size of the competitors". Therefore the Canadian firm must be able to offer special value – this is the *sine qua non*. The firm must have a strategy to be known for something, not just known. Once the firm has something special to offer, then some other things can help, including the following: [37]

- Being able to *"bring something of interest to the table" not just arriving to ask "what's coming up".* [37]
- Offering solutions, not just general capabilities. *["Most Canadian consultants are not leading edge."]* [37]
- Working in harmony with the Canadian image [for example, Canada has a good reputation for solid competent municipal services.] [37]

- Some general advantages of Canadian firms are a low dollar, a generally attractive culture and easy-going way of doing business, and fluency in English. European competitors submit their proposals and resumes in English for IFI work, but their staff are often not truly fluent enough to work in English. Often the client's only foreign language is English. [37]

Comments on civil works procurement - price, positioning, image and differentiation:

- The market is focused on occasional major projects and big sales, so marketing tends to focus on single efforts not on-going relationships with particular customers. [102]
- The firm has sold X% of its equity to a large European state-owned corporation. The advantages it sees are that the large scale of the partner provides stability, financial guarantees and access to European funding and subsidies, and lobbying power. [24]
- Another factor in the firm's success overseas [or at least good prospects] is its choice of an area of work in which Canada in general has a good reputation and image. [27]
- By and large Canadian firms are competitive against the *"ugly Americans"* and the expensive Europeans. [28]
- 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]
- It is useful to have offices in both Canada and the USA [and other locations]. One can bid from one office or another depending on the requirements. [29]
- The appropriate business model for a large company working internationally has changed. Now only about 50% of their work is done in-house. It is very important to be able to call upon a network of specialists as sub-contractors. What the large company offers still is project management and financial stability. [39]