# Understanding your current reality
## What is your existing performance across the five key areas of Competitive Intelligence (CI)

| Area of CI Effort | 1. Tactical Responses | 2. Early Warning | 3. Strategic Projects | 4. Competitor Profiling | 5. Strategic Planning Cycle | Self Assessment Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Developing competitive intelligence that can support operational and tactical issues eg pricing, investment, sales opportunities | Identifying opportunities and threats before they become obvious, and early enough that the company can use intelligence in their strategic decision-making | Developing competitive intelligence to support decision-making in a particular area of strategic focus | Monitoring and assessment that helps to develop a deep and holistic understanding of one or more competitors at the strategic and tactical level | Competitive intelligence as an input into key decisions around strategic plans and budgets within the company's planning cycle(s) | These are the **five areas of best focus** for a company's CI effort |
| **World Class** | • War Gaming done for all key operational projects such as major innovation launches, price changes, brand/product / service relaunches<br>• Tactical responses to external activity are based on broader strategic understanding of competitors/ other 3rd parties | • Systematic monitoring of multiple, comprehensive areas of competitive activity. Covers competitors and other critical players such as suppliers and customers.<br>• War Gaming regularly used for early warnings perceived as being of significant threat | • Competitive Intelligence function is fully engaged in the key strategic projects for the business, supported by Executive<br>• War gaming a common tool for certain types of projects | • Systematic monitoring as per Early Warning.<br>• Regular debriefing sessions with senior management on key activities, predictions for the future and implications for their business, with a call-to-action as required | • Predictions of likely competitor strategies are used to help stress-test plans and determine whether assumptions are achievable within competitive context<br>• Budgets, growth & profit expectations can be adjusted before locked down for following year(s) | 1. |
| **Advanced** | • CI function *usually* consulted for advice and support in developing tactical response<br>• Sufficient intelligence about the competitor enables tactical responses to be developed within the broader strategic context, sometimes using war gaming as a tool | • Coordinated monitoring of key elements of competitive activity across multiple areas of performance to enable predictions<br>• Creation and sharing or predictive intelligence early enough to influence decision-making | • CI function has clear visibility over key strategic projects and develops intelligence inputs of value to project decision-makers<br>• Quality of competitive intelligence output is valuable and predictive in nature | • Target companies identified with engagement of senior leadership<br>• Competitor profile presentations developed and shared on ad-hoc basis | • Key trends impacting external players such as consumers, customers, suppliers, financial markets form part of strategic review for upcoming planning cycle | 2. |
| **Progressing** | • Tactical responses to external activity are made on ad-hoc basis without broader strategic competitive understanding<br>• CI function *sometimes* consulted for advice or support in tactical decision-making | • Pockets of activity monitor competitor activity, but only limited coordination to enable bigger picture to be created and future activities or strategies predicted<br>• Sharing of competitor activity largely focused on historical events, not predictive | • CI resource delivers ad-hoc insights and information to help with strategic project on request, but insights are still largely tactical rather than strategic | • Target companies identified<br>• Information and analysis still mostly ad-hoc but some coming from within the organisation | • External landscape is reviewed as part of inputs to following year's planning cycle.<br>• Key activities of competitors in prior year are used to help understand context | 3. |
| **Little or no system** | • No coordination of information about tactical competitor activities<br>• Company responses developed without knowledge of the broader strategic issues that are driving competitor behaviour | • No systems in place to actively monitor competitor activities and provide early warning of what is ahead | • Competitive intelligence input to key strategic projects is non-existent, or at the last minute and limited in scope | • No prioritised list of target competitors to profile<br>• Some ad-hoc collation and storage of information relevant to competitors with limited analysis or sharing beyond CI team | • No review of external landscape used as input to strategic planning cycle. Focus purely on internal performance and goals | 4.<br><br>5. |