

Personal visits are essential to market your products or services.

A very contractual environment.

Doing business in Germany is very contractual. Everything is done in writing and your German counterpart will not hesitate to take legal advice with possible ensuing court action. One must have a good legal and tax counsel from the outset.

Contracts for utilities are over 5 or 10 years and cannot be broken. If you lease telephone, telex or fax equipment, it is for at least 5 years.

Employment contracts are very rigid. Be sure you have understood all the clauses.

The Canadian embassy will be helpful to start you off. Help from the Canadian embassy was very useful in the beginning to get names of German industry and commerce contacts. After that it was up to you.

For the non-German employee it is essential to master the native language because although most German business partners understand English they would feel more comfortable to finalize a deal in German. Add the fact that you are in a new country and you need to learn German is a big challenge.

As customers find it more comfortable to deal with nationals, the CNR office in Germany the CNR office in Hamburg office CNR found it preferable to have a German employee in the Hamburg office. To speak German is a must.

Germany proved to be a very important market for CNR. After a few years the most important market proved to be West Germany, and in 1976 an office was opened in Frankfurt. Even today 30% of CNR's export business is accounted for 80% of exports if you look at the statistics. Moreover, it can be very difficult to place names in front of official statistics. Use the telephone to find out where the business is located in Germany.

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Lessons to be drawn

Continuity must be preserved. Germans respect the continuity of staff. Beware of high staff turnover. Meetings for business only, social chats about football or the weather are regarded as a waste of time.