

TAKING STOCK

CONTEXT

You've been at Post for approximately four months. You've had the opportunity to get your bearings, your personal affairs are more or less in order and you feel you are starting to get a grasp on things. Taking stock is about reviewing what you've experienced so far in order to plan for future action.

Why plan? To the extent possible, you want to develop a measure of control over your environment. *What do you need to do in order to plan?* You need to stop, take stock, and set objectives. You need to establish a framework that will enable you to make the most out of what you have at your disposal. Demands are changing . . . and your plans should reflect and respond to this dynamic.

Traditional trade promotion activities have tended to consume the attention of the commercial-economic section, but market access issues must be integrated into your work plan. When trade agreements are in place, your challenge is one of identifying access barriers, securing market access gains, ensuring countries live up to their obligations, and promoting new business and economic opportunities for Canada.

The key to success is the effectiveness of your team:

building teamwork and focusing on results should be every manager's goal.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

What works well as is? Where are there problems that *need* to be addressed or areas where obvious improvements can be made?

Delegation of Authority and Responsibility

- Is workload distribution equitable?
- Are responsibilities allocated according to interest and competence?
- Are mandates and expectations clearly set out? Are they documented?
- Do your staff have experience with accountability letters (i.e. statements of objectives discussed and agreed upon by employee and manager)?
- Do your staff appear to be fully occupied? Are they making effective use of their time?
- Have you noticed areas where they could be doing more?
- Have you noticed situations where some streamlining of effort could save time and resources?
- Are you and your staff able to devote enough time to activities that reflect your priorities?