

2010 CI Application Survey

1. How well do you think that your CI customers or clients understand the definition and value of competitive intelligence?

- Excellent understanding. CI is an integral part of strategic decision-making. Budget is allocated for skill development.
- Good understanding. Most senior management understands CI. Resources dedicated to ongoing CI tasks.
- Average understanding. At least one senior management sponsor. CI funded on project basis.
- Below average understanding. Senior management does not differentiate CI from Business Intelligence, Market Research, Marketing or other fields. CI executed as part-time task of another function.
- Poor understanding. Little or no appreciation of CI in the organization. CI is done surreptitiously and has little impact on results.

2. Which statement best describes your success in describing competitive intelligence to prospective customers or clients?

- I regularly, succinctly and convincingly explain the definition and value of CI for them.
- I usually can explain the value of CI in an “issue discovery” meeting with my prospects.
- I struggle to explain CI in context of my customers’ or clients’ issues in a way that leads to their decision to use my services.
- I have tried many approaches but have not found one that works consistently well.
- I fight misconceptions about CI so often that forming a proactive, affirmative statement about its definition and value is missing for me.
- I think that this is a non-issue among my prospects.

3. How well does your organization assemble and market competitive intelligence success stories?

- We track and report numerous cases when CI made a substantial, positive impact on a customer’s business outcomes.

- We maintain a few archetypical CI success stories that are adapted to explain the potential value of CI.
- We have one stellar CI story that we regularly repeated in our marketing.
- We primarily use marketing material from CI books or industry sources to market CI.
- We lack convincing success stories that work well with prospective clients.
- We cannot share stories because the useful information is confidential.

4. Which of the following development steps do you regularly take to improve your competitive intelligence skills?

- I participate in online forums with other CI professionals.
- I engage in ongoing professional dialogs to learn about new CI approaches, tools and techniques.
- I examine and decipher CI case studies.
- I regularly read CI blogs and books that are relevant to potential client engagements.
- I take CI classes.
- I attend meetings or conferences dedicated to CI.
- I learn primarily through executing CI engagements.
- I publish CI material through blogs, books or magazines.
- I conduct research in CI topics.
- I ask my previous or existing clients how I can improve.
- I am too busy working on projects to dedicate explicit time to skill development activities.

5. Which skills, if substantially improved, would have the greatest impact on your competitive intelligence success? I would like to be better at ...

- Finding prospective clients
- Explaining and selling the value of CI
- Gaining management sponsorship for CI
- Identifying better information sources

- Accessing and organizing information
- Selecting and using the right analytical techniques
- Interviewing customers and primary sources
- Boiling down the analysis to a few key points
- Creating a convincing story to present
- Presenting conclusions in a compelling way
- Helping the organization to believe and act on my conclusions
- Capturing the impact of my efforts
- Dealing with the people issues