



Key people are all of a sudden not available. If this occurs, it is done of politeness. They really do not wish to do business with you. Or the product/service vendor is already predetermined.

However, if you have a powerful, influential, well-connected partner, you can minimize these disappointments. The Canadian experience is that embassy staff and officials can be a great help in opening doors and meeting decision makers.

Myth #11: By participating in environmental events such as trade shows or trade missions I will fill my order book.

Reality: Trade shows and trade missions are useful tools in establishing a first contact, but require your sustained support. This goes back to your business plan. Careful market research will give you the direction and resource commitment required. Trade missions are useful in identifying business opportunities.

Myth #12: In today's information and communication age communication is easy.

Reality: Not everybody is hooked into the communication frenzy. In many of the emerging industrial nations the degree of urgency we feel that a reply should have is not shared. Allow for communication times to be double and your communications budget requirements to be 25-30% greater than domestic communications costs.

Myth #13: Project timetables are similar to those of North America.

Reality: Wrong! Allow for at least double the time. As well, many European and Latin American countries have many more holidays which interrupt business projects.

Myth #14: The international business arena is a gold mine.

Reality: It is more like a mine-field. To be successful requires commitment, resources, staying power, a strategy (short-, intermediate- and long-term) and flexibility.

Myth #15: Everyone understands English. .

Reality: Maybe so, to varying degrees. But knowing the local language and therefore being able to communicate gives you a decided advantage over the competition. You understand the culture and the nuances, and you will be able to socialize at a different level. In addition, clear wording of contracts is essential including how words are used. Retain a translator if necessary and local legal counsel.