

If the company decides that it wants to pursue an opportunity in Mexico, it should contact a trade commissioner, who will need detailed information about the company and its expectations. A checklist of information needed is reproduced at the end of this section. If possible, promotional literature should also be provided, ideally in Spanish. This material will help the trade commissioner introduce the company to Mexican contacts.

Additional information about the company and its goals in Mexico can help make the trade commissioner's efforts more productive. This might include copies of press releases, price lists and other information that will present the company in its best light. The trade commissioner should also be aware of any existing contacts or agents that the company may have in Mexico.

Communications with the trade commissioner should be by telephone, fax, electronic mail (e-mail) or courier. Mail service to Mexico can be slow, and months could pass before two or three two-way communications are completed by that means. In spite of recent improvements, Mexico's phone lines are still unreliable, and faxes are sometimes lost in transmission. This leaves e-mail and courier as the preferred methods of communication.

Companies making inquiries should also be aware that complex questions can take time to answer in the Mexican business environment. Trade commissioners do not have ready access to the type of information considered commonplace in Canada. Corporate disclosure and public accountability by government agencies are only vague concepts. Information is often considered proprietary and is jealously hoarded. Thus, personal contacts are a much more important research tool in Mexico than they are in Canada. Even then, Mexican executives are often out of their office for a large part of the day. For all of these reasons, it is best to do as much research as possible before leaving Canada and to allow ample time for information collection.