



## FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS

As many of you know, I travel several weeks a month for Pinnacle Group. In each of the 25 cities we actively recruit in, I spend part of each week interviewing candidates, part of each week meeting with firms and usually one day attending a conference or networking event. I love it and it gets me out to spend time with as many of you as I can. That 30+ weeks of travel has given me many opportunities to hear the instructions of the flight crew and, like many of you, I take it for granted and usually bury my nose in my book or meeting notes thinking “I’ve heard it all before.” On this flight, I took note of exactly what the flight crew said and realized that those safety warnings have some particular relevance to the current turbulent market conditions we’re venturing in right now for the industry. While many of us may experience only a bump or two on our journey, knowing the safety tips can make the difference in being prepared.

1. **Carry on bags are limited to one plus a personal item.** It’s a good idea to pack light when you are making a career move. Ever notice how frustrated you can get when you see someone getting on the plane with overstuffed luggage and trying to cram it all into the overhead bin so they don’t have to wait at baggage claim? Did they really need to bring all that baggage with them? Either ditch the unnecessary “baggage” you’re toting or recognize that you’re going to have to endure the delay in getting to your destination. Travel light, it’s easier on you and your traveling companions at your new firm will appreciate that you brought just the essentials with you.
2. **Minimize unnecessary movement around the cabin to protect you and your fellow passengers from unexpected turbulence.** We are undoubtedly experiencing some unexpected turbulence in the industry and it’s hard to predict exactly where those rough patches will pop up. I think a conservative approach to career movement is like a safety belt. Sure you can walk around the airplane and stretch your legs, seeing who else is onboard, where they’re going and what they’re eating in the first class cabin, but when unexpected turbulence hits, those who are up from their seats are likely to be tossed about – potentially injuring their fellow passengers as well as themselves. Stretching your legs is fine, having a look around – good idea, but now is a good time to keep your seat belt fastened comfortably and to minimize wandering in your career.
3. **Exercise caution when opening the overhead bins, as items may have shifted during flight.** As soon as the plane lands and the fasten seat belt sign goes off, folks jump up and pop open the luggage bins, forgetting this easy warning.

Periodically, some unsuspecting passenger is bopped on the head by something that falls out of that bin, sometimes with a serious bonk on the head, making everyone around express concern and wonder why the guy whipped open the bin without heeding the warning. After all, no one could even get off the plane yet, so what was the big hurry? Likewise in your career right now, it would be sensible to exercise caution when rushing to get at your possessions – while a great opportunity may be in store, it's also possible that your opportunity to exit may be slightly delayed and that rush to get out could leave you with a bump on your head. Exercise caution.

4. **Take a moment to locate the emergency exit nearest you.** It's called an emergency exit, because if you need it you might not be able to spot it as quickly and you may feel a bit disoriented in your movements, it may even be dark. The reason they suggest you take a look around early is to orient yourself and to make sure you've created a visual memory when things appear normal to you. In the event things become suddenly difficult in your firm, it may be difficult to orient yourself to a dramatically different landscape and it will be easier for you to get your bearings if you have taken a look around in the calm of a pre-planned moment to think about "next steps."
  
5. **In the event of an emergency, those of you in the exit row may be called upon to assist crew and other passengers in safely exiting the airplane.** Those exit row seats sure have more legroom than the ones in the cramped middle of the plane. Seats like that open up in your career, sometimes, too – they feel like a pleasure, they give you some room to move around and they also come with a tacit agreement that you will be a helper to the folks around you in the event of an emergency. Remember that comfort has some responsibility and if you sense an impending emergency, be helpful to the people around you in making sure others can get a safe exit, too.
  
6. **In the event of power loss or sudden loss of cabin pressure, lights will appear along the floor and an oxygen mask may drop from the ceiling. Take a moment to secure your mask first and breathe normally.** You have to be calm and make sure that you get your oxygen mask on – you need to take care of your basic needs first because without it you can't be helpful to anyone else. Don't panic, get your bearings, look for instructions. Then, take a deep breath and get a sense of exactly what is going on around you so you can sort out what your next move needs to be before you assume that things are going down.

7. **Your seat is a flotation device, in the event of a water landing, put the straps over your arms and hug it to your chest.** I have to admit, I can't imagine using my seat as a flotation device, but we've all heard it a bunch of times when we've flown. Your network is your career flotation device and you will want to hug it to your chest and get your arms around it to help you keep afloat. That means making sure that you are always keeping in touch with your network of business and personal relationships so that they, too, can wrap their arms around you in the event you need to keep afloat in times of trouble.
  
8. **Have a safe flight, we know you have a choice and we appreciate your business.** I like this part of the flight where the crew says "Welcome to Pinnacle Group International. Whether this is your final destination or a port along the way, we have enjoyed serving you. We know you have a choice and we appreciate your business." Denise, Joe, Brant, Roy, Joe Tyler, Sarah, Aaron and all the ground crew at home really mean it – thanks for letting us serve you and we look forward to another safe trip with you again.

Kindly,  
Denise