

in areas where they can make the maximum contribution to the team effort.

Roles

The project team recommends four major functions within the team structure. One would be assigned to Canada-based staff, one to the locally engaged Commercial Officers, one to the locally engaged Trade System Specialists, and one to the Canada-based Trade Commissioner who will be responsible for the coordination of the trade promotion and trade policy functions.

The success of the Trade and Economic Program will depend heavily upon the continuity of a viable intelligence network. Business relationships which lead to the exchange of sensitive information require careful nurturing. Especially in the Mexican business environment, it takes time to develop such relationships: people generally become friends before doing business. This means that ongoing personal relationships with the Mexican business community will be needed. Accordingly, the new roles expand the base of accountability to sector teams rather than individual staff.

The transition from market information to market intelligence also implies a different relationship with locally engaged staff. Continuity can be difficult given the typical two-to-three year period of a posting. Consequently, locally engaged staff will have to play a larger role than they have in the past. They must take greater responsibility for maintaining persistent contacts as Canada-based team members come and go. This means a much greater use of teamwork and sharing of contacts and intelligence than was required when the focus was on market information and event-driven activities. It also means that local staff must have a clear mandate and be recognized for their contribution to the stability and effectiveness of the organization.

An accompanying illustration gives a brief definition of each of these roles. Appendix 2 provides detailed descriptions of the roles of the Minister Counsellor, Trade Commissioner, Commercial Officer and Trade System Specialist. These descriptions are intended as tools for role clarification within the teams. They should be useful for setting personal objectives as well as for identifying individual learning needs.