

## THE GRADUATE

**Name:** Ricardo Pilon  
**Date of Birth:** 10 April 1973

### Study + University:

PhD, Air Transport, Concordia University  
International Aviation MBA, Concordia University  
MSc Air Transport Management, Cranfield University

**Graduation date:** 10 October 2002

**Thesis:** Impacts of Global Airline Alliance Groups on Airport Economics



### Summary of Thesis:

My MBA thesis and PhD dissertation concentrated on the impact of airline alliance groupings on airport economics and the subsequent policy issues. Overall, it concluded that whereas alliance groups generate significant increases in volumes and as such traffic related revenues, bottom-line results were less optimal due to a decline in the quality of the traffic mix (i.e. increase in transfer, that is less-profitable, traffic to the detriment of higher propensity to spend originating traffic).

### Your relationship with Aerius:

I was referred to Aerius by a friend that, at the time, studied at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. Due to my background and strong interest/vocation in this domain, I enlisted as a member.

### About your Internship:

No, I did not. I completed one in Curacao, Netherlands Antilles.

### Current Employer:

- (1) Transat A.T., Montreal, Canada
- (2) Concordia University, Aviation MBA, Montreal.

**Since:** July 2003

### Function:

- (1) Corporate Senior Director, Systems & Planning (Strategic Planning)
- (2) Adjunct Professor, Airline Strategy, Management & Marketing.

### Job Contents:

Responsible for providing the framework and supervision within with all strategic projects within Transat subsidiaries for overall group vision and strategy alignment. Secondly pioneer, sponsor and project leader of the central reservation system for the Transat group, as well as tour operator revenue management system implementation. Thirdly representing Transat as speaker and attendee at world wide airline industry and the wider travel industry conferences . And last but not least regular presentations before the Top Management committee as well as the Transat board of directors.

### Future wishes:

Starting another airline. Or, a top management position with a major airline.

### Previous employer:

Air Transat

### Previous function:

Director – Systems, Methods & Special Projects (Strategic Planning) at Air Transat

### Your application experience:

Manager – Product Development (IATA), Manager – Pricing, Network & Product Design (Skyservice Airlines Inc.), Senior Air Transport Consultant (KPMG).

## Your Golden Rule for application (interviews):

Preparation and focus. I tend to argue that focusing on your genuine interest in the position and firm but also the fit between your qualities and skill sets bear more fruit than attempting to impress the interviewer with your knowledge of, for instance, the company (anybody can study a company's website content). Confidence is equally important, although be careful not to come across as arrogant. Finally, eagerness to learn should be expressed rather than "this company needs me because...". Increasingly, companies are looking for general skills, ability, but notably attitudes and personality, rather than information or knowledge.

### Some short questions:

- Newspaper:** Wall Street Journal, Washington Post & National Post (Canada)
- Magazine:** Airline related: Airline business and in general: National Geographic.
- Radio:** Hmm..rarely, that is, mostly while driving.
- Television:** CBC, BBC, Discovery Channel.
- Music:** Jazz (Diana Krall, Norah Jones),R&B, Acid Jazz (Massive Attack, Delerium, Enigma)
- Last book:** Emotional Intelligence, by Daniel Goleman (and Harry Potter !)
- Sport(s):** Basketball, Squash, Tennis, Golf, Skiing
- Food:** Thai
- You can wake me up for:** A surprise trip somewhere.
- City:** Seville, Spain.
- Country:** Every country I have lived in...
- Season:** Summer/Indian Summer (early Fall in North America)
- Holiday:** A three week expedition through Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia. The remoteness and closeness to nature was truly touching and impressive. It also helped put certain things more in perspective.
- Best / Worst flight:** Two years ago on a flight from LHR to SIN on a Singapore Airlines' B744 in First Class. Truly amazing service product and comfort, although the service delivery is still somewhat robotic. It was better than a flight on Concorde from CDG to JFK two months after...
- A flight on United Airlines from LAX to HNL two months after 9/11; definitively the worst in-flight service and flight attendant attitudes I have ever witnessed.