

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

- 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]
- It is key that the firm "*manages its image and does not just let it happen*". That is, the firm must differentiate itself clearly from the extensive international competition by having something special to offer and by making this clear to potential clients. [28]
- Having a list of very strong client references from past work [essentially to working internationally] [29]
- Repeat business from satisfied clients is essential to building a viable international business. [29]
- Being active in international professional associations is helpful but expensive. [29]
- "Word of mouth" marketing is vital. [29]
- It is useful to have offices in both Canada and the USA. One can bid from one office or another depending on the requirements. [29]
- Regular marketing visits. "*We visit the ADB personally every quarter.*" "*If you do not appear you are just a pile of paper.*" [30]
- Keep good records of the work and the contacts made. [30]
- Personal contacts and credibility, carefully nurtured and maintained. [31]
- 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]
- A web site or sites that showcase the special value offered. [37]
- Working in harmony with the Canadian image [for example, Canada has a good reputation for solid competent municipal services.] [37]
- In such a huge and diverse international market a company has to have a focus and a strategy. It has to offer something that clearly differentiates itself from the competitors. This company has developed a proprietary software product for tax administration. It provides professional services along with the product. This has given it an entrée to a large number of developing countries that are attempting fiscal and tax reform. The product is in English because that is where the large market is for such services. [40]