

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

dispersed among DFAIT, EDC, CIDA, CCC, AAFC and many smaller agencies such as CMHC.

2. Basic information and opportunity identification for neophyte companies is unlikely to yield much in terms of export volume. Such activity might continue to be worthwhile, but should be balanced with assistance to experienced and competitive companies once they are short-listed.
3. In-depth country and technical knowledge both are essential to success in the new international economy. The traditional Canadian model of the generalist trade commissioner who moves between countries and sectors fairly frequently is challenged by this clientele.

Other specific recommendations by interviewees included:

- Having staff at Posts keep a network of contacts and make key appointments with key contacts for visiting Canadian business people are an important contribution, in the opinion of the business people we interviewed. There appears to be more to the point than just wanting a free service. Interviewees were generally of the opinion that DFAIT could do this sort of task better and more cheaply from the Post than private agents might.
- Trade commissioners should respond quickly with a high level of help once a Canadian company has been short-listed for IFI work.
- The scope for IFINet to be an information intermediary appears limited. The IFI's web sites are fully adequate or fast becoming so. As well, the private sector now provides access to bidding and contracts information, with considerable value added in various ways, for a fee [for example, *developmentex.com*]
- Canadian networks within the IFIs are more likely to be useful to Canadian companies than OLIFI units at adjacent embassies.