

- o Inevitably, the subject of the Free Trade Agreement surfaced in the discussion groups in Montreal and Toronto and, to a lesser extent, in Vancouver. Particularly in Toronto, the Free Trade Agreement tended to evoke a kneejerk reaction among many discussants who opposed the deal. The comments on the Free Trade Agreement seemed to suggest that international competitiveness is viewed as something quite different from Free Trade.

- o Many participants spoke of the U.S.-Mexico free trade negotiations, some expressing fears that a cheap labour supply in Mexico might undermine Canada's ability to compete on the continent.

- o Some protectionist sentiments emerged among discussants who felt that Canadians should become more self-sufficient by producing more goods and selling these products at home.

- o The issue of competitiveness was fairly salient to the focus group participants. Discussants said they had previously talked about the issue and had heard about the issue from others and from the media. Some participants claimed to have heard similar ads, and one thought she had heard these particular ads before.

2.2 Necessity for Canada to Become More Competitive Internationally

Participants were asked for their impressions about the need for Canada to become more competitive internationally. The answer to this question was an overwhelming "yes".