

Finally, these company strengths — people and philosophy — were turned into exporting success as a result of sound action skills. These include the ability to locate and secure market niches, to design products and/or services and to piece together an effective exporting campaign plan.

Each of these findings is discussed further in this chapter and illustrated with examples and quotes from award-winning companies.

Certain success factors were not common to all 27 companies, and these “uncommon” elements are not described. Rather, it is hoped that the five company profiles indicate how particular exporting situations require contrasting approaches.

Good people “The people in the company make it happen”

The most fundamental strength of the award winners is their people. And not just management, but the work force and the way these two groups relate to one another.

“The strength of our organization is people.”

*Reinhard Zobrist
Vice-president and General
Manager
Ingot Products Division
Alcan Smelters and
Chemicals Ltd.*

Management

Management skill and ability is a key success factor in exporting. Many companies were proud of their specific abilities and know-how in their industries as well as other skills in such areas as negotiating contracts and knowing how to do business in particular world markets. But the overriding theme was a commitment to doing a good job.

“The major factor in our exporting success is that we have a very committed and proud team.”

*Peter Sewell
President
Western Packaging
Systems Ltd.*

Seaboard Lumber Sales of Vancouver, British Columbia, stresses the skills and abilities of its management team of international traders in a highly competitive and volatile business. According to Clive Roberts, the chief executive officer of Seaboard,