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# Getting more for less within the travel & tourism sector

# By way of introduction

Fascinated by why people do what they do

44+ years of experience

**Experience Management**
- Customer Experience
- Employee Experience
- Supplier Experience

Combining **data science and behavioural science** to:
- understand why people do what they do,
- what they are likely to do next,
- how organisations should best respond
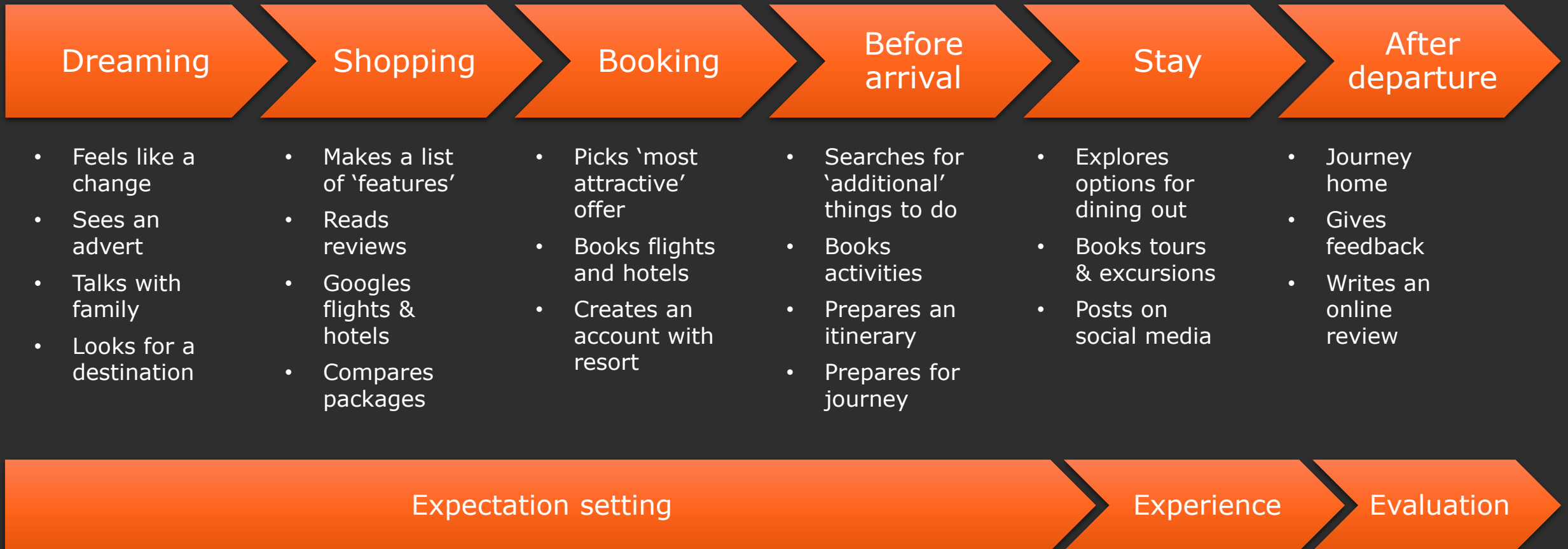
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In the 2030s, the best hotels will offer highly personalised guest experiences, sustainable travel options, and attractive employee opportunities.

- McKinsey, July 2023

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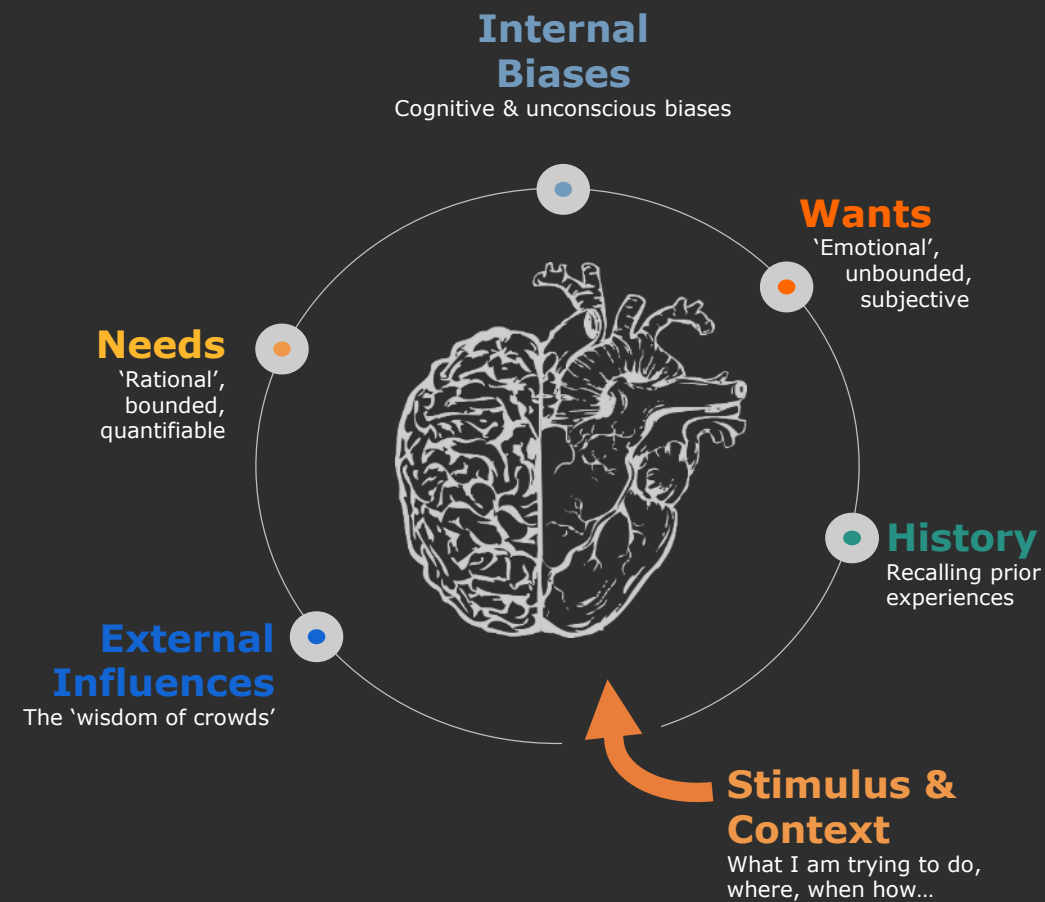# The drivers of customer behaviour in the tourism sector

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# Example leisure / travel journey map

A guest's customer experience starts long before their stay begins and extends beyond returning home

| Dreaming | Shopping | Booking | Before arrival | Stay | After departure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

- Feels like a change
- Sees an advert
- Talks with family
- Looks for a destination

- Makes a list of 'features'
- Reads reviews
- Googles flights & hotels
- Compares packages

- Picks 'most attractive' offer
- Books flights and hotels
- Creates an account with resort

- Searches for 'additional' things to do
- Books activities
- Prepares an itinerary
- Prepares for journey

- Explores options for dining out
- Books tours & excursions
- Posts on social media

- Journey home
- Gives feedback
- Writes an online review

| Expectation setting | Experience | Evaluation |
|---|---|---|

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# How people make decisions

For most people, taking a vacation is a 'discretionary spend' – and they are demanding more for their money

**Internal Biases**
Cognitive & unconscious biases

**Wants**
'Emotional', unbounded, subjective

**Needs**
'Rational', bounded, quantifiable

**History**
Recalling prior experiences

**External Influences**
The 'wisdom of crowds'

**Stimulus & Context**
What I am trying to do, where, when how…

|  | Practical | Psychological |
|---|---|---|
| **Self** | What I need | What I want to feel |
| **Organisation** | Your practical attributes | Your values (that mirror mine) |

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Practical          Psychological

# Can anyone share some examples of…

Self

| | What guests need | What guests want to feel |

# The changing expectations of travel and tourism

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# There are lots of location options

There has never been more competition, at a time when there is pressure on discretionary spending

Lots of choices of accommodation:

- Hotels
- All-inclusive resorts
- Villas
- Independent hosts
- Timeshare / holiday homes
- Friends & family
- Motorhome / caravan / camping



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# There are lots of activity options

Guests often want multiple experiences within a single vacation

- Sunbathing on the beach
- Canoeing / water sports
- Cultural tours
- Hiking adventures
- Wildlife / jeep safaris
- Baths of Aphrodite / Blue lagoon
- Vineyard tours
- Coastal cruises
- Relaxing spa retreats
- Yoga, Tai Chi and wellness retreats
- Nightlife

- Festivals and events
- Shopping
- Historical architecture
- Theme parks / water parks
- Photography
- Volunteer work
- Cultural workshops
- Painting classes
- Local music and dance shows
- Cookery classes
- Glamping / camping

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# What tourists don't like

(That are under your control, and in no particular order)

- Accommodation not ready on arrival

- Not honouring reservations

- Poor customer service

- Uncomfortable accommodations

- Hidden costs, overcharging and hidden fees

- Misleading advertising or inadequate / wrong information

- Food quality and allergies, not catering to special diets

- Lack of cleanliness and hygiene

- Staff not respecting a "Do not disturb" sign.

- Lack of complimentary supplies
(or the ability to easily buy them)

- Health concerns

- Environmental issues

- Faulty electronics / appliances.

- Unavailability of services / amenities

- Theft of personal items.

- Safety concerns

- Transportation / transfer issues

- Tacky commercialization

- Lack of (authentic) experiences

- Inability to prebook 'extras'

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# Evaluating guest satisfaction / happiness

There are lots of ways that we try to measure guest satisfaction

## The Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Not at all likely    👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤    Extremely likely

## Customer Satisfaction Score (CSat)
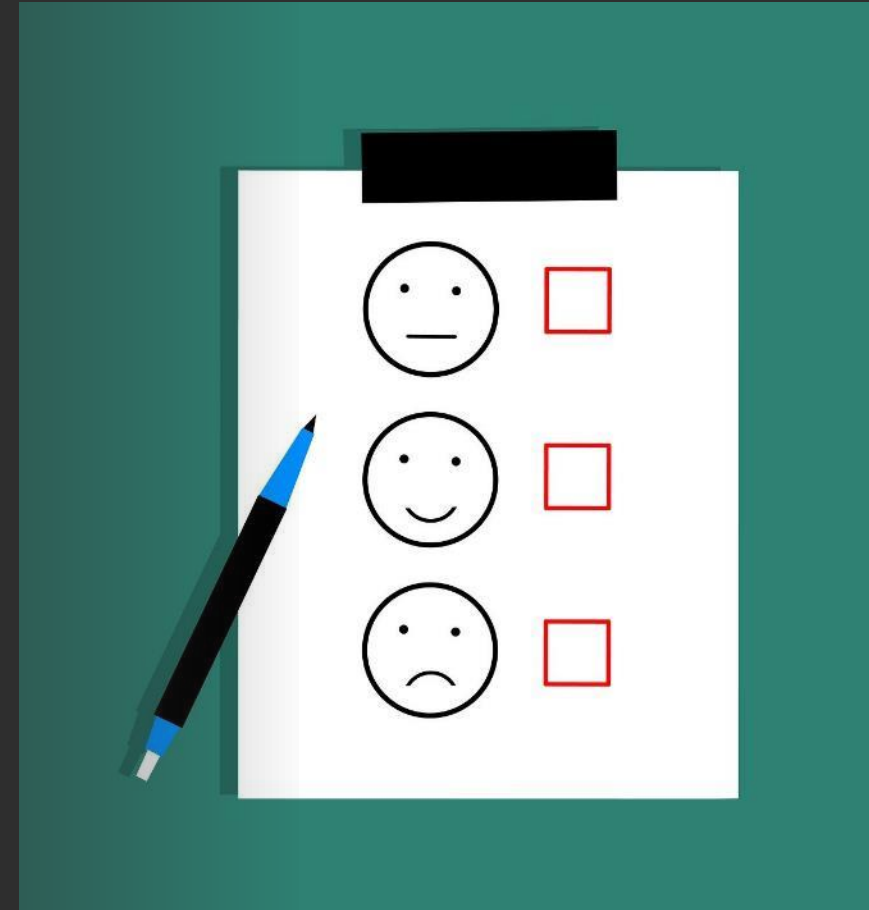
⭐⭐⭐⭐☆ Very satisfied

## Customer Effort Score (CES)

Very difficult   👎👎⚙️👍👍   Very easy

## Sentiment

Negative ☹️ 🙁 😐 🙂 😊 Positive

## Happiness

Unhappy ☹️ 😐 🙂 Happy

# The problems with surveys

Most measures of guest satisfaction face a couple of significant challenges

Satisfaction is not measured relative to a universally agreed scale – it is relative to what is expected

Any survey represents only a single moment in time

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# Questions

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# Coffee break and exercise

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# Empathy mapping exercise



Describe one type of guest and what they expect of their stay

Describe some of the ways we can make their stay more enjoyable

# Welcome back

Let's talk about some of your answers

- Practical needs
- Psychological wants
- Pains (and how we can eliminate them)

# Creating 'WOW!' moments, without spending a lot of money

# First, know what you customers actually want

"...like being in the world's biggest theme park without ever having to leave the hotel." – Paula Poundstone

Casinos in Las Vegas spend $millions analysing customer behaviour and on revenue management to keep the guests on the property

Most of us can neither afford the analytics, or the facilities to meet all the needs of our guests – so we need to prioritise.



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# Going back to the journey map

From the moment they book, to when they depart, we can encourage them to spend more

| Dreaming | Shopping | Booking | Before arrival | Stay | After departure |
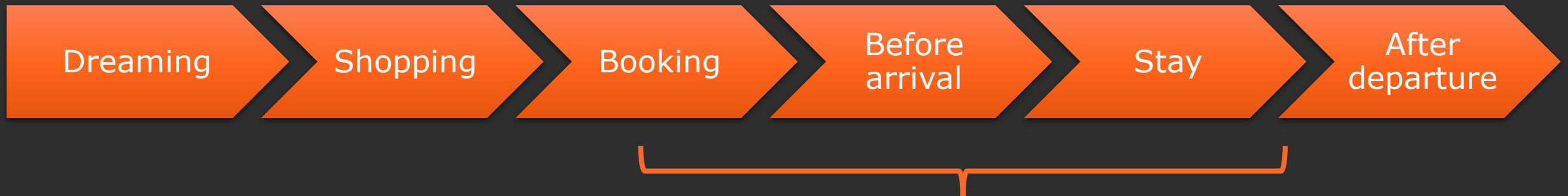
- Build anticipation with regular messages before arrival
- Make it easy to pre-book add-ons, excursions, etc.
- Offer experiences to enhance their stay
- Be proactive in addressing any concerns (even if not your fault)
- Offer incentives to re-book in the future

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# Examples of add-on activities

(You might work with your local community to provide these)
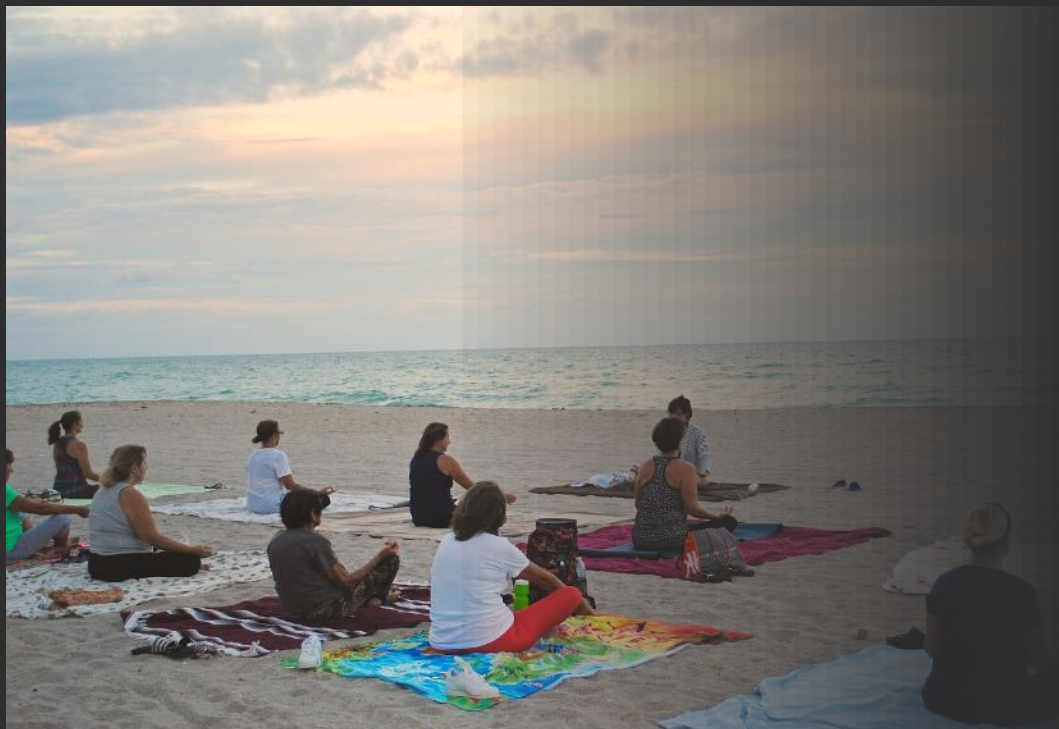
# Learning to cook a traditional Greek / Cypriot meal

Take a painting lesson or spend some time painting with a local artist

# Volunteer at a historic site



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Offer a yoga lesson on the beach

# Also '**Workations**' are on the rise

## Taking a break from the usual place of work, but not from the work itself

- A workation typically lasts between one and two weeks.

- Employees often take longer vacations if they can combine it with work

- Nearly 70% of US employees are less likely to quit after a workation.

- 90% of workationers say mixing business with fun boosted their productivity at work.

- 80% of employees claim taking a workation helped them cope with burnout.

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- A reliable internet connection is the most important aspect (65%) for workationers when choosing accommodation.

- Other important factors include a suitable workspace (63%), online ratings (63%), and price (53%).

- Only 15% of workationers find having a quiet place to hold meetings crucial when choosing accommodation.

Source: passport-photo.online

# Things that government can do to help

Cyprus has a diverse mix of hosts; many do not have the resources to compete with major resorts

- Enable local ecosystems of smaller hosts and providers

- Build a digital guest portal for vacation planning & excursion booking

- Offer a federated analytics suite that would otherwise be too expensive or complex for smaller hosts

- Sponsor the creation of virtual tours

- Help introduce sustainable practices

- Coordinate access to cultural / entertainment experiences

- Provide incubation funding for small independent vendors, including public / private partnerships

- Offer cheap insurance / liability cover, …

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Attracting & retaining talent
in the sector
- the key to tourism success

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# The employee lifecycle

Attitude and emotions play a significant role in the employee experience

The **Customer Experience** they deliver

**How they learn** & what they can recall

Their ability to **approach challenges**

Their **creativity** / capacity to adapt
– especially with **autonomy**

**Some key questions:**

How can we improve an employee's experience to increase motivation and productivity without impacting loyalty?

Can we improve how we measure performance and impact to enable insight-driven change and reduce attrition?

How to optimise motivation, performance and wellbeing?

Selection

Recruitment

Alumni

Onboarding

Exit

Development

Retention
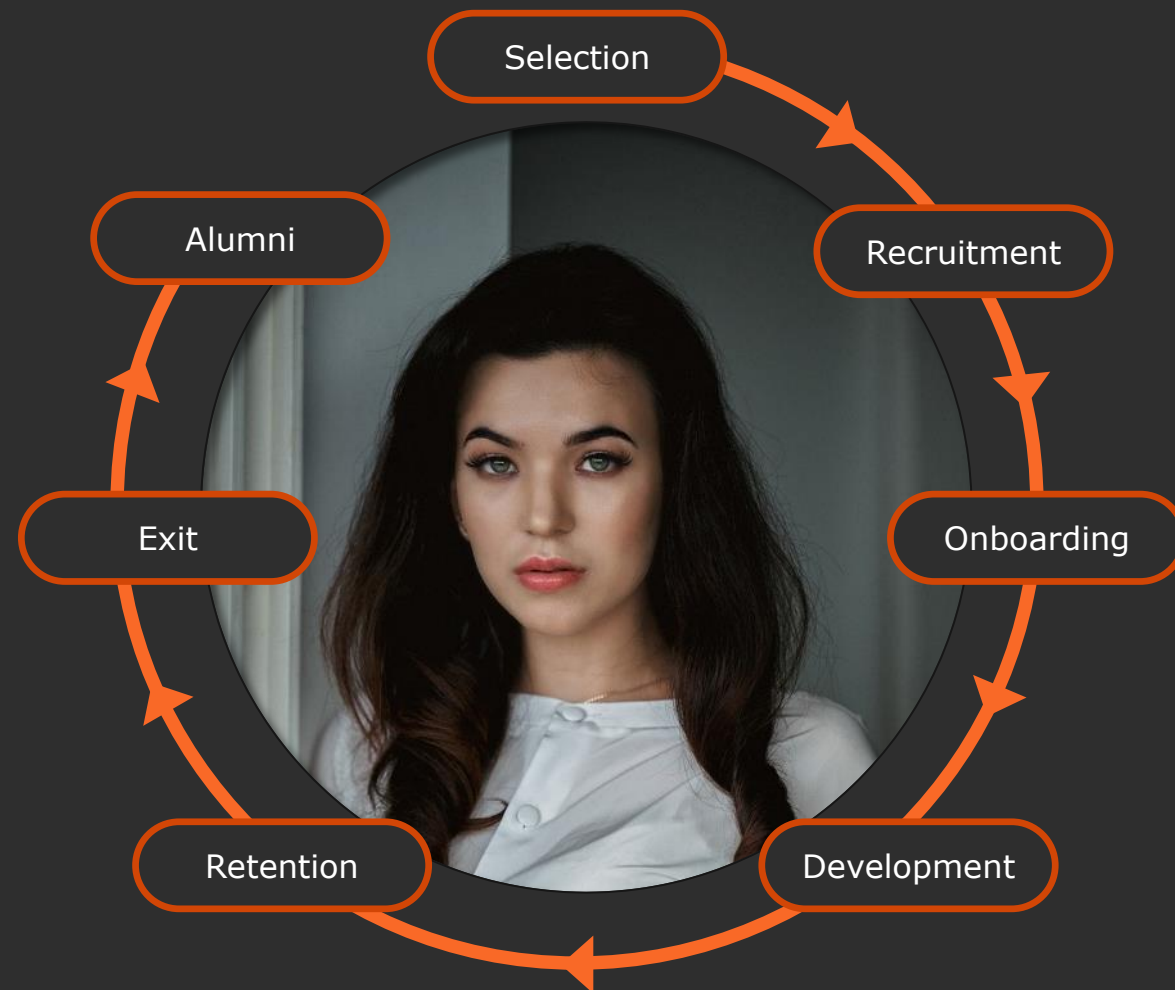
# Attracting and retaining talent

(Especially in bringing younger workers into the sector and keeping them engaged)

- Offer meaningful training and development, that leads to a genuine career path – sponsor internal entrepreneurship

- Give recognition and constructive feedback

- Introduce technology for 'Generation app'

- Be inclusive and open to diversity

- Demonstrate a company culture that aligns with their values

- Show that you are a 'socially responsible' employer

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# Questions

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# Thank you!

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