

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

- We always use partners in investments, mostly international partners – we do not want to be majority shareholders. [11]
- The firm helps to support a dedicated person in Washington and one in Manila who liaise with the IFIs. However, *“they do not do that much... their work is mainly logistics rather than developing relationships. They gather reports and other information to help with proposal development...”* The financial depth of the company internationally is a more important aspect of pooling resources. [15]
- Alliances and joint ventures with local and international companies that have complementary interests. [37]

Comments on services – agents and local partners:

- Finding IFI work is largely *“hit and miss”* because the only way to identify real opportunities is through personal contacts, preferable as follow-on business. One cannot wait to see the notices in UN Development Business, or on the Bank web sites. This is far too late. One has to be involved much earlier to be able to assess the context, the complete rationale for the project, and the chances of success. *“We would hope to be ahead of the Bank in our involvement and knowledge of the project.”* [15]
- Language skills in some countries such as central Asia where having a project manager who speaks Russian is a major advantage [16]
- Agents are expensive and of doubtful value. Professional services have to be marketed by the professionals themselves. Agents cannot develop the types of relationships that are key to gaining work. These relationships require professional credibility. The large international consulting firms can do much more contact marketing than can a small Canadian firm. [18]
- Strong locally-engaged staff is the right way to go. They are often very knowledgeable and helpful. In contrast, a trade commissioner is *“barely getting to know a country at the end of a three-year assignment.”* [21]
- DFAIT [not just the trade commissioners] are a great resource when the company is trying to enter a new country market. The Post can help the firm establish a network of agents, partners and contracts in the country by making recommendations and checking credentials. [21]
- *Size and diversification help.* If a company is small and specialized, opportunities in a particular market or though a particular IFI will arise infrequently, perhaps not frequently enough to justify a continuous presence. Also the company needs to be big to get *“decent size jobs”*. [23]