

# Using Competitive Intelligence to Improve Client Relations through Empathy

What's this? "Competitive Intelligence" and "Empathy" in the same sentence? Absolutely!

Competitive Intelligence (via such methodologies as mystery shopping and the debriefing of frontline staff such as sales and customer service reps) can be used to close the physical and psychological gap separating corporate decision-makers from clients and their experiences.

Unlike most quantitative methods that reduce client experiences into a numerical abstraction and qualitative methods that gather client experiences long after the fact, Competitive Intelligence can be used to look at the real-time experience of clients going about buying and using your products and services.

For decision-makers, this should be seen as a key point that separates Competitive Intelligence from other research methodologies.

As a decision-maker, Competitive Intelligence provides you with real-time and corroborated evidence of client experiences with front-line staff, as well as providing important clues on their perceptions of the relative strengths and weaknesses of products and services, yours and those of the competition.

Through Competitive Intelligence, decision-makers are given a vital (and sometimes, uncomfortable) perspective of their own products and services as seen through the eyes and ears of their clients.

Decision-makers are also given an opportunity to discover and understand the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of their offerings as perceived by clients – and exploited by competitors.

On the other hand, they will also be given a glimpse into what competitors see as the strengths and value propositions of their products and services – as well as the weaknesses which they try to hide or underplay.

Given the important perspectives provided by Competitive Intelligence, it is clear that this is a vital tool in a business executive's toolbox.

Are you ready to "walk the walk" in your client's shoes?

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