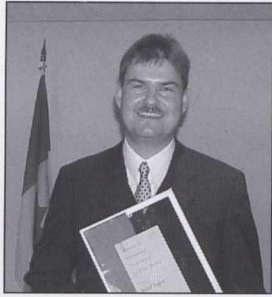


*an interview with*



## Detlef Engler

Detlef Engler is the Senior Investment Officer for Berlin. He holds degrees from Trent University as well as the Universities of Freiburg and Frankfurt. He was recently awarded the 2000 Minister for International Trade Award for Trade Service.

### **C**ongratulations on your award! What's your secret?

When I'm talking to German business people, I need to be convincing. I know Canada's advantages and I genuinely like Canada. I also believe in our investment strategy because it works. In 1999, direct investment in Canada by German companies rose 25%. This investment stimulates the local economy, encouraging growth and investment in other sectors. So when I'm talking to potential investors, my enthusiasm comes through, not just in my words, but in my nonverbal language as well.

I take a practical, down-to-earth approach. But the secret is in providing a continuity of service, from identifying, to courting, to helping German companies realize their investment project in Canada.

### *How do you promote direct investment in Canada?*

I am one of three investment officers at the Berlin office. We look for German companies that fit a specific profile. Most of the companies we deal with are family owned with sales ranging from \$500 million to \$2 billion annually. They have a global outlook and Canada is part of their plans.

Canada already has a positive image in Germany. Its size, its friendliness, its

proximity to the US market are all positives. We encourage investment by building on this. Once we've confirmed a prospective investor, we involve headquarters. We also alert Investment Partnerships Canada and the Trade Team Canada Sectors, and any other federal partner we might need at this point.

### *Tell us about your network of contacts?*

We have excellent investment counterparts at the provincial level. We also connect with economic development organizations at the municipal level. It's all about people.

We rely on a strong network of contacts to encourage German companies to set up shop in Canada. Knowing who to call and liaising with the right people is key.

After all, a site selection tour isn't just about finding the right lot. Our partners make sure the German company is informed about suppliers, school boards, the quality of life, a whole range of factors that influence the decision to invest in Canada. We focus on the feelings and culture of the investors to find the best possible Canadian location. We also help them get written commitments and working permits for their spouses and for staff to set up and train Canadians. Our success depends largely on this network.