

**Business Development
Bank of Canada (BDC)**

BDC is a commercial Crown corporation mandated with nurturing and developing small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The corporation exists primarily as a training ground, providing loan products and financial counselling as well as teaching industry-specific research skills.

New Exporters Training and Counselling Program (NEXPRO)

NEXPRO is BDC's answer to entrepreneurs who want to get an edge in exporting. Combining 105 hours of professional training with personalized counselling, NEXPRO aims to provide small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with the tools to proceed confidently through the export process. NEXPRO's step-by-step approach allows participants to broaden their knowledge of exporting and their company's export potential, develop a realistic export plan and implement their own export strategy. They also have the opportunity to network with other business owners and develop valuable contacts.

The president and one other company representative attend 40 hours of training sessions led by industry experts on such topics as:

- integrating the essential aspects of an export plan;
- developing and implementing an international marketing plan;
- seeking and establishing export partners;
- assessing the role of the customs broker;
- financing exports;
- preparing for a business trip;
- selecting a manufacturer's agent or distributor;
- arranging exhibitions for trade shows; and
- planning fiscal and legal aspects.

Workshops are complemented by 25 hours of roundtable discussions involving 20-25 company representatives and facilitated by an experienced export adviser. To help maximize the benefit of these training sessions, the export adviser also visits firms on-site on a monthly basis to counsel principals on a company-specific export strategy.

Following the program, company representatives may choose to participate in a two- or three-day trade mission to the US which includes:

- a visit to the US Customs and Immigration office at the border;
- meetings with distributors and potential customers;
- meetings with Canadian and American trade commissioners; and