

Halifax Chamber of Commerce opens the TAP on trade

It's hard to overstate the importance of trade to Nova Scotia's economy. The province is sending more (and more diverse) goods and services to international markets each year—from industrial and consumer products, to marketing and professional expertise.

In 2017, for example, Nova Scotia's exports grew 3.9 per cent (or \$186 million), compared with 2016. That's impressive, but with an approximate annual total of \$13 billion the province is still a long way from the Ivany Report target of \$21 billion—in fact, trade outflows are down six per cent from 2012.

According to Patrick Sullivan, President and CEO of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, Nova Scotia not only needs to think about exporting, but what exporting actually means in the competitive, global economy.

“Recent research from the Business Development Bank suggests that successful exporters share certain attributes,” he says. “Firstly, they see exporting as critical to overall success. Secondly, they do their homework before taking on the foreign competition. And, thirdly, they put resources behind their export strategies.”

This is where the Trade Accelerator Program Canada (TAP) can help. As part of its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, the Chamber makes the federally-supported initiative available to its more than 1,700 individual and company members across Nova Scotia.

“TAP provides access to the top exporting advisors, resources and contacts in Canada through training and direct, hands-on support,” explains Becky Davison, the Chamber's Director of Marketing. “Its



workshops in eight cities across the country, including Halifax, are geared towards building export plans for specific sectors and circumstances.”

This means learning how to navigate the complexities of the global trade ecosystem; leverage Canada's trade and investment resources; access tailored, face-to-face advice; recognize international best practices; accelerate export readiness; develop and implement new-market entry plans; and enhance trade footprints and revenues.

All of which points to a fourth attribute successful exporters share. Says Sullivan: “Never underestimate the importance of knowledge and continuous learning. That's how the trade edge gets honed.”

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