

The Initial Approach

The best introduction is by personal visit. A representative or distributor may be appointed later but, initially, large-volume buyers prefer to meet their prospective suppliers face to face.

It is often necessary to make appointments with individual buyers. As a matter of good form, it is usually advisable to start with the director of purchasing or his equivalent and, through him, meet the buyers themselves. Advance notification is suggested in such cases.

It is important to make a complete presentation on the first call. Your proposal should include literature, specifications, samples if possible and all the price, delivery and quality-control information a buyer will need to evaluate your capabilities against his current sources. Many buyers keep up-to-date records on their suppliers. You will enhance the impression you make on your first visit by providing a résumé including the following:

- vendor's name, address and telephone number;
- name, address and telephone of local representative, if applicable;
- date established;
- size of plant;
- number of employees;
- principal products;
- location of plant;
- description of production facilities equipment;
- description of quality-control facilities and procedures;
- transportation facilities;
- approximate yearly sales volume;
- list of representative customers;
- financial and credit rating.

We suggest however, that before you visit the Midwest, you write to the Canadian Consulate General, Commercial Division, 12th Floor, 310 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60604-4295, to obtain some preliminary information on opportunities existing there. Your letter should contain:

- 1) a summary of your past experience in this market territory;
- 2) the channel of distribution you wish to pursue;