

more positive results.

This project has made some progress in meeting its objectives, and those of the PBS, however it is not a dramatic success story as yet. Problems/concerns include the following:

- each of the three partners (i.e. JETRO, DFAIT, and the CEA) has different expectations, and slightly different objectives for the project. JETRO perceives the role as that of matchmaking, DFAIT perceives the role to be that of providing guidance on how to access the Japanese market, while the CEA perception of the appropriate role straddles that of DFAIT and JETRO);
- insufficient preparation for consultations. There is a concern that the import specialists, and to some extent DFAIT officers, have not prepared themselves sufficiently (with respect to information about clients and their needs and expectations) ahead of time, and that this had led to poor quality consultations. To ameliorate this it was decided that a DFAIT officer would accompany the second import specialist on his visits to DFAIT clients. This, however, has not happened to the extent that was originally hoped;
- the second import specialist has referred DFAIT clients to his home trading company. DFAIT is sensitive to the potential problems this might cause, and alerted this import specialist;
- there is not yet enough reporting of results by the second import specialist;
- the fact that there is only one import specialist was cited as limiting the impact of the import specialist's work by most of those interviewed;
- the first import specialist was not as proficient in English as the second import specialist. Language proficiency is important to ensure effective communication between the import specialist and clients.

Lessons learnt from this project are as follows:

1. Quality of consultations is more important than quantity.
2. Companies serious about penetrating the Japanese market but not already present in this market, or those experiencing roadblocks should be targeted.
3. More teamwork between DFAIT officers and the import specialist, and more preparation for consultations is required.
4. Responsibilities and expectations must be clarified to avoid misunderstandings.