

Competitive Intelligence Maturity Model

The optimal competitive intelligence program:

1. Is well-staffed and well-funded
2. Keeps tabs on both direct and indirect competitors
3. Informs product and go-to-market strategy with win/loss data
4. Measures success and makes decisions using meaningful KPIs
5. Makes it easy for all stakeholders to access relevant, real-time insights



Competitive Program Grader



ACTIVATOR

Common action item: Determine where in your company CI is most needed and strategize accordingly.

Most Activator programs are meeting only one of the five criteria listed above—maybe two if they're on the cusp of graduating to Architect. Few Activators are doing win/loss analysis, and even fewer are using KPIs to measure success and make decisions.

Believe it or not, these gaps are not necessarily attributable to a lack of resources; there are plenty of Activator programs with dedicated headcount and budget. Typically, the thorn in the side of an Activator is a lack of strategy.

What is the purpose of our CI program? What do our stakeholders care about? What do our buyers care about?

These are the questions that most Activators have yet to answer.



ARCHITECT

Common action item: Use the [ACT framework](#)—alignment, culture, technology—to maximize your impact.

Most Architect programs are meeting only two of the five criteria listed above—maybe three if they're on the cusp of graduating to Accelerator. Many Architects have either implemented win/loss analysis or established KPIs, but few have done both.

By definition, if you've reached the Architect stage, you have all the pieces you need to create that optimal competitive intelligence program. The challenge is putting those pieces together.

How you overcome that challenge depends on the specifics of your situation—hence your personalized action items!—but in general, it's a matter of staying aligned with your stakeholders, creating a competitive culture, and implementing a dedicated CI software solution. To learn more, [enroll in Competitive Advantage Academy and take the Architect course!](#)



ACCELERATOR

Common action item: Keep doing what you're doing—just make sure you're getting more efficient over time.

An Accelerator program meets three or more of the five criteria listed above. To reach this level of maturity, you need to have either implemented win/loss analysis or established KPIs. Many top-tier programs have done both.

Although some Accelerators closely resemble the optimal CI program described above, most still have room for improvement—whether they're lacking quantitative KPIs, in need of additional headcount, or failing to update their deliverables as much as they should. For programs at this level of maturity, it's less about putting the pieces together and more about continuously improving on what's already been done.

How can we get more out of our win/loss interviews? Can we formalize a process for making predictions about our market? How can we better assess which projects are worth our time? These are the kinds of questions most Accelerators should be asking themselves.