

Your political astuteness, knowledge of international economic and financial matters and of a wide range of global issues will enable you to represent Canada, with ease, at international, bilateral and public events. As a "generalist" in the Political/Economic Stream, you will use your portable skills to manage information, as well as handle consular and administrative responsibilities within Canada and abroad. Your overview of Canadian responsibilities will enable you to skilfully co-ordinate your work with that of colleagues in the International Trade and Social Affairs streams.

You will be trained in Ottawa for one to two years. During this time, practical assignments will expose you to the department's procedures as well as Canada's policies and programs abroad. Preparation for your first overseas mission will include any necessary foreign language training, or courses related to the specific duties of your assignment. Your first posting abroad will be for two to four years.

During a typical day at a Canadian diplomatic mission you could:

- deliver a diplomatic note to the host country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding a forthcoming international conference on the environment;
- complete a report on the re-election prospects of the host country government, based on information gathered from local-language and international news sources, and professional contacts;
- phone a local university contact to promote an academic exchange you are co-ordinating for a group of music professors;
- during a luncheon meeting with a Canadian delegation, outline plans for a technical exchange program and give an impromptu briefing on local economic conditions;
- prepare a summary on the implications of the balance of payments situation in the host country for Canadian financial institutions following a meeting with the Ministry of Finance and Central Bank officials;
- be interrupted while updating biographical files on the host country's leaders to deal with an urgent consular case requiring your foreign language skills: a traffic accident involving Canadian tourists.

In short, your work could involve economic/political analysis, cultural affairs, information, consular work and, in some posts, administration. Balancing many responsibilities is a daily challenge. A Political/Economic Officer is flexible, has a tolerance for ambiguity plus keen analytical, decision-making and negotiation skills. Your adaptability will enable you to work tactfully yet effectively in environments with different mores while promoting Canada's place in the world.

The usual career pattern for Political/Economic Officers is to alternate postings of two to four years abroad with assignments of similar length at headquarters in Ottawa. Your skills and experience gained abroad will be used at headquarters in areas as