

The "Pre-Departure and Intercultural Effectiveness" course is where you can get all this and more. Offered to all DFAIT employees heading off to a mission, this course focuses on the practical intercultural skills necessary for working in a modern diplomatic mission. In three fast-paced days this course covers country and culture specific topics, intercultural effectiveness strategies and the challenges of individual and family adaptation. The course highlight is a break-out session with a professional from your mission country.

The course is designed to be relevant across the complete range of posting experiences from first-timers to veterans. Given the importance of family adjustment to posting success, spouses are encouraged to attend the course.

For training dates, consult the CFSI Intranet site at <http://intranet/cfsi/menu-e.asp>. For more details contact Judy Chaplin, CFSC, at 994-7773.

It's what you say that matters! Here are some comments made in evaluating the course.

- *I was very impressed with this course and feel it would be beneficial to all employees whether they go on posting or not.*
- *The workshop was refreshing and thought provoking. It is useful not only for Management Consular Officers going abroad, but for all DFAIT streams and other OGD personnel*
- *I liked the concrete examples, real experience. Very well-organized and valuable workshop.*
- *The course addressed aspects of understanding a foreign culture that I feel are essential to living there.*

Talk the Talk

Language Training a Pre-Posting Must

The Centre for Language Training (CFLS) offers a range of options to DFAIT personnel and their families to be prepared in a foreign language before going abroad.

People who need to develop an advanced knowledge of a foreign language to prepare for the social and professional requirements of an overseas posting will likely want to join the Professional Proficiency program. Employees and their families (14 years of age and up) who do not require job-related foreign language may take the Social Integration program. Employees interested in taking foreign language training outside working hours could receive financial assistance through the Training Outside Working Hours program. Official language training is also available to those whose positions have been designated bilingual and for those who wish to maintain their proficiency in both official languages.

Contact Josée Guitard, registrar, at (819) 953-4751 or learn about CFLS on the web:

Foreign Language Training Centre: <http://intranet.lbp/cfsi/menu-e.asp>
<http://www.cfsi-icse.gc.ca/english/langschool/index.html>
<http://www.cfsi-icse.gc.ca/francais/langschool/index.html>

Distance training (Virtual Campus): <http://corpapps/campus/main1.asp?href=cfsi&option=view>

Language resource: <http://e-lang.net> or <http://intranet/cfsi/menu-e.asp>



Jean François Clément coordinates services at Bisson.

At Bisson

The Welcome Mat is Always Out

Jean-François Clément and his team make sure the welcome mat is always out for participants at the Bisson campus of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute.

"My priority is client service, there is never a request that is unreasonable," says Mr. Clément, who administers the facilities at Bisson with Denis Dussault as part of the Management Services (CFSM) team. "We want to provide participants and trainers with the best possible learning environment."

Everything from classroom registration to setting up the room, along with providing audio visual and computerized equipment, flip charts, and anything else required, is part of Mr. Clément's day. He also coordinates the set-up of tele-conferencing sessions with SXCH. He can always be reached by cell phone as he sees to the smooth functioning of the building and its resources.

Temperature is often a problem for participants who come from posts around the world and may not be properly dressed for the climate. "People don't realize that they can call me as soon as a problem is spotted. Since every room is individually climate controlled, I can request to have the temperature changed right away through our huge computerized system. In 30 minutes the room should be the way the class wants it. But I have to know about it. It's my job to make people feel comfortable at Bisson."

Father of three children, Mr. Clément left the armed forces four years ago after a stint of 23 years as a radar technician and recruiting officer. His second career has brought him to Bisson. He is currently setting up a computerized system for booking rooms with all client requests virtually outlined to speed up and stream-line the process. Right now he handles reservations for the 52 rooms at Bisson through telephone and e-mail requests.

A typical day starts at 7 a.m., and either he or Mr. Dussault, his colleague is on site until the last class leaves. Mr. Clément checks the last minute requests, then heads out to modify the rooms set up the night before. Water is brought in, and he tends to other requests as they come to him. He is the contact person for security, locks, passes, even for the gardener and for snow removal. He compiles a master sheet for room reservations and set-up requests on a weekly basis. The annual picnic is his to co-ordinate. He oversees every detail, from printing tickets to making sure there is plenty of food and drink.

"If people don't know who to ask, they ask me," he says. Either it's his job or he directs clients to the person on the team who can solve the problem.

Off duty, Mr. Clément carves wood and draws pastel portraits (he took courses at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design), enjoys genealogy (he has mapped his family tree), plays the violin, gardens and canoes.

On duty, he is constantly on the move at Bisson, trying to make your learning experience as comfortable and as smooth as possible.

The Buzz at Bisson:

Work Facilities at Your Service

The Bisson campus of The Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI), situated on an attractive residential street in Hull, houses 52 classrooms, a large cafeteria and the largest foreign language library east of the Rockies. The multi-media lab with 40 computers offers a range of cutting-edge technology to support your language learning. There is a large parking lot adjacent to the building affording free parking to all student and a picnic area for the nicer days for spring or summer. It is a 10-minute drive from the Pearson building on Sussex Drive in Ottawa.

As a student you have access to a telephone, a computer to check e-mails while away from your own desk, a photocopier and fax machine. Commissionaires receive messages at (819)956-7027 and post them on the reception area bulletin board for students. Urgent messages are delivered to you right in your classroom.

Bisson is a very busy place. The language library, for example, has had 22,000 transactions (loans and renewals) in the last nine months.

For more information about the Bisson campus, consult CFSI's Intranet site at www.cfsi-icse.gc.ca or pick up a copy of the brochure "A Visitor's Guide to the Bisson Campus."