an immediate refund.

Prospect: Well, all right. I guess I'll take the round-trip ticket, then.

You say: Our City Ticket Office is located in the Stevens Hotel—when will it be convenient for you to purchase your ticket?

Prospect: I can stop by your City Ticket Office tomorrow afternoon.

You say: Our City Ticket Office is open until 6 PM and we will hold your Reservation until that time. Will you need limousine service to the airport, Mr. Jones?

Prospect: No—I'll drive my own car.

You say: Mr. Jones, we are holding a reservation for you on December 12, Flight 45 departing at 9:05 AM, arriving in Los Angeles at 3:30 PM. Will you please contact our Los Angeles office just as soon as you know when you'll be returning?

Prospect: Yes, I'll be glad to.

You say: Thank you for calling Central Airways.

Prospect: You're welcome. Good-by.

You say: Good-by. (Wait for him to hang up first.)

You immediately forward your reservation to the Space Control Office in Denver by teletype. Now Mr. Jones is all set for his trip to Los Angeles and you settle back to wait, expectantly, for your phone to ring again.

## **Airline Ticketing**

Now let's shift our attention to another fast-moving section of the Airlines industry and the employee who stands in the middle of it—the Airlines Ticket Sales Agent.

Before we start—just to refresh your memory—better check back to the beginning of this lesson and read again the definition of Ticketing we started from.

## **The Beginnings**

Here again, we'd better track back a few years to the beginnings of Commercial Aviation to determine how the position of Ticket Sales Agent came about. That'll give us a better concept of what Ticketing is all about, so that you'll have a well-rounded picture of Ticketing.

Like Reservations, Ticketing was unheard of in Aviation's early days—until Aviation grew to the point where the Pilot couldn't handle all the other duties. He had to have help on the ground.

## **First Duties**

The original Ticket Agent was installed primarily to issue tickets and collect money. The scarcity of passengers in those early days made this anything but a full-time job; that's why the original Ticket Sales Agent frequently doubled as Cargo Agent, Passenger Agent, Reservationist, Communicationist and whatever else had to be done.

When Aviation was in its infancy, you see, flying was such an extraordinary event that most passengers arrived at the airport hours ahead of departure time. That gave the Agent plenty of time to issue tickets and perform his other duties as well.

## **Look at This!**

To show you how the Ticket Sales Agent's job has become specialized during the years, consider these facts:

In 1926, the Airlines carried an average of 481 (count 'em!) passengers a month.

The latest statistics available show that the Airlines are presently carrying several million passengers a month!

You can tell simply by the phenomenal growth of passenger service during these years that the duties of the Ticket Sales Agent have grown correspondingly. That's what has elevated the Ticket Sales Agent from a general field helper to a very important position.

## **The Problem**

With air travel growing by leaps and bounds, more and more passengers crowded the airport office before flight time. Harried clerks were hard-pressed to issue tickets, collect money and get passengers ready to board the plane by flight time. The situation showed no signs of improvement.

Matter of fact, if anything, the confusion was growing worse. Flying became more and more routine; passengers took the liberty of waiting until the last possible moment before appearing at the airport. This, of course, threw an even heavier burden upon the Airport Ticket Sales Agent and caused many flight delays.

## The Solution

This congestion is what led eventually to the establishment of the City Ticket Office. That's where the City Ticket Sales Agent really came into his own.

The City Ticket Office, as it exists today, provides a valuable contribution to Airline traffic—a real service to the ever-growing number of Airline passengers.

## Location

The typical City Ticket Office is located in an easily accessible downtown spot—usually in a leading hotel—whenever possible, to take ad-

## What the City Ticket Office Has Done

The establishment of the City Ticket Office has accomplished certain notable achievements in the Airlines industry.

Perhaps most important, it has increased passenger traffic considerably by providing a convenient place for a prospect to obtain information and purchase tickets. You'll find that many prospective passengers who might not have the inclination to travel all the way to the airport to purchase a ticket will gladly stop in at the City Ticket Office.

In the second place, the City Ticket Office has helped immeasurably in removing the last-



The Chief Agent at St. Petersburg, Florida and two Ticket Sales Agents are shown in a smartly styled City Ticket Office. Photo courtesy National Airlines.



vantage of the transient public. These offices have to please a discriminating clientele; they're strikingly designed, tastefully furnished. They're ideal places to work!

minute congestion of passengers at the airport. We'll see in a minute how the City Ticket Sales Agent takes a lot of the detail work off the shoulders of the Airport Ticket Sales Agent.

Finally, the City Ticket Office provides the Airline with the locale and setting necessary to do a real selling job on prospective passengers. It's a pleasure for a prospect to drop in at a handsome City Ticket Office and place his travel problems in the hands of an attractive, capable Ticket Sales Agent.

### ***What It's All About***

Let's see now what Ticketing is all about. We'll start with the duties of the Airport Ticket Sales Agent—the employee who “mans” the ticket counter at the airport.

As you'd suspect, the primary duty of the Ticket Agent is to sell tickets. In that respect a thorough knowledge of all Ticketing procedures is necessary.

Later on in the course, we'll go into Ticketing in much more detail when we'll actually see and use the various ticket forms and coupons. For now, let's concentrate on the high spots.

### ***Tickets and Tariff***

The good Ticket Agent knows Ticketing. First of all he (or she) knows how to prepare forms for one-way trips, circle trips, open-jaw trips and round-trips.

Know what a circle trip is?

It's a flight whereby the passenger returns to the starting point by a different route. An open-jaw trip is a circle trip where a portion of the trip is made by some form of surface transportation.

Then, the Ticket Agent has to be able to use the Local and Joint Passenger Tariff. This is a sort of family Bible for all the Airlines. It lists the fares and regulations under which all the participating airlines operate.

That needs some explaining.

### ***The Air Transport Association***

Back in Aviation's early days, every airline operated independently of all the others. That meant that none of the airlines knew what the others were doing. Fares were different; regulations were different.

As a result of this, one airline couldn't make commitments for the others. When a passenger wanted to make an interline flight—remember

what an interline flight is?—the airline which booked him originally couldn't do any more than fix him up with a ticket for their own flights.

When the passenger reached the connecting point, he had to go through the complete Ticketing procedure again.

Obviously, a system like that was soon outdated in the swift progress of Aviation. That's what led to the organization of the Air Transport Association, an association of all the domestic airlines.

The purpose of the organization, you see, was to bring the individual airlines into closer cooperation by establishing set fares and uniform regulations to govern all the domestic airlines. They published the “Local and Joint Passenger Tariff” which contains the rules which govern all the airlines and the passengers who ride on them.

That's why the Tariff, as it's commonly called, is one of the principal tools of the Reservationist as well as the Ticket Sales Agent. Both have to know it intimately.

### ***What Else?***

In addition to the specialized knowledge required for Ticketing, the Ticket Sales Agent has to have a wide general knowledge of all the other phases of commercial Aviation. The public that travels by air wants to know a great deal about its flights, as we've seen already. They're immensely curious about the equipment in use, the capacity of the plane, the weather outlook, the cruising speed, altitude and so on.

The Ticket Sales Agent can't side-step these questions.

### ***Checking In Passengers***

One of the primary duties performed by Ticket Sales Agents at the airport is checking in passengers.

When a passenger reports to the airport Ticket Counter to check in for a flight, the Ticket Sales Agent checks with Reservations to make certain that the passenger holds necessary space. If everything is in order, the Ticket Sales Agent removes the appropriate flight coupon from the



passenger's ticket. The passenger's baggage is checked and claim checks are prepared for him to claim his baggage at the destination airport. The Ticket Agent then gives the passenger a ticket envelope which contains the remainder of his ticket as well as the baggage claim checks. On the outside of the envelope, he marks the number of the flight and the date. A passenger usually shows his ticket envelope when boarding a plane.

The above procedure is quite simple and takes very little time if the passenger has his ticket before he checks in for the flight. That's why most airlines encourage a passenger to purchase his ticket in advance.

On some Airlines, passengers who report to the City Ticket Office for limousine service are actually checked in at that office before departing for the airport. The limousine driver gives the necessary check-in data to the Airport Ticket Sales Agent upon arrival.

## **Baggage**

When baggage is checked through, the Airport Ticket Sales Agent issues claim checks—the stub is attached to each piece of luggage the passenger has. The normal process in handling baggage is to allow passengers to carry only small articles of personal luggage—brief cases, jewel boxes and so on. All other baggage must be checked through, principally because there simply isn't enough room in the cabin of most planes to allow passengers to carry large pieces of luggage with them.

There are exceptions, and the Martin and Convaire, for example, have baggage racks built in the rear of the passenger cabin so that passengers can handle their own baggage if they wish. The purpose of this arrangement, of course, is to avoid the delay in waiting for baggage to be unloaded at the plane's destination—another form of passenger convenience.

## **P. A. Announcements**

The Airport Ticket Sales Agent usually makes Public Address System announcements of arrivals and departures of the flights. The "P. A." is used to page passengers, to deliver messages and, in general, whenever it's needed.

## **The Diplomat**

One of the situations that call for all the Airport Ticket Sales Agent's tact and diplomacy is that which arises when a flight is delayed or cancelled after passengers have arrived at the field.

As we've seen, the Airlines have made tremendous strides in licking the problem of maintaining schedules in adverse weather conditions. Yet, we have to acknowledge the fact that there are times when the cancellation of a flight is simply unavoidable in the interest of safety. That means more to the Airlines than schedules.

In most cases, the cancellation will be made far enough in advance of departure time to notify passengers before they leave for the airport.

But—

When the cancellation occurs after the passengers have arrived at the airport, or at some intermediate station along the line of flight, the Airport Ticket Sales Agent really has to rise to the occasion.

## **Soothe Those Feelings**

The first problem, of course, is to soothe feelings. If you've ever been the victim of a cancellation, you know how a person feels when he's stranded after he's come all the way to the airport to board a plane or—even worse—when he's at some stop en route to his destination.

Naturally, at times like that, passengers aren't in the best of humor; that's why the Airport Ticket Sales Agent has to be diplomatic to soothe injured feelings by explaining intelligently why the cancellation is necessary and then taking action to preserve the good will of the passenger.

## **Alternate Transportation**

In some cases, this can be accomplished by arranging an alternate flight on a later plane. If the passenger can't wait for the weather, the Ticket Sales Agent might have to arrange for surface transportation to the passenger's destination—reservations as well as transportation to the station.



The Airport Ticket Counter now almost matches the City Ticket Office in style and comfort.  
Photo courtesy Western Air Lines.

## Hotel Accommodations

When a passenger will be detained overnight, the Ticket Sales Agent arranges hotel accommodations so that the passenger can spend the night comfortably. That arrangement also involves providing transportation to the hotel where the passenger will stay.

## Refunds

When cancellations occur, the general policy of the Airlines is to issue immediate refunds to those passengers who want them. That means that the Ticket Sales Agent will come in for some sustained action, since refunds must be made accurately and precisely—and quickly!

## Reservations, Too

As an Airport Ticket Sales Agent, you may be called upon to handle requests for Reservations for future air travel. The tools you'll use, again, are the Guides, the Tariff and Charts; then you'll notify your Reservations Department of the space you've booked.

Before you can accept a Reservation, however, you must contact the Space Control Office to

request the space unless you have Automatic Sales facilities at the airport.

## The Rule

Behind all these duties, there's one inflexible rule to guide you as an Airport Ticket Sales Agent. Make sure that everything you do shows off your company to advantage. You must remember that in the larger air terminals, your counter will be side by side with those of all the other lines which fly through there. You must provide a service that will be a credit to your line!

## Luxurious Setting

The City Ticket Sales Agent, as we've explained before, works in the luxurious City Ticket Office. Let's look in on the City Ticket Sales Agent at work to get a general idea of what goes on.

## First Duty

Primarily, of course, the City Ticket Sales Agent sells tickets. City Ticket Offices were established first of all to increase passenger sales by providing additional convenience to

prospective air travelers. That means that the City Ticket Sales Agent is basically a salesperson—but a highly talented, highly specialized one!

### *Issue Tickets*

Following right on the heels of the sales effort comes the duty of issuing tickets once the sale has been made. We're not going to get too deeply involved in the actual ticket forms you'll use because we're going to discuss them in complete detail a little later on.

For, now all we'll have to know is that each ticketing operation calls for certain highly specialized procedures—selecting the proper forms, filling them out accurately and legibly, issuing the completed ticket to the passenger, accepting money, making change and so on.

### *Information and Service*

In addition to these primary duties, the City Ticket Sales Agent also provides information and service to his prospects.

Information may range from simple questions about a flight of fifty miles to detailed information on a flight half-way around the world. Naturally, that means that you have to have a wealth of information about your line—and the others—right at your fingertips!

### *Limousine Service*

The City Ticket Sales Agent usually controls, to a large extent, the limousine service in operation between the city and the airport. Normally, the limousine starts at the City Ticket Sales Office and picks up passengers at strategic points along the way. It's up to the City Ticket Sales Agent to make certain that the car leaves the office in time to get to the airport with time to spare.

### *Check in Passengers*

In some cases, the City Ticket Sales Agent checks in passengers before they depart for the airport. This duty provides additional service to the passenger since checked-in passengers don't have to go through the procedure at the airport.



Here's a typical City Ticket Office — modern, spacious, luxurious.  
Photo courtesy United Air Lines.



A passenger list is prepared and sent to the airport via the limousine for completion there.

### **Wonderful Job!**

Basically, the City Ticket Sales Agent, working in a wonderful atmosphere, meeting interesting people every day, holds an enviable position in the Airlines organization.

### **What Does It Take?**

What's it take to be a successful Ticket Sales Agent? Let's check the necessary characteristics:

1. **Training.** All airlines require at least high school education for Ticket Sales Agents. Since the duties are specialized, the airlines prefer personnel who have specialized training—the kind of training you're receiving through these lessons.

2. **Previous Experience.** The right type of experience and background is desirable in Ticket Sales Agents. Especially valuable is experience involving public contact.

3. **Personality.** The successful Ticket Sales Agent has to have the kind of personality that goes with the work. Maybe you have it now—that's fine! If you don't, you'll have it before you complete this training!

4. **Emotional Stability.** As you can tell from our examination of Ticketing, the Ticket Sales Agent must be emotionally stable. The fast pace of the Airlines industry isn't the proper place for the person who's nervous, fidgety, easily excited.

5. **Attractive Appearance.** The same rules that apply to all Airlines positions are true in Ticketing. Most Airlines put Ticket Agents

in attractive, well tailored uniforms. Rules of personal care are especially true of Ticket Sales Agents who are constantly in the public gaze.

6. **Congeniality.** Air travel is known throughout the world as "Friendly Travel." It's a tradition founded basically on the congeniality of Airline employees, especially those who represent the Airlines industry to the public. You can easily tell why a friendly attitude toward the public is of great value to the Airlines; you'll appreciate this congenial attitude when you're actually doing Airlines work.

7. **Dignity.** Don't get the idea from what we've just discussed that Airline employees are undignified. As we've stressed throughout these lessons, air travelers are a discriminating group. They're quick to resent any familiarity on the part of Airline employees. The ideal employee—again, particularly true of Ticket Sales Agents—is the one who can combine cordiality and dignity in the right proportion.

Check yourself honestly on these characteristics. If you're not up to par on some of them, make a conscious effort to cultivate the characteristics you need. You'll find help in these lessons where we'll continue to give you pointers on how to develop these qualities.

Now, how do you like Reservations and Ticketing?

It's important, responsible work, you can be sure of that. But, it's also fascinating—highly rewarding.

Fascinating is the freshness, the newness of every day you're on the job—new people, new faces, new situations all the time.

Rewarding is the immense satisfaction you'll get from playing an important part in the vast field of Commercial Aviation.



From the very beginnings of commercial airline operation, the communications department has played a vital part, and it's just as important today. In your next lesson, you learn how it started . . . what it's like now . . . radiotelephone . . . teletype . . . private line fone . . . typical messages . . . what they mean . . . what it takes to succeed in Airline Communications.

## Notes and Memos

