



Best Practices **in Dealing with Agents**

A: SELECTION

Choose your agents judiciously.

1. Remember that agents will be seen as the official representative of your institution. Poor performance and services may affect the reputation of your program and institution adversely.
2. Remember to ask for references from a prospective agent as well as a listing of the institutions currently represented. The membership of the Canada Language Council is very diverse and covers a large geographic area. Check with your colleagues as to the performance of the potential agent. You may also want to take into consideration how many institutions that the agent represents in your geographic area.
3. It is advisable to visit the prospective agent in his office prior to finalizing the agreement. Viewing the actual office may be the best indicator of the professionalism and business ethics of the agent.
4. Communication is key to ensuring adequate service between your institution and the agent. Ensure that you have had frequent communication with the agent prior to formalizing an agreement to ensure that the communication skills are sufficient.

B: CONTRACTS

Ensure that you have a signed contract or agency agreement that clearly specifies the following:

- Effective date
- Expiry date
- Renewal policy
- Cancellation policy
- Dispute mechanism, including jurisdiction under Canadian law
- Policy on confidentiality
- Terms and conditions
- Definition of Breach of Contract
- Range of services expected
- Commission rate for tuition
- Specification if commission applicable to any services other than tuition
- Commission policy with respect to cancellations and refunds

C: ORIENTATION

1. Ensure that you have a program to provide a comprehensive overview of your programs and services.
2. Ensure that your agents have an adequate supply of your current information at all times.
3. Ensure that you have a mechanism in place to inform agents of any changes as they occur.
4. Encourage and/or sponsor familiarization trips for agents to your institution.

D: FOLLOW UP / TRACKING

1. Establish a process via student feedback as to the performance of the agent.
2. Ensure that the agent is not adding additional charges for services that are provided by the institution.
3. Request that copies of any additional information produced by the agent are forwarded to you for review.
4. On your recruiting missions, schedule regular visits to the office of the agent. Verify what is being displayed and promoted for your institution.