

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT
EPISODE 051

Valuing Yourself and your Expertise

The 4 Step Plan to Assess Your Client, Your Value and Execute it for your future bookings

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Announcer: Welcome to Travel Agent Achievers, the place to learn how to grow your travel business and have fun with it. Join Roslyn and her guests, as they walk you through proven steps to a fulfilling and profitable business.

Ros: Hello, hello, hello there Travel Agent Achievers. Welcome back to another episode of our podcast. I'm your host, of course. And today, we're talking about self worth, your value, and how to assist your clients and work out what sort of business model is right for you moving forward.

So I get asked a lot whether, you know, as travel professionals, we should charge fees, how much should I charge? How do I present the fee? You know, what if clients don't like it? How can we continue on if we are not charging fees? And my friends? My answer to your question about whether you should charge? How do we value ourselves? How do we give that there is that you are the expert? I say this so much within our community that I hope it sinks in? And if you're listening to this today, let me know, do you hear that?

Say that you are the expert, may you deserve to be paid for the work that you do. There are billions and billions of people on this planet that would rather pay for a service, then have to navigate a process and the changes and all the rest of it, then, you know, they don't want to do that they don't want to have to do that themselves, they would much rather pay an expert. And we see this in so many other industries, right?

We see that so many other industries and people professionals are getting paid for the work that they do. Now we've seen over the last 18 months how incredibly tough it is by handing back commission. And we've worked for so many years, particularly here in Australia, on the model that as travel agents, travel professionals, that we will get paid when somebody travels.

And we will get paid by the service provider, not necessarily from a client. And some people have in fact



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been implementing phase for a long time now, but it hasn't been the norm. And what I've now seen and it crushes me is that there is so many great travel professionals globally that are leaving the industry, because it's getting too hard.

I hear it every day. And it crushes me because I think we've got so many great people out there that have done this for a long time. It's been their livelihood and their life. But they've just got to a point where it's too hard now. And so my goal with travel agent achievers is really just to change that. I want to ensure that if you're just starting out and starting your own travel business, awesome.

If you're a seasoned professional, and you've been in the industry for a long period of time, great. But no matter where you're at, I want you to understand that you are the expert, people come to you for your expertise. And moving forward. You absolutely deserve to have the travel business of your dreams, you deserve that. You deserve to build the business that you've always aspired to have.

So no matter where you're at this episode is for you. Because I'm talking about how do you even put a price on the value that you provide? These are some other questions? How do I get how do I even know what to price my services at rose? How do I weigh it? Where do I need to inform clients?

I'm really scared that they're going to say no. But that my friend is just part of my four step process in actually working out the value that you provide, and then how to get that system out to your clients in a really non intrusive, friendly and easy way. Before we get to that though, if you haven't already done so, I'd love to invite you to our lockdown series of copy connection and coaching.

This is an opportunity where we cling on a Friday morning here in Australia over the next six weeks. I believe we will be doing this at least it's The opportunity for you to come together with other travel professionals around the world and share where you're at, share your experience come together as a community.

Because right now more than ever, connection is so important. I want the you to feel supported, encouraged, have some positive people around you. Because what I see so much is that sometimes if one person's down, another person will be up, we might get a real kick in the guts if there's been a change or something's happened.

But I can guarantee within the Travel Agent Achievers community, that there are other people that have had a good day that can help bring you up. And so part of my lockdown series of Coffee Connection and Coaching is really that opportunity to connect and feel supported, to be surrounded by people that understand you and get you and that are going through the same things as you.

But also to throw in a little bit of coaching there too, to give you the opportunity to learn and implement



during this time. Now, this is all free. I just love to invite you and see you there.

So if you've got any questions, then you can jump onto the Travel Agent Achievers website, sign up for the reminders. And I look forward to seeing you every week live on Facebook, at least until the end of August at this stage. This is the community of travel professionals that are around the world. They are everywhere. But it's also a really safe place for you to get the support you need for your travel business.

And you know, I'm there as well. I love seeing you all and sharing my morning with you as well and bring my own coffee. You get to see me as I am. There is nothing made up about this session, it is just an opportunity to connect.

Okay, now let's dive into today's topic because there is plenty to cover. But I also want to make this session as easy and stress free for you as possible, I want to throw in a little bit of fun there for you. Now we do have a free resource to go along with this episode. So you can jump onto the Travel Agent Achievers website, click on the podcast section. And you'll find the resource that comes along with this episode right there for you as well. And you guys know I love giving you the tools, the tools to move forward.

So make sure you grab this one because it's definitely a goodie, we'll also add all of the details inside the Show Notes for this episode, so that you can easily link over to it as well. Okay, so this four step resource, and the four step plan that I have is a unique way for you to really look at what you do provide the value.

But I often get asked for how do you put a price on that? And how do you know when is the right time to implement? Or what's the right way that I should do it? What do I charge? What are the right things that I should charge for? But moving forward in this new day and age, I just want you to stop and do a gut check. Ask yourself this question. Can you continue on with the path that you've been going on? Over the last 12 months? Two years? Three years? check in with yourself? Can you go ahead and move forward over the next six months, 12 months, two years time doing exactly what you were doing? pre COVID? I know for me the answer is no.

Because now I have seen that not only are we the experts in what we do, but we are also risk management specialists. Right? Who would have ever thought we we could now name ourselves is that because when you have a client that checks in with your asks about travel, you have to know all the ins and outs exactly like you did before. But now with an extra layer added on to it.

But do you a gut check? Check in with yourself now and ask yourself that question. Can you continue on doing what you were doing before? Or does something need to change? If you say that something needs to change, then you are in the right place. Because I'm here to help you make those changes.



But also to do it in small bite sized chunks. I don't like for myself. My for me if I go to a conference or an event and it's all learning I can run away from those sorts of things with 10,000 notes, right? My I'm pretty old school at times where I just like to have a notebook and write things down, get the ideas out of my head. And for me, I now realise that you know what, moving forward we're going to do things smarter. more efficiently. We've already got great systems in our business, but we're going to do things even better. And our team have come together, we are all on board, we are going to make sure that we've got the right thing for the right clients at the right time.

So the question, no, do that go check? Do you want to change things? Or are you happy with where you're at? Hopefully, it's you want to make a change? So let's look at our four steps.

The first step is to ask yourself, What value do you bring to the table? What value do you provide for your clients? Now value is a big word, right? It's something that sometimes we can get stuck. And say all I know, I don't know, I kind of, they come to me, and they asked me about a trip, and I booked it for them. But I can guarantee that is not the only thing that you do. I want you to have a think about value from the point of view of what do you potentially do that others don't? and ask yourself this question.

Because I can assure you, you do so many different things, the value that you provide could be that you're on call, it could be that you are able to decipher complex itineraries, it could be that you do budget preparation with clients.

So when they come to you, they're looking for a trip that's worth \$10,000, but they don't have the budget for that. But you could work with them to come up with different ideas and convenience options, or, you know, a layby option or layaway or something like that you are the expert in this area. So how to think about what value you provide to your clients when they come to you. It could be that you understand unable to research and provide guidance on these requirements, currency exchanges, customs and immigration, you understand travel insurance, what is and what isn't included, you may have different suppliers that you can negotiate with. But any event, you might be able to negotiate extended payment deadlines.

There are so many things that you do whether it's, you know, keeping records of passport details, and you remind clients of that, because that's something that they forget, you may every step of your process, you might be able to say to your clients, but I have a specific step by step system that will ensure that no detail is best.

Now I remember and going back to my own days as a corporate traveller, a big thing for me. And it really seems quite petty now, and I'm embarrassed to admit it. With that, my frequent flyer number was often not included on my flights, right seems really petty. But as a corporate traveller, I wanted to ensure that when I got to the airport, I was able to skip queues, I was able to go straight into the lounge, I was



able to have my seat preference available, I had specific meals, like all these sorts of stuff, it might sound like minor details, but that can have a very big impact on your clients.

So think of all the different things that you provide to your clients as value. And then what I'd love you to do is write those down, write out all of the things that you think you do, as the very first step. Now, the second step is, once you've got this in your head, it can often bring a little bit of competence.

Or you can say to yourself, hey, I actually do a lot of things for my clients, and I don't necessarily charge them for it. Or you might say I do all of these things, and this expertise and the risk management and I show up for my clients and I provide all these different options. And I give them, you know, their itineraries in both a soft copy and hardcopy and they get access to an app. But there are a lot of things that you might do.

And you might feel as though this is really it gives you that energy boost gives you a little bit more competence. And I encourage you to start right there. So the second step is to then ask your clients now one of the easiest and non intrusive ways to ask for feedback and I use this word quite a bit is asking for feedback. Because it's not going out to your clients and say Hey, can I get a testimonial? The first thing the client thinks or a note for me if somebody says man an email say Hey, can I get a testimonial for the work that I did for you? I'm immediately feeling pressure.

o the word testimonial can also mean pressure For the end person, because they feel as though they need to write something good or give you the right answer that you also desire. But when you switch that to asking for feedback, it can break down barriers. And it can also get you the answers that you desire as well. So this is where we use a tool like Survey Monkey or Google Forms. For us, we use Google Forms because we're on the G Suite platform. And it's really easy for us. And it's also a simple tool to use. So we use Google Forms. And this is what you do. You set up a survey.

So a Google survey. And then with that, you put together a series of questions. Now, it doesn't have to be 30 different questions, and so many different things, long answers, and all the rest of it, it can be really short and sweet with maybe five or six questions, the things to ask, and this will all be part of the resource as well. asking your clients, how they feeling? How comfortable? Are they at the moment with travel opportunities? How are they feeling about travelling internet, travelling internationally when the borders open for them?

Now, I want you to think global on this scale. Or if you're not comfortable with that, it might be something that they're thinking about closer to home, and then have that sliding scale so you can understand where your clients are at blinding sliding scale that we use in this specific situation was, you know, number one? Nope, I definitely want to stay at home or number five, yep, get me on that plane.



So that's one of the first questions that we asked because we are asking for feedback, and also trying to get some interaction from a client as well. We also ask clients, you know, where's the first place that they want to travel to? Or where do they want to visit when they can travel again? Now, this invokes desire and excitement. And it also helps us from a feedback point of view, because we get to understand exactly what we should be asking our clients.

You know, what, what should we be sharing with them right now, should we be sharing, you know, information about local trips and exciting destinations closer to home, we might have insider knowledge that we can share. We just haven't up until now, because we didn't think that that's what they wanted. But we can also gather that information for future reference, when a special comes out. And a client is asked or specifically requested that this is the first destination that they want to go to bed, we can send them the information that they've initially given to us. Right.

So it is a great way to gather that feedback, but also provide insight into how your clients are feeling. And it's really non intrusive, because you're not on the phone with them and having to ask these questions in a really formalised manner. You are purely gathering their feedback in a way that might take them, you know, two or three minutes to get back to you. We also ask them about specific travel IDs. Did they know that we did? Or we booked certain experiences? This could be a yes or no question. We asked them about how often do they want to hear from us? Are they looking for what's happening in the travel industry sort of information? Are they looking for just something monthly, or whenever we feel as though there's something of value to share with them.

Now moving forward, we also asked for them, if they would be open to paying a small professional service fee for the insight, the knowledge, experience level of care, the clothes know that we have their back, and the peace of mind service that we offer when it comes to arranging arranging travel. Now this is a yes, no question. The reason why we have it is yet to know is because we don't want to maybe possibly we don't want those sorts of answers. We just want to know, are they happy to pay or not?

Now we then ask well, if you haven't answered Yes, or if you did answer no to the question Previously, we just want to know why is there any reason like how important is what we've done? You know, is it important that over the last 12 months, they've experienced, you know, certain issues, you know, what has happened that may have given the end that we don't necessarily want and we say you know, there's no judgement and the feedback that we received from there. And I wanted to share this specifically with you is that 99% of people say yes, moving forward, they would be open pay a small professional service fee.

Now I haven't told them how much it is. That could be \$500, but a small professional service fee for the amount of work and the hours and the information, the knowledge, the level of care, the experience that we deliver. Well, that could be anything. We're just asking them whether they yes or no 99% of people



said, Absolutely they would. The one that did it, and the one that came back and said, No, they wouldn't. When we said why, why did you say this? Like, why? If you answered No, why we'd love to hear thoughts around it. And they said, because I'm done. I've got to have my last travel, not intending to travel anymore. Perfect. You know, there's no hard feelings there. There are I'm not hurt in any way. I'm not upset, I haven't done anything wrong. That is all based around the client.

So there are several questions that you could ask, we're going to list these for you inside the free resource as well. To give you some ideas, I want you to mix it up and see what works for you as well. Because these are your ideal clients, right? These are the ideal clients that want to work with you. And it is one of the easiest and most unintrusive ways that you can ask for feedback. Now, the way where you even send this out, where you could be posting on social media, just asking for feedback, you don't need to make it big and long winded just say that you are looking for feedback on how to move forward in the travel industry, what are your clients thinking right now invite them to take the survey, you might add it as a quarter, or one of the topics inside your newsletter if you send those out.

And the other great one that I like is direct emails. Now this has a double whammy effect. Because you can make it really super short, you can just say to the client, hey, I'd love your feedback on where you sit at the moment with regards to travel, I'm trying to assess where our clients are at to know and understand how we want to move forward.

So I say it's a double whammy. Because it's a personalised email directly to your client, you could have that as a template and you just change the beginning and the end of your email doesn't matter. But you've got something there, you're inviting them to fill out the survey. But it's also on the other side a way for you to build connection, build that relationship, strengthen it, have that additional rapport there, and clients feel important. You might say rose, why would they ever feel important? You've asked for their feedback, you are involving them in your business.

And by offering a direct email to them, you're more than likely to get the responses there for your feedback and your surveys.

So this there are several different ways that you can get the information out or the questions out to your clients, you get to choose, it's your business to remember as I said, and by sending out a non intrusive survey, you are coming back to one step at a time you've checked in with the value that you provide. you've felt confident about that. Now you're asking for feedback. Now this is all done in a way that there's no pressure. Right?

So then step three, step three is what do we actually learn? How do any of these responses make you feel? Don't get upset? if somebody doesn't respond? You don't need to read them in the email, say, Hey, did you get this, just let it go. You know, you're not going to get responses from everyone. And we



have a fairly large database waiting get responses from everyone, I think we've got about a 20% response rate. But be you, it depends on how you send it out, you might have one on one conversations with clients, you might send it out as a direct email, the way that you position it may build get a better result than others.

Now, not only are you going to learn what your clients are thinking, how they're feeling, what they're looking forward to, you're gathering the insight here and the information that you can then use to help you build your business moving forward. You might as I said, find a special that's come up where a client has specifically said they wanted to travel to a destination, you can immediately send that to them based on their results and their feedback.

The other side of this is you can get the feedback given to you those warm and fuzzy messages. The clients have written something extra on the survey to tell you how much they appreciate the work that you've done, how they've always loved working with you. You can turn those into pieces of feedback or you know the more formal word testimonials that you can then use in your marketing materials moving forward, these sorts of things and the small snippets of information that you received from clients can really help other people understand what you do and the value that you provide as well.

So have a look at the feedback as it comes through. Don't take it personally, because everybody is just telling you how they feel. You might want them to travel with me, I want them to travel. But I know that they can't as well.

But you are there listening, you're listening and learning. And you are able to make informed decisions moving forward, whether this is around charging a fee, or whether it is around what you promote moving forward, totally up to you. But it is a golden opportunity.

So please don't miss that. Now, as we've said, with our own survey, there was one person that has said that they won't, don't want to be charged a fee, because they're not travelling anymore. But out of our achievers programme, and our mastermind students, there was 100%, absolutely charge me a fee. And I love how those guys have taken action and sent out asking for feedback from their clients. And trust me, the feedback that you get will blow your way, there will be things that come back to you that you don't even think of, and that you don't realise that you do because it comes so naturally to you. So gathering the feedback, right?

Getting those testimonials, that is step three, learning, learning what's actually happening, step four, coming up with the plan, to Now roll out your new fee structure, or your professional fee, or your fee for service, whatever it might be, or to increase it. So if you've been doing this for a long time, you might see this as an opportunity.



Now once you've sent out the survey, and you've written down all of the things that you do, you might see this as an opportunity to increase. How cool is that. And there are many different ways that you can actually implement a fee in your business.

Most Typically, what I have seen is a part of the booking. And if you work for a host provider, they may already have a fee for service booking fee, and the service fee attached to a flight or attached to an accommodation booking or attached to a specific service. So there could be a part of a booking.

And that's how you make up the fee for that, you know experience or that your clients book, there could be just one amount a per booking fee. Now making sure some people charge a per booking fee, and then take it off the booking when the client goes ahead, and this is one way to do it, there is no right or wrong.

You check in with your own gut, you go with what you are comfortable with. But this is just another alternative. So some people will say, Yep, no problem, it's \$500. And this comes off your booking fee when you walk. And it must be for this booking, obviously, you don't want to hold on to that money for six months, 12 months, 18 months don't track, it could be that you offer a professional beta service as well.

So you are straight up with those clients, whether this is existing clients or new clients and say, absolutely, this is the value that I provide, you can put a whole document together outlining the value that you provide why clients walk with you add in a testimonial feedback, you know, a photo and some feedback from a client goes wonders, because that is social proof as change your experience and expertise.

So professional paper service. And this is where a client will pay you a certain amount for doing the job. Again, you get to choose what the amount is, there is no right or wrong. It's what you feel comfortable with. And if you feel comfortable, initially with \$100, go with that. Work out test and measure, as I always say implement something, but then tested out, measure it to make sure that you are actually getting paid for the amount of work that you do. And then over time that may increase.

The new one that I've also been looking at is a monthly or annual subscription fee. That covers a year's worth of planning fees. Now this is great for regular travellers, you might have one be I'm gonna pick a number out of the air and say it's \$1,000 a year for clients to work with us. Right and this is the planning fee, whether they look one trick with you, or five trips with you.

There is that one fee, they don't have to pay any more than that. Now how great would this be for you on a monthly or an annual basis that there is a regular form of income coming in whether a client books



with you or not. But this is great for regular travellers because they don't have to remember every single time that they need to pay you 250 300 \$500 as a professional fee for that service, it's just a great way of covering it up being straight up front and saying, hey, done this year annual subscription, keeping them in the loop, giving them access to certain deals that other people may not get. treat those guys as VIP. No matter what option you choose, roll it out, test and measure. And of course, you've got to advise your clients. So this is how we now discuss or have that conversation.

You might have existing clients already that let's say you haven't charged them a fee previously. That's okay. If you feel as though now is the time to implement a fee structure, it's great to be able to gather that feedback, understand your value so that you feel comfortable with it. But with your existing clients, or your top clients, or the ones that you love working with, you might decide that they get a discount, you provide extra value to them, you reassure them as you roll out your new fee structure through your newsletter or what you might be doing.

Or as a new person comes on board, you let them know, this is how you work and this is your system. But it could be for your existing clients, you let them know that they're a VIP, you've worked with them for so long, that they might only pay a small amount, or they may not pay a fee at all, if you haven't been charging fees. Whatever it is that you decide, go with it. There is no right or wrong.

You have to assess how you feel, and what you feel comfortable and competent with. But just ensure and I recommend do this only for your top clients and your VIPs the ones that are your ideal clients, or your dream clients and that you do love working with treat them, especially because they will be the ones that become your biggest referrals. They will be the ones that share the love about you and how great you are. Because you've continuously taken care of them.

So that's what we have. For today, the four different steps, start with a gut check, do you want to make a change? Are you quite happy with where you're at, if you're happy with where you're at cool, nothing you need to do. But if you do want to make a change, and you feel as though you'd need a little bit of extra push to make this all happen.

Start with writing out the value. What do you bring to the table? How are you different? What are the unique services that you provide for your clients? Step two, send out that survey asked for feedback promoted everywhere, get people to just send it to you send it direct mail, right, make it short, build that client love. It's more important now than any other time that we have those relationships with our clients, and especially the ones that we love working with, because they'll be the ones that are there that want to continue to travel with you when they're able to step three is assessing what you've actually learned, what insights have you gained from the survey responses and check your survey at different times, like don't just set and forget, and then leave it, come back to it. Check it every way.



Go check it every few days initially, just to see if there's any new feedback that come through. If you want to ask your clients for further information or have an extra conversation around it, go for it gain clarity to work out what is going to be right for you moving forward, whether it means and as I said, you might get some really cool insights here to find out what they're thinking. When did they want to travel again? What sorts of travel experiences have they looking for? How can you then tell the your service to ensure that it's the right thing for them as well. And then step four is coming up with a plan to roll out your new fee structure.

There are several different ways that you can do it. But it's all about communication. The way to roll it out is through conversation. We've set it out. So that was in a newsletter with a survey, then we share the findings. And then it might be this is now what we're going to be doing moving forward. have those conversations, make sure that your clients are involved in the process, so that it's not a big surprise when you actually roll it out.

Don't forget to download the free resource that comes along with this episode. always send me feedback. I'd love to hear how you are. Send me a direct message just through Travel Agent Achievers on Facebook or via Instagram. I'd love if you're able to leave a rating and review on iTunes. But check us out.

Come and join me on those Friday mornings for coffee connection and some coaching but really just to join the community live on a Friday morning, Australian eastern standard time where we can come together and support one another to get through this. And I can guarantee that the work that we do now will benefit us in the future. Take care, stay safe, and I look forward to chatting with you again very soon.

Bye for now. Thank you for listening to this episode of Travel Agent Achievers. If you love it, please share it on Instagram or Facebook.

Make sure you tag us too so that we can shout and share with you as well to your friends and colleagues. We are here to help as many travel professionals as we possibly can. Don't forget to check out the travelagentachievers.com website for loads of resources and tools to help you grow your travel business.

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