

# The Journey to World Class Competitive Intelligence

These are summary points – illustrative, not exhaustive.

The table is best read by row, starting at the bottom and working from left to right (then up to the next row; and left to right)

## Self Assessment

What is your existing performance level in each Area of CI Effort (on the left)?

Based on this assessment we recommend identifying 3 areas of best focus for your company's CI Effort

	Tactical Responses	Early Warning	Strategic Projects	Competitor Profiling	Strategic Planning Cycle
	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)
<b>World Class</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>War Gaming done for all key operational projects such as major innovation launches, price changes, brand/product / service relaunches</li> <li>Tactical responses to external activity are based on broader strategic understanding of competitors/ other third parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systematic monitoring of multiple, comprehensive areas of competitive activity. Covers competitors and other critical players such as suppliers and customers</li> <li>War Gaming regularly used for early warnings perceived as being of significant threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competitive Intelligence function is fully engaged in the key strategic projects for the business, supported by Executive</li> <li>War gaming a common tool for certain types of projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systematic monitoring as per Early Warning</li> <li>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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Predictions of likely competitor strategies are used to help stress-test plans and determine whether assumptions are achievable within competitive context</li> <li>Budgets, growth &amp; profit expectations can be adjusted before locked down for following year(s)</li> </ul>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An existing CI function which usually is consulted for advice and support in developing tactical response</li> <li>Sufficient intelligence about the competitor enables tactical responses to be developed within the broader strategic context, sometimes using war gaming as a tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated monitoring of key elements of competitive activity across multiple areas of performance to enable predictions</li> <li>Creation and sharing or predictive intelligence early enough to influence decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI function has clear visibility over key strategic projects and develops intelligence inputs of value to project decision-makers</li> <li>Quality of competitive intelligence output is valuable and predictive in nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target companies identified with engagement of senior leadership</li> <li>Competitor profile presentations developed and shared on ad-hoc basis</li> <li>More advanced CI profiling capability and tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key trends impacting external players such as consumers, customers, suppliers, financial markets form part of strategic review for upcoming planning cycle</li> </ul>
<b>Foundations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some tracking of tactical competitor activities</li> <li>Limited CI function which is sometimes consulted for advice or support in tactical decision-making</li> <li>Tactical responses to external activity are made on ad-hoc basis without broader strategic competitive understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pockets of activity monitor competitor activity, but only limited coordination to enable bigger picture to be created and future activities or strategies predicted</li> <li>Sharing of competitor activity largely focused on historical events, not predictive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI resource delivers ad-hoc insights and information to help with strategic project on request, but insights are still largely tactical rather than strategic</li> <li>Limited CI capability to conduct strategic research and analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target competitors identified</li> <li>Information and analysis still mostly ad-hoc but targeted on identified competition</li> <li>Limited CI profiling capability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External landscape is reviewed as part of inputs to following year's planning cycle</li> <li>Key activities of competitors in prior year are used to help understand context</li> </ul>
<b>Limited System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No system of coordination of information about tactical competitor activities</li> <li>Any company responses are developed without knowledge of the broader strategic issues that are driving competitor behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No systems in place to actively monitor competitor activities and provide early warning of what is ahead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competitive intelligence input to key strategic projects is non-existent, or at the last minute and limited in scope</li> <li>No organisational CI capability to conduct strategic research and analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prioritised list of target competitors to profile</li> <li>Some ad-hoc collation and storage of information relevant to certain competitors</li> <li>Limited analysis and sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No review of external landscape used as input to strategic planning cycle. Focus purely on internal performance and goals</li> </ul>