

Management/employee relations

In many cases, it's not just the management skills or the work force that makes for success, but how the two work together. Teamwork is essential. I.S.E. International Submarine Engineering Ltd. enjoys strong employee support within a "family" atmosphere. FAG Bearings Limited's no lay-off policy binds the work force to the company. Many FAG employees have been loyal to the company for 25 years or more. Both SNC Inc. and Husky Injection Molding Systems Ltd. are convinced that people are the key. SNC Inc. is employee-owned, and at Husky, employees already own more than 10 percent of the company. Management expects this share to rise to 30 percent within the next few years.

Senior managers do act as a motivating force for their employees. Jim MacFarlane, president of I.S.E. International Submarine Engineering Ltd. is a good example, organizing pizza parties on important occasions, such as the launching of a new submersible, and annual Christmas parties where all members of the team and their families get together.

Clear philosophy "It's what the people think that prompts company success"

Having people with the right skills and abilities is the starting point, but a clear philosophy is important too. For the export award winners, this meant three things: (1) being certain of their corporate mission, (2) being committed to exporting as a means of achieving their objectives, and (3) having a strong customer orientation.

A defined corporate mission

All of the award winners had a clear idea of what they wanted to achieve as a company. Before a clear mission can be developed, however, a company must have a good understanding of the business it is in. As Charles Danneman, corporate director of marketing, Spar Aerospace Limited says,

"Not only do you have to understand the environment, but you've got to understand what business you're in . . . and the levers of that business (i.e., the keys to success in that business)."