

LES Training Strategy, *First Step*

Jackie Buchholz, LES public affairs assistant at the Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis, is very enthusiastic about the two-week course she attended in Ottawa this October.

"It was the single best experience I've had in the 17 years I've been working for the Department," she says.

The Program for LES was put together by Alice Power, Director of the Centre for Corporate Services Learning. Vivien Ratcliffe managed the delivery of the program and, together with Margaret Caines, acted as mentor to the 11 LES from the United States.

Ms. Buchholz has been on two other training courses, but she says that this one stands out as most significant because of the opportunities for person-to-person contacts and for learning about access to resources available to LES.

"The best part of the two-week course was building relationships at all levels, between us and with people at headquarters," says Ms. Buchholz. "It is this relationship-building that has given us confidence to go back to our posts and do our jobs better."

She says that being at headquarters makes a big difference in how the group learns. "We could have studied the information from books or on the Net, but we could never have built the contacts and relationships that we did. Although LES assistants are on the organization charts, we find ourselves somewhat isolated. This course has allowed us to build in a number of directions and to feel like a part of the machine."

On the one free day in the program, Ms. Buchholz made appointments based on the needs of her post. She visited the passport office, discussed security issues and met the consular desk officer

she had known only by phone. She said her most valuable time spent on the day off was meeting the political, economic and public affairs desk officer who has been "a great resource."

The group bonded very quickly, and after classes, explored Ottawa together. They will try to organize annual get-togethers after this.

"The whole two weeks," says Ms. Buchholz, "was a great journey."

International Trade: *Reviewing the Ground Rules*

Not so long ago, all that Canadian exporters had to do in order to sell their products abroad was find a good local representative, pay specific taxes and ensure that their product complied with market standards and requirements.

It was simple, yet complicated. While Canadian exporters would have had to take these same steps for every new market they were interested in accessing, different countries did not always have the same laws and regulations.

International trade was not regulated then as it is now by laws and regulations that governments have gradually

established through various organizations – in particular the World Trade Organization (WTO) – in order to promote international trade, while also maintaining a balance between healthy competition and a certain level of market protection.

In a changing world where borders are slowly disappearing, it is important to review from time to time the basic principles and mechanisms that govern international trade.

The course offered by the Institute's Centre for International Affairs Learning and Management Development (CFSD) examines the various ground rules established in recent years by the main organizations, agreements and treaties governing international trade (such as GATT and the WTO). It also helps participants review or broaden their knowledge of the main practices used in our trade system and examine the issues that will inevitably be discussed during the Millennium negotiations.

More than 60 colleagues learned a great deal during this two-day course in September and October. We are already being asked when registration starts for the next one. A sign of the times? A sign of a definite need!

*Maurice Y. Bernier (CFSD)
Trade Program Manager*



The secrets of speed reading are revealed to staff, left to right, standing: Robert Carrière (instructor), Joanne Bédard (SIX), Richard Dubuc (AES), Gilles Desbiens speed reading (IDC), Hélène Tremblay (EPC), Suzanne Desjardins (EET), Simon Rainville (EPS), Luc Scott (EPC), Yves Tellier (EPC), and Yvon Turcotte (REC); sitting: Alain Gendron (TBF), Michel Lemay (PKE), Suzanne Lalonde-Gaëtan (HPF), Donald Marsan (REO), and Carlos Miranda (LSR), off of the picture was Roseline Brien (REA).