

# Key Skills for Engaging in INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The first ten years of a career should be used as a time to develop foundational skills that you will refine and build on throughout your career. While every position will have its own unique requirements, the five areas outlined below represent a path to accomplishing cross cutting skills that you will need to be successful in the field of international trade.

## TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

1-5 years

### GOALS:

- Commit to life-long learning: learn the process of how things work – government, politics, issue advocacy – with the fundamental skills, you can learn the specifics of any issue
- Subject matter expertise in specific trade issues like intellectual property rights, free trade agreements, or AD/CVD
- Learn the legal/regulatory, operational, and policy aspects of a specific area of international trade; study history that has led to the current legal and policy framework

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

You will build credibility by demonstrating your knowledge of policy, and create a foundation for developing technical expertise as opportunities arise.

## COMMUNICATIONS

1-10 years

### GOALS:

- Develop effective communication and public speaking skills
- Deliver effective verbal communication and public speaking to increasingly larger audiences
- Develop advocacy skills tailored to specific audiences
- Develop your “personal brand” – who you are and what you offer to the community

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

You will be able to successfully explain, market and advocate for your client, industry, organization or project. You will also be able to successfully market yourself as you build your career.

### RESOURCES:

**Toastmasters** – public speaking skills.

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## STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

2-10 years

### GOALS:

- Engage with an increasingly broad variety of private sector, government, and non-profit stakeholders for advocacy and collaboration. Leverage diverse perspectives and ideas
- Build your network to leverage opportunities for skill-building and career development (eg coalition-building, speaking engagements, WIIT leadership!)

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

You will build relationships - and friendships - and be able to harness the power of a broader community to support your initiative.

### RESOURCES:

**LinkedIn** – engage the community

**Attend public events/discussions** – focus not only on panelists but on the engaged audience, who asks questions, what are they asking?

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

3-10 years

### GOALS:

- Learn how to manage a planning process to identify priority objectives, deliverables, deadlines and milestones
- Understand how to use available data to measure program efficiency and effectiveness
- Effectively manage a schedule to ensure delivery of key activities

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

You will strengthen your resume by including “Major Accomplishments” that show you can deliver concrete results.

## SUPERVISE/LEAD

5-10 years

### GOALS:

- Recruit a team, and manage and motivate performance
- Manage a budget and know how to get the resources you need

Maintain an effective work-life balance and effectively manage time

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

You will demonstrate your successful leadership abilities and set yourself up for positions of ever-increasing responsibility and impact.

