

## IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

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- Good personal representation in potential client countries; and reliable partner companies, and alliances with compatible companies internationally are also important. [27]
- The firm also has considerable faith in individual agents as marketing representatives in-country. [27]
- The firm likes to have the lead in a joint venture, or alternatively to be clearly a minor partner - 50/50 ventures do not work. [28]
- Having a list of very strong client references from past work is essential to working internationally [29]
- Being active in international professional associations is helpful but expensive. [29]
- A local partner or agent is a *sine qua non*. Without one it is impossible to work. A local agent tracks prospects, gets bid documents, and assists with logistics. Having an agent is much more effective than having a subscription to UNDB. However, ethics can be a problem. [35]
- The company, working through an agent or local partner, should be aware of a potential project long before the client decides whether to call upon IFI financing. The groundwork needs to be laid early, but, on the other hand, small projects can arise at any time or stage – some of the success of the company has come from casual contacts by the company president when visiting Bangladesh or Pakistan. [35]
- To be consistently successful, the firm has to develop a good network of satisfied clients, alliances with other firms and “country presence”. [40]

### 3.6 Innovation

A number of companies of all kinds stressed the importance of technical skill and innovation in being successful in international markets, including IFI-financed markets, and that federal government trade strategy should pay more attention to Canadian R&D and innovative skills.

*“In international business, where Canadian companies are either subsidiaries of international parents, or have international subsidiaries themselves, the issue became not what is the nationality of the company [which is becoming increasingly meaningless] but rather where will the work be done? This depends more and more on where the skills and the innovative capacity are.”* [119]

“Willingness to innovate to cope with local conditions is key.” [103]