

A **three-page excerpt** from our 11-page Best Practice Guidebook:

Building a Sustainable Companywide Intelligence Network



Best Practice Guidebook

Building a Sustainable Companywide Intelligence Network

GUIDEBOOK SUMMARY

Firm: Cintas

Industry: Business Services

Headquarters: Cincinnati, Ohio, United States

Geographic Footprint: Global

Ownership: Public

Revenue (2011): \$3.8 billion USD



Problem:

Cintas must optimize limited resources and harness employees' competitive intelligence insights to help the company win new business and defend existing accounts.

Solution:

Cintas builds a self-sustaining competitive intelligence (CI) network that involves the entire workforce. This program includes:

- Acquiring a bottom-up perspective on existing CI usage to establish the program's framework
- Developing a companywide CI network that capitalizes on stakeholder capabilities and captures explicit and tacit knowledge
- Maximizing network productivity by aligning CI roles to day-to-day responsibilities
- Driving awareness and participation among Cintas' 30,000 employees with a tailored marketing campaign
- Creating intelligence deliverables that balance CI program resources with stakeholder needs
- Driving network usage of a customized intelligence portal

Business Results:

- Enhanced internal information-sharing
- Improved response rates to competitive activity
- Increased sales efficiency

Resources Required:

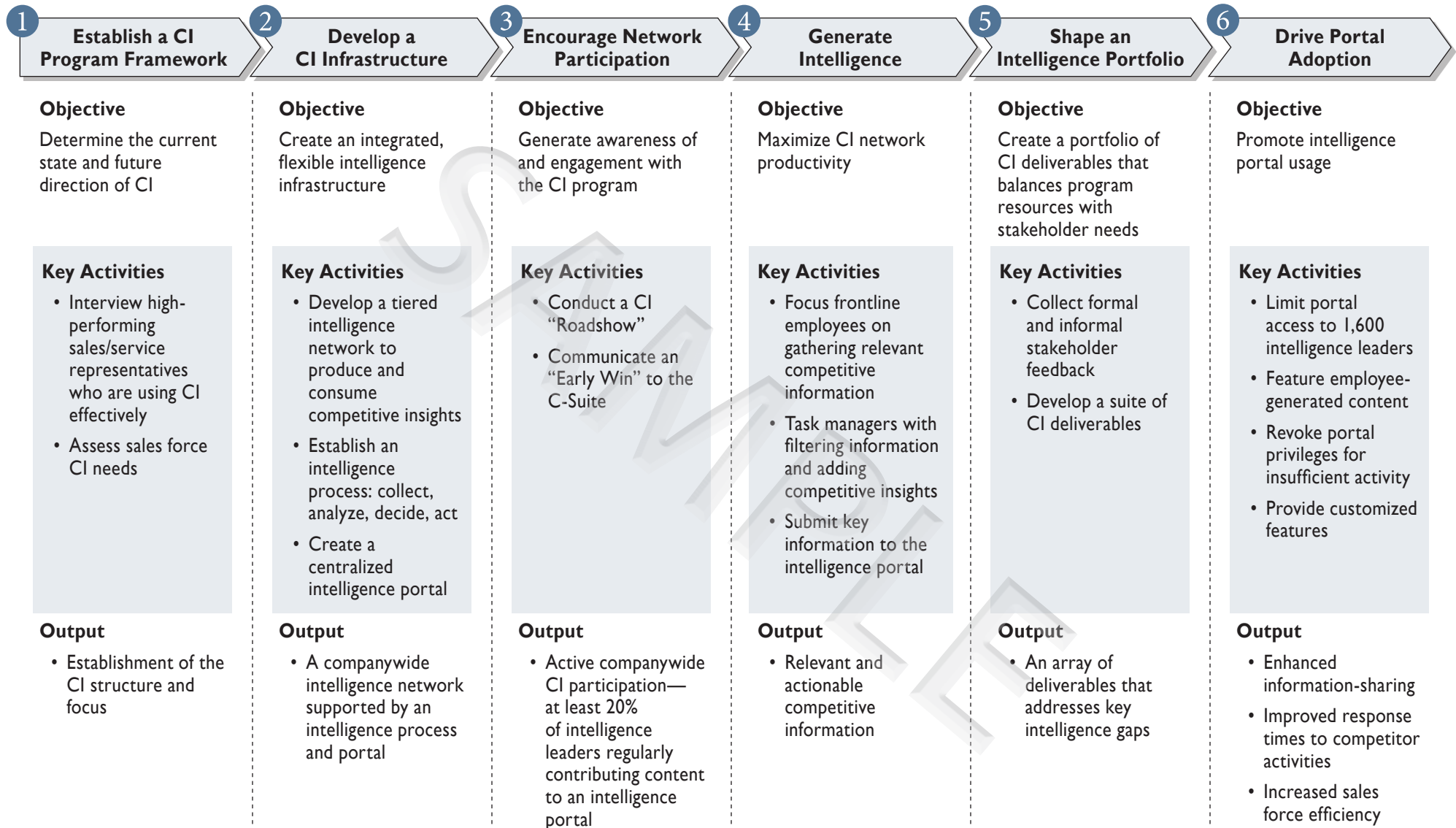
- Full-time CI Director
- CI vendor
- Customized intelligence portal

Applicability of Best Practice to Executive Functions:

Function	Applicability
Competitive Intelligence	●
Sales Leadership	◐

Cintas builds a companywide competitive intelligence (CI) network to complement its one-person department

CI Network Development Process



Note: Definition of Competitive Intelligence—The continuous monitoring of a company’s competitive environment to identify, analyze, and disseminate intelligence on opportunities and threats.



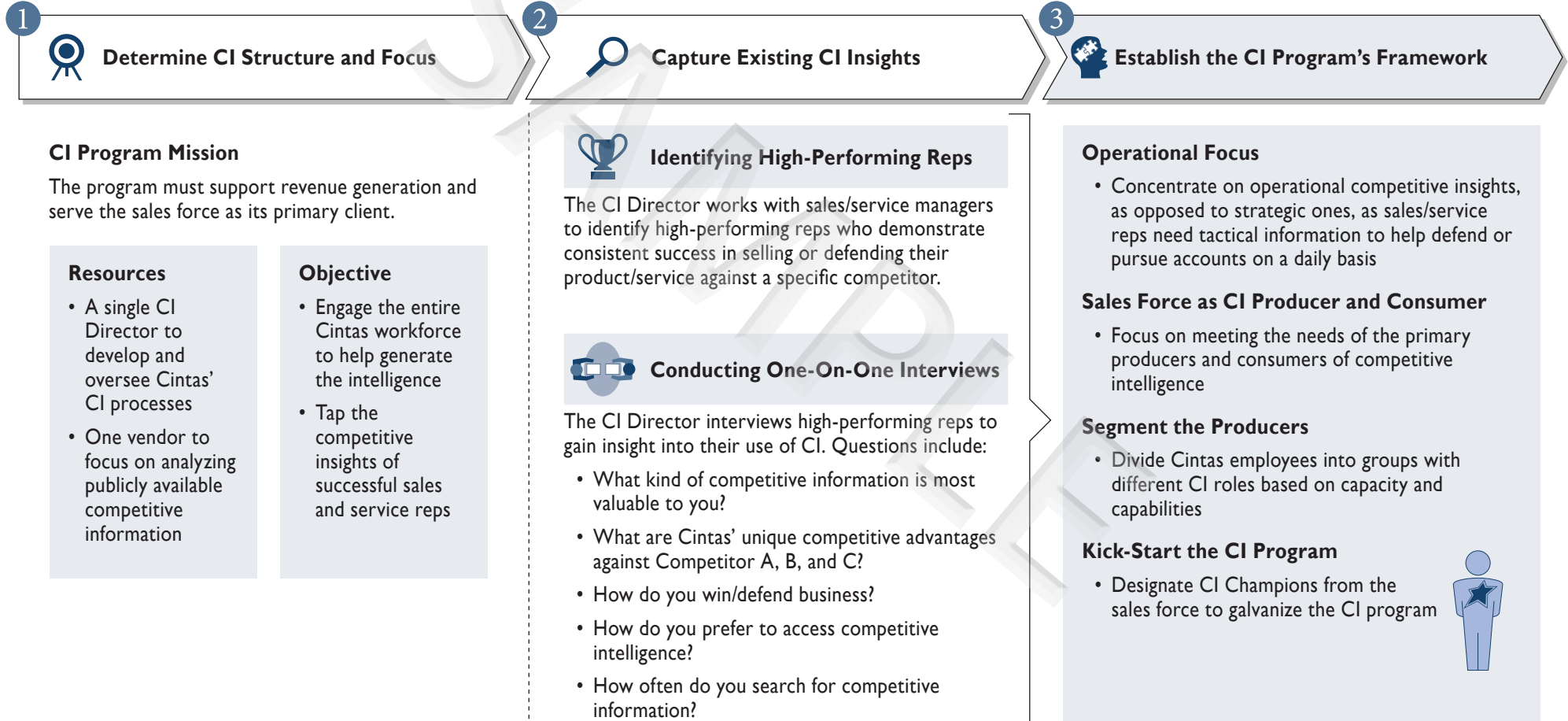
KEY TAKEAWAY: Scope program needs by learning how front-line employees use competitive intelligence

The CI Director in 2007 evaluates existing CI efforts and program needs by conducting cross-company interviews of leading sales and service representatives

IMPLICATIONS OF A ONE-PERSON CI FUNCTION

A one-person CI function necessitates the creation of an employee CI network. By limiting the size of CI to a “Director” role, intelligence consumers must share information in order to receive information (i.e., become producers). By involving every employee in the intelligence process, Cintas can capture explicit and tacit intelligence and foster an intelligence-focused culture.

Assessing the Current State and Future Direction of CI



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