

Quality in Higher Education – A Competitive Intelligence Based Approach

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Abstract

Competitive Intelligence (CI) is a systematic and ethical program for gathering, analyzing, and managing external information that can affect the company's plans, decisions and operations. It is a crucial part of the emerging knowledge economy. By analyzing rival's moves, CI allows companies to anticipate market developments rather than merely react to them. Within this framework, benchmarking can involve ten steps: identify what's to be compared; identify comparative companies; determine data collection method and collect data; determine performance "gaps"; define future performance levels; communicate benchmark findings to the organization; establish goals to be attained; develop plan; implement and monitor progress; and recalibrate benchmarks. We propose to discuss several models of benchmarking in the aim of using competitive intelligence in higher education quality assurance and improvement.

Key Words: *Quality, Competitive Intelligence, Benchmarking Models, Higher Education.*