

PREPARING FOR YOUR REPLACEMENT

We would all be better trade program managers if we didn't have to reinvent the wheel each time we arrived at a new Post. There's no doubt that any new manager will soon imprint his or her style on the commercial section, and that there will be some refinement of the existing trade program. But reaching this stage takes time, and before implementing changes in the commercial section, you will have to go through a period of implementing the program as established by your predecessor. We would *all* benefit if you:

1. Bear in mind, from the day you arrive at Post, that you will be handing this portfolio over to a colleague a mere two to four years down the road.
2. Remember that your contacts, and the market intelligence they provide you with, are *not* proprietary: sharing information with your successor can only improve the service we all provide to the business community.
3. Keep your systems and files in logical order, so that your successor can easily find the information needed to start the job as soon as he or she walks in the door.
4. Let your contacts, in Canada and in the territory, know that you are leaving the Post, and who is replacing you. This address list can also serve as an excellent guide.
5. Leave a list of "helpful hints" about the local scene. For example, where would you take your principal contacts for lunch in your first week? Who are your main local clients in order of priority? Which other key contacts should be met first?
6. Prepare a transition book: much of what you prepare for visiting business people, Departmental briefing books, event reports, etc. can serve as material for your transition book. An ideal transition book would answer many of the questions posed in "Pre-Posting Arrangements", and would be provided to your successor as soon as he or she is confirmed for the posting. The bulk of your successor's pre-posting period could then be used to concentrate on what is *really* important in the Post's trade program, instead of searching for information readily available elsewhere. A transition book received on arrival at Post is better than no transition book; but one received two months prior to departure is even better.
7. Follow up with your successor a few months after he or she has had a chance to settle into the job, to discuss "What I would have done, had I had the chance." There probably have been issues that took the duration of your posting to come to grips with, strategies you may have wished to explore, and ideas for improvement that you simply did not have time to implement. Your successor will now be in a better position to evaluate your suggestions.

Canadians have an investment in our missions abroad . . .

let's make sure we're worth it .
