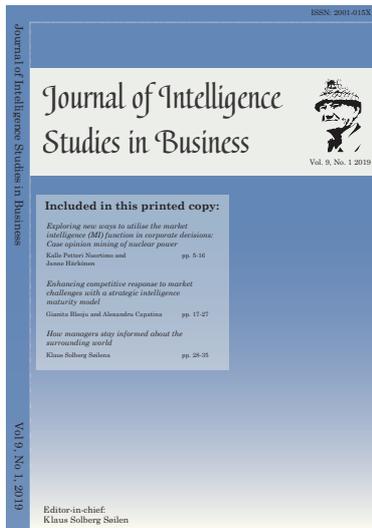


# Journal of Intelligence Studies in Business



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### Enhancing competitive response to market challenges with a strategic intelligence maturity model

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## Enhancing competitive response to market challenges with a strategic intelligence maturity model

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**ABSTRACT** Tracking meaningful insights about companies' exposures to high risk of failure in competitive markets, intelligence studies in business should listen to practitioners' signals and act in providing decision making support to systematic scanning for valuable information. In order to gain robustness in confronting unexpected events in real markets, companies should adopt an unstructured learning perspective with maturity assessment tools, while purposely pooling strategic intelligence (SI) skills. By bridging organizational maturity modeling with a future orientation stream of literature and intelligence studies in business, this conceptual research aims to highlight a genuine Strategic Intelligence Capability Maturity Model (SI CMM), capable of purposely addressing the challenge of aligning detective and anticipatory organizational capabilities. The conceptual model highlights the degree of preparedness of four SI profiles behaviors (intelligence provider, vigilant learner, opportunity captor and opportunity defender – previously developed by the authors) against seven levels of maturity. The SI CMM framework outlines both conditioned scanning capabilities (the first five SI readiness levels) and enablers to anticipate future market trends (the last two SI readiness levels). The novel approach of the strategic intelligence readiness framework supplies companies with a valuable organizational learning tool to close the skills gap through an opportunity provider profile. The main features lie in coordination and sharing SI common knowledge to enhance preparedness in forward-looking competitive pressures. The conceptual framework invites academia and the community of intelligence experts in business to evaluate the relevance of the new conceptualization, clarity of constructs and complementary nature of correlation and causation with the proposed SI CMM model.

**KEYWORDS** Capability maturity model, intelligence provider, opportunity captor, opportunity defender, strategic intelligence, vigilant learner

*“If we are blinded by darkness,  
 we are also blinded by light”*

*Annie Dillard*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of unpredictable changes, which have a huge impact on firms' competitiveness, providing managerial tools to assess

organizational preparedness for the future becomes compulsory. The performance gaps registered between competitors are due to the different degree of organizational preparedness to anticipate and react to future market trends.

Managerial proficiency in understanding and addressing market challenges lies with scanning for relevant information, reacting to ambiguity, developing peripheral vision and overcoming cognitive bias in weak signal

interpretation. In order to enhance future organizational preparedness, core organizational skills to embed knowledge need to be addressed and responses need to be provided, confronting the demand of decision-makers for strategic intelligence (SI) training with developing anticipative capability.

The changing patterns of competition and its impact over the organizational capabilities' alignment continue to be a challenge for scholars and practitioners in business and management. In order to deal with increasing complexity and volatility of the competitive landscape, organizations should inquire about the knowledge and skills they must develop for the managerial future orientation. Current patterns of strategic behaviour are still dominated by standardized or specific models and tools which are foreseeable to deter gain from innovation and change in future markets. Therefore, strategic intelligence core skills should be trained to support management decisions in providing adjustable learning tools to successfully leverage dynamic capabilities of the firms.

In order to provide anticipative managerial training, a strategic intelligence framework to assess the degree of organizational preparedness is hosting a learning approach to SI maturity with:

- **conceptual training:** knowledge acquisition oriented, to match SI missing skills;
- **interpretative and iterative:** expected proficiency in knowledge sharing; knowledge transfer oriented of core SI skills; actionability through collective learning experimentation;
- **future oriented behavior training:** knowledge capitalization oriented to enhance competitive identity of SI performers; influencing the future competitive environment; developing a SI supportive culture.

The Strategic Intelligence Capability Maturity Model (SI CMM) articulates actionable organizational knowledge and provides guidelines for managerial practice to share SI practices about future competitive pressure anticipation in order to identify the specific SI core skills that need to be improved. The value added of the SI CMM resides on an interrelated body of knowledge of strategic intelligence and competitive behavior, valorizes our up-to-date benchmarking

insights over the key topics on organizational alignment capabilities to environment turbulence and underlines knowledge discovery vocation as a SI unique feature to influence organizational intelligence maturity.

In the following sections, the main approaches and outcomes in the field of intervention, conceptualization, constructed experimentation and adjusting within the multi-framing approach of strategic intelligence profiling are exposed, as well as the methodological matching.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The value of intelligence in influencing managerial thinking builds upon business practice reports about the lack of perspectives on strategic intelligence capability importance to assist decision-makers with scenarios of aligning intelligence agendas with the anticipation of competitive pressures (Gilad, 2011).

Developing the capability to design interpretive frameworks is particularly important, while managerial strategic decision has to anticipate future competitive pressures with unanalyzable environments. A conceptual model of collective creation of meaning emphasizes the principles of puzzle method and provides an anticipative scanning process (anticipative strategic scanning and collective intelligence) to enrich the literature and business collection of cases (Lesca and Lesca, 2011).

Qualified foresight capability is approached with a future orientation stream of literature and intelligence studies in business to enhance managerial relevance of various business toolkits to confront competitive environment complexity and volatility.

Intelligence studies in business highlights the importance of designing support decision making tools to share practitioners' concerns about interpreting relevant information regarding the external environment, affecting strategic positioning. Intelligence analysis toolsets, cross-disciplinary studies, foresight and industry-specific case studies are listed as uncovered areas of interest among respondents' perceptions. The definition of CI studies in business continues to track confusion with implications in formulating precise responses to practitioners' needs. Intelligence studies in business should focus on the content of managerial training to enhance their knowledge about relevant external influences, through ethically gathering

actionable information. Moreover, the industry-specific focus deals with the necessity to develop anticipative tools to mitigate failures and crises (Søilen, 2016). Furthermore, intelligence studies should help to articulate need-to-know, strong signals and trends affecting organizational intelligence preparedness. The body of knowledge should be enriched with relevant evidence of various applications confronted to real competitive context, where we expect that learning by doing bridges what we see with what we do not see about the future to generate relevant intelligence training content (Søilen, 2018).

Enhancing competitive responses to market challenges requires managerial proficiency not only in distinguishing between key drivers of success in current markets but to anticipate future changes in complex and volatile environments. Taking leadership to steer organizations in an unstable competitive landscape needs a high level of preparedness in challenges to the current status quo, mainly if successful. The market leader position is under serious threat once ordinary capabilities are misperceived as extraordinary, as the risk of non-replicating the business success is very high. New challenges arise from ambiguity and volatility, influencing leadership to change the current business model; therefore, developing new dynamic capabilities emerges. An insightful approach organizes dynamic capabilities around three pillars: sensing change, seizing opportunities and transforming the business model, which are considered critical in enhancing competitive response within volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous future environments. Proactively upgrading key features of the current business model is decisive to ensure the successful organizational fitness to VUCA environments, while reframing strategic leadership on core skills pillars is listed: anticipate, challenge, interpret, decide, align and learn. The real challenge for organizational preparedness is to reinvent the business model through purposely combining sensing, seizing and transformation to comply with unforeseeable consequences. (Shoemaker et al., 2018).

Competitive positioning relies upon an organizational learning approach of interpreting the environment with test makers actively searching for information and test avoiders with passively interpreting information within limits. Four categories of interpreting behavior are considered: enacting

and discovering labels intrusive organizations, while conditioned viewing and undirected viewing labels non-intrusive organizations (Daft and Weick, 1984). Intelligence studies in business builds upon the above seminal work and focuses upon an organizational learning approach to improve managerial interpretive skills to cope with the environment.

The foresight maturity model (Rohrbeck, 2010) adapts and develops the three-step model of managerial acting upon weak signals on emerging change: scanning or data gathering, interpretation of the meaning of data and enacting through learning (Daft and Weick, 1984).

The future orientation stream of literature provides useful insights about measuring corporate foresight, maturity to reach future preparedness status, and labeled vigilant future prepared status at maturity. Valuable insight features continuously perceiving through change sensors, systematically prospecting for anticipating unexpected changes, followed by probing scenarios to shape the rules of competition, as core skills to be developed (Rohrbeck, 2010). The conceptual framework underlines five capability dimensions against which the respondent is assessing the level of organizational future orientation (OFO) readiness: information usage, method sophistication, people and networks, organization and culture. The quantitative benchmark research assessed the level future preparedness with a 300 multinationals longitudinal study, 120 interviews among high and medium management levels, followed by 20 case studies across industries. The study defines an optimum level of future preparedness when its corporate foresight need level is matched by its corporate foresight maturity level, with the results clustering corporate foresight practices with the sample as follows: vigilant (24%), deficiencies (26%) and in danger (50%) (Rohrbeck et al., 2018).

Enhancing competitive response to volatile and uncertain environment challenges requires managerial core skills to understand, interpret and enact upon competitor analysis and market selection. Mapping competitive pressure in different industries gives valuable insights about how to make relevant a current position to future positioning when anticipating change patterns of competition. Each firm will be uniquely affected by its capacity to decide upon markets selection. Therefore, to enhance the competitive

response, reconfiguration with alliances and targeting will be undertaken. Based on common strategic intent, five types of alliances are labelled: surrogate attackers, critical supporters, passive supporters, flank protectors or strategic umbrellas will destabilize and redirect the pressure system (D'Aveni, 2002).

Relying upon measuring the managers' perceptions about competitive dynamics, one significant study informs about limited capability to identify and act upon sensors, once opportunities and threats dominate competitive response decisions. Reflections upon developing organizational capabilities shapes plausible competitive response behavior through an experimental learning approach to align internal and external influences in anticipating early changing patterns of competition in future markets (Fouskas and Drossos, 2010).

Exploring new markets is particularly challenging for capturing opportunities, while previous performance is non-repeatable. To address the concern, a useful response lies with mapping corporate foresight activities to overcome vulnerabilities in coping with uncertainty. Experimenting recipes with multiple iterations of perceiving, prospecting and probing in bottom of the pyramid (BOP) segments finds distant opportunities, crucial for capitalize upon them (Højland and Rohrbeck, 2018).

Differentiation in future markets becomes particularly difficult when it comes to managing innovation-related benefits among partners engaged in co-competition, as they are sharing a common knowledge base.

Seeking offer differentiation colludes with a technological co-competition business model and peculiar concerns arise when analyzing radical innovation vs incremental improvements for individual firms engaged in co-competition. Conflictive objectives derived from the propensity to share vs protect practices to embed relevant knowledge has implications for business model transformation. Return on evidence of a cross-industrial survey in Finnish markets informs about the emergence of a radical business model innovation to preserve the offer differentiation outcome within collaboration among competitors (Ritala and Sainio, 2014).

One recent study proposes a comparative three-level (early stage CI, mid-level CI capability, world-class CI) capability CI maturity model with eight dimensions:

strategy and culture, relationship with management, structure, resources, system, deliverables and capabilities, analytical products and CI use, and impact. The comparative model aims at enabling benchmarking across industries and returns on empirical evidence underlines the necessity of a holistic model to track each company's CI practices to reach maturity (Oubric et al., 2018).

Business and intelligence communities are seeking relevant guidance to act upon organizational competitive capital and training should provide external expertise support to focus on defining the scope of a business opportunity (Liebowitz, 2006).

Developing competitive capital lies with selecting facilitators and enablers from organizational-environment interaction. Organizations must go beyond mere awareness of SI practice benefits to engaging in purposely pooling strategic intelligence skills. In order to cope with a turbulent environment, managerial practices should be enriched with engaging in sensing and seizing change, and acting before competition. Moreover, a genuine learning approach to collective intelligence practices would overcome cognitive dissonance in strategic decision and activate interpretative and iterative loops to enrich SI core skills for influencing future markets. SI cultural identity embraces collective filtering to develop insights about distant opportunities, while strategic leadership will take lead in exploiting competitive capital through open-mindedness and learning from consequential mistake experimentation.

## **2. STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY MATURITY MODEL (SI CMM)**

The conceptual model highlights the degree of preparedness of four SI profile's behaviors (intelligence provider, vigilant learner, opportunity captor and opportunity defender) against seven levels of maturity. The SI CMM framework outlines both conditioned scanning capabilities (the first five SI readiness levels) and enablers to anticipate future market trends (the last two SI readiness levels).

SI CMM defines a systematic approach to pooling SI core skills, leverages SI expertise to

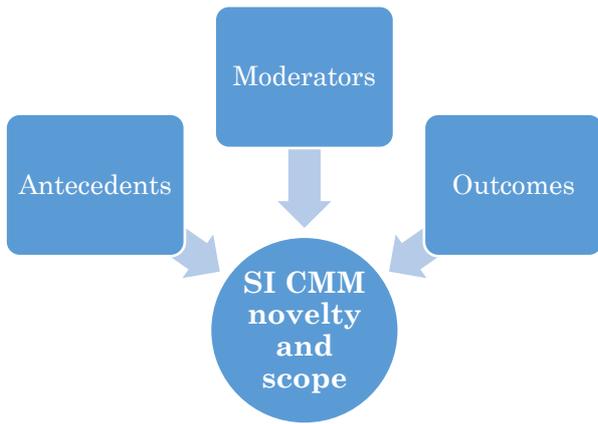


Figure 1 Key elements of SI CMM.

combine conditions affecting competitive response and enables organizational intelligence to influence future markets (Figure 1).

SI CMM antecedents reveal volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity and competitive pressure at the external level, while dynamic capabilities, test makers and test avoiders are related to the internal level.

SI CMM novelty resides on the knowledge discovery vocation and the competitive capital collection cases return on experiences to share within the community or practitioners to match the future need of SI core skills upgrading, while its scope deals with targeting profile-specific needs for updating SI knowledge.

SI CMM moderators aims to assess the lack of managerial anticipative skills associated with each SI profile identity. This is the coordination and sharing of SI common knowledge to enhance preparedness in forward-looking competitive pressures and the development of a supportive culture to enable organizational preparedness for assisted learning consultancy-based (conceptual training), business mentoring (problem solving), and procedural animators (action oriented).

SI CMM outcomes reveals profile-specific roadmaps to improve SI core skills tailored to four SI profiles, previously developed within exploratory research conducted by the authors (Figure 2).

SI core skills acquisition assisted learning consolidates profile-specific SI competitive identity through tailored interventions and enhances profile-specific capability to SI process self-improvements.

Drawing upon organizational intrusiveness and matching test makers vs test avoiders (Daft and Weick, 1984), profile-specific SI performance improvement with each maturity level assessment will focus on an iterative and interpretive approach to learning progress, tailored to each SI profile.

The intelligence provider (IP) develops core skills to distinguish between market challenges influencing organizational fitness, explores strategic trajectories to gain

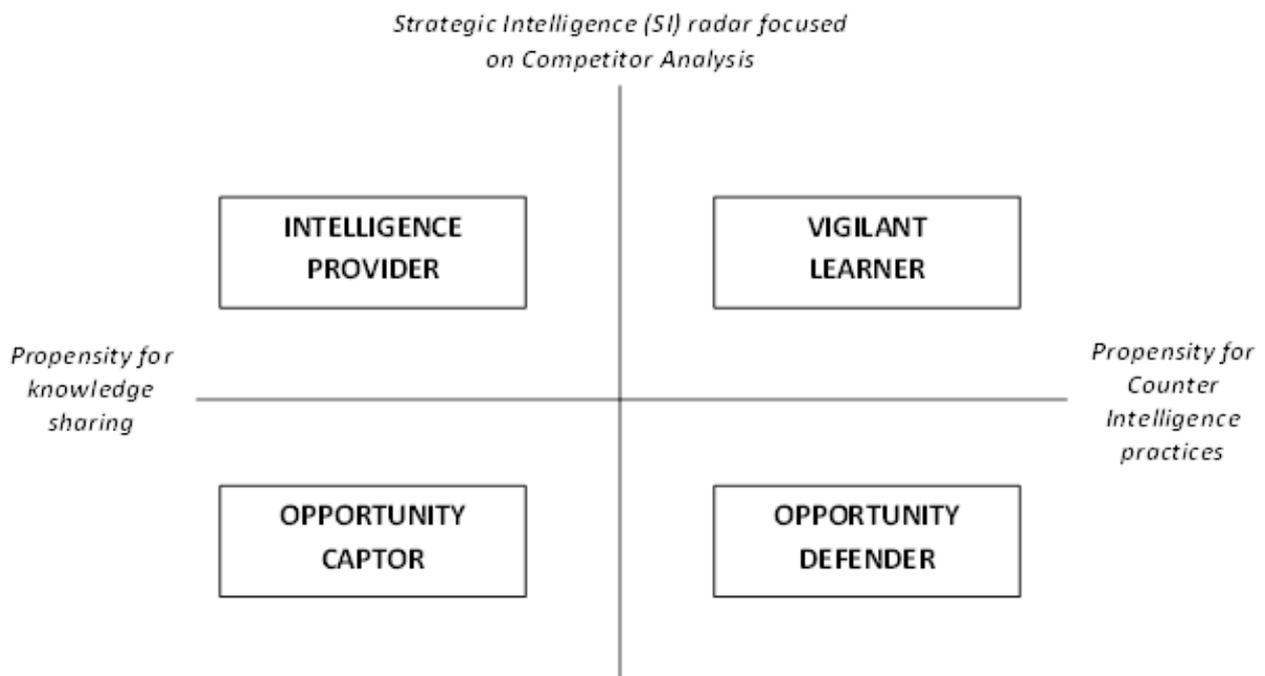


Figure 2 The Strategic Intelligence profiling tool. Figure reprinted from Bleoju, G., & Capatina, A. (2015). Leveraging organizational knowledge vision through Strategic Intelligence profiling-the case of the Romanian software industry. Journal of Intelligence Studies in Business 5(2).

proficiency in noise and consequential mistakes recognition, and pursues risk of failure minimization. Moreover, IP is capable of engaging systematic scanning of the environment with the specific purpose of blind spot recognition, while developing scenarios of their impact.

Vigilant learner (VL) leverages context-dependent knowledge gain to permanent upgrade case-based experience in discerning opportunities and threats, and adopts ready-to-adjust behavior in confronting future competitive contexts.

Opportunity captor (OC) pursues market challenger behavior by leveraging learning from imprinted consequential mistakes to recognize similarities in avoiding future failures through sensing changes and filtering among capturable challenges.

Opportunity defender (OD) focuses on market follower capability to protect market shares though systematically avoiding consequential mistakes.

The SI CMM builds upon previous informative pilot testing of the SI profiling tool against four variables with high impact on organizational knowledge: strategic scope, organizational agility, organizational cultural change process and the approach of competitors.

The in-depth analysis of the SI CMM framework empirical testing outlines the SI profile specific core skills to develop in order to overcome managerial lack of anticipative skills (Table 1).

SI CMM claims to overcome the rigidity of a traditional maturity framework, being designed as an auto-adjustable organizational learning solution, through recalibrating the

classical assessment toward a portfolio of exploring anticipative maturity profile-specific SI trajectories (Table 2 and Figure 3).

**Phase 1. Conceptual training** with basic features of each profile observed and initial skills assessment tailored to each profile need for improvement.

### 2.1 SIRL 1: entrepreneurs' missing skills in labeling strategic behavior. Focus on understanding the benefits of the SI profiling tool.

The seed stage focuses on understanding the benefits of the SI profiling tool, provides guidance with critical information to match organizational knowledge gaps and enhance profile alignment to industry competitive advantage dynamics. It also stimulates managerial reflections with *strategic scope decisions* regarding future market opportunities, key success factors and organizational configuration to meet strategic goals.

The first step in estimating SI readiness is to identify the strategic challenges - the positions in which the start-up in seed stage, with the right combination of skills, talent, and knowledge, has the biggest impact on enhancing its anticipative capabilities. The needs to cope with frequent environmental change and to deal with the strategic decision-making complexity require a renewed approach to the entrepreneurs' knowledge base. The conceptual training should adopt the open intelligence perspective (Calof, 2017) at this stage.

Table 1 SI profile specific core skills

Detective and anticipative core skills	Intelligence Provider	Vigilant Learner	Opportunity Captor	Opportunity Defender
Sharing vs protecting knowledge	Sharing knowledge	New knowledge acquisition	Competence portability	Effective reaction against competition
Intelligent filtering	Strategic agility	Process focused	Products and services	Operational efficiency
Strategic dissonance and cultural dissonance	Capacity to interpret weak signals of cultural dissonance	Culture favorable to change	Culture open to change and capacity to monitor the cultural dissonance	Capacity to monitor cultural changes
Enhance competitive response	Permanent care for upgrades and innovations	Focus on meeting the clients' needs instead of attacking rivals	Competitive advantage on harvesting over competences' portability	High capacity to detect competitors' threats

Table 2 Strategic Intelligence Capability Maturity Model (SI CMM).

SI Readiness Level	SI profiles			
	IP	VL	OC	OD
<b>SIRL 1</b> <b>Seed stage: missing skills in labeling strategic behavior. Focus on understanding the benefits of SI profiling tool</b>	Non-replicable achievements Knowledge discovery Differentiation among competition	Replicable achievements Fresh knowledge acquisition	Wake up and act! Discern among opportunities	Wake up and pay attention to threats!
<b>SIRL 2</b> <b>Positioning on SI profiling tool</b>	Actively seek information to upgrade the knowledge base	Learned behavior approach Passively seek information about the environment	Contextual Intelligence skills self-assessment Ready-to-adjust to competitive environment	Customized skills to cope with threats
<b>SIRL 3</b> <b>Understanding how to accommodate with conflicting objectives derived from market orientation vs. vision orientation</b>	Improve capability to balance conflicting objectives Generate nonreplicable knowledge	Ability to leverage market vs vision orientation in filtering conflicting objectives Generate replicable knowledge	Unpredictable positioning payoff due to environment dependence Propensity to collaboration	Predictable payoff because context dependent Propensity to resistance
<b>SIRL 4</b> <b>Develop profile specific core skills Anticipation and detective capacity as trainable qualities</b>	Recognize impactful signals before competition	Attention and confrontation to competitors' signals	Contextual Intelligence skills to deploy in specific industry Competence portability	Effective reaction against competition Protect market share
<b>SIRL 5</b> <b>Activating profile specific core skills Developing agility and calibrating competitive response</b>	Strategic agility Focus on anticipatory cues of the competition Key future challenge recognition Noise recognition within a chain of non-consequential mistakes	Refinement of interpreting early enough competitive challenge Coordination in ready to adjust capability Learning from experimenting noise with consequential mistakes	React and wait! Quick response to capture only specific signals from industry trends Gain competitive experience	Wait and react! Learning from own and competition failure
<b>SIRL 6</b> <b>Foresight skills to anticipate unexpected change recognition</b>	Sensing changes in competitive landscape	Seizing changes in competitive landscape	Ranking opportunities to develop sharpness in positioning	Ranking defense mechanisms Strengthening foresight skills from small consequential mistakes
<b>SIRL 7</b> <b>Influence future markets as trend setter Strategic framing and promoting a SI culture</b>	Sharing cultural practices to set up new patterns of competition	Proficiency in overcoming cultural dissonance	Proficiency in leveraging cultural dissonance due to context unicity	Mastering cultural practices to avoid systematic failures in future markets

Setting up the **strategic scope** enables pre-profiling upon embedding knowledge from relevant experience of each profile on:

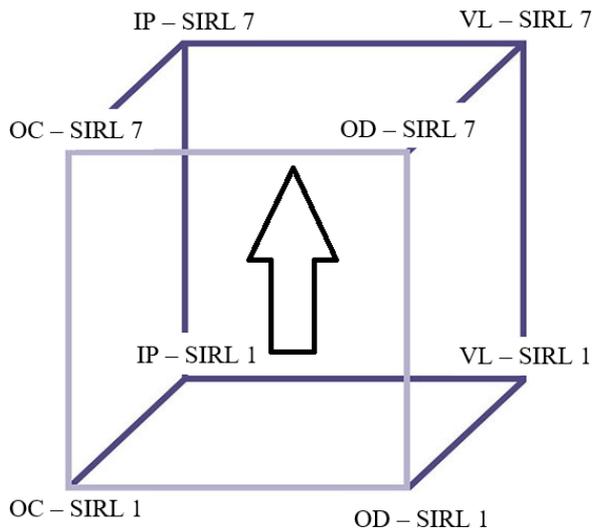
- Sharing knowledge differentiation among competition IP
- Fresh knowledge acquisition and capitalization seeking VL
- Competence portability OC
- Effective reactions to the competition's strategic behaviour OD

The SI preparedness journey will check IP against knowledge sharing propensity through

systemically being alert to non-replicable achievements, while VL focuses on replicable achievements and will foster the acquisition of new knowledge.

In turn, the OC's propensity to *wake up and act* enhances competence portability, while the OD's actions (wake up and listen) enable effective reaction against competition.

The SI skills to develop in order to enhance competitive response will be focused on the IP's orientation toward change anticipation through recognition reasoning, while VL focuses on analytical skills to capture relevant



*Figure 3* SI profiles maturity journey. Phase 1. SIRL 1-3 knowledge acquisition oriented with focus to match SI missing skills: conceptual training. Phase 2. SIRL 4-5 knowledge transfer oriented to improve core SI skill actionability, collective learning anticipative training, interpretative and iterative support. Phase 3. SIRL 6-7 reinforcement of profile specific core skills actionability is knowledge capitalization oriented to check proficiency upon SI core skills and influencing the future competitive environment, future oriented behavior training, developing the profile specific supportive culture to consolidate each competitive identity.

information and to commute it toward exploitable knowledge.

OC focuses on exploring benefits while systemically leveraging market footholds to challenge competitors' positions, while OD's concern is to protect market share and avoid consequential mistakes.

## 2.2 SIRL 2: entrepreneurs confronting concerns about positioning on the SI profiling tool

To confront concerns of basic SI requirements to comply with positioning on the SI profiling tool, the assessment will focus on:

- VL capability to learn through **actively seeking** information about the environment.
- IP capability to frame the organizational learning landscape through **actively selecting** information about the environment.
- OC adopting **conditioned scanning for the best differentiation** to discern among opportunities in a particular industry environment; seeking customizable achievements replicable across markets.

- OD customized skills to rank competitor threats valuable across industries.

In this stage, the entrepreneur's focus is to set specific SI competencies needed to perform the strategic jobs related to positioning on the SI profiling tool. The differences between the requirements needed to select an SI profile and the company's current SI capabilities leads to "competency gaps" that assess the organization's SI readiness. These SI missing skills are embedded in a training portfolio dedicated to the effective launch with the maturity journey.

## 2.3 SIRL 3: the entrepreneur understands how to accommodate conflicting objectives derived from market orientation vs. vision orientation

SI core capabilities check market orientation vs vision orientation on each profile. Leverage knowledge gains to match strategic scope and competitive pressures reveal how to act upon organizational agility to approach competitor threats:

- IP vision-oriented behaviour gains depth and ability to balance conflicting objectives. Generates nonreplicable knowledge.
- VL's ability to leverage market vs vision orientation in filtering conflicting objectives. Generates replicable knowledge.
- OC's ability to recognize distant opportunities. Distant opportunities are a challenge in BOP markets because there are a high number of consumers with very low spending power, therefore opportunities for differentiation are not obvious, and high risks of competence transferability among competitors erodes competitive advantages, therefore perceiving and prospecting are core skills to train.
- OD's ability to protect the market share while predictable positioning payoff is context dependent. Propensity to resistance.

Entrepreneurs are aware that creating a SI report regarding market orientation vs. vision orientation becomes compulsory. With such a report, they can analyze the SI readiness of the organization at a glance, easily detecting the

strategic domains in which more resources are needed to converge with a particular SI profile.

## **Phase 2. Intermediate level with interpretative and iterative support**

### **2.4 SIRL 4: entrepreneur's self-assessment of the capability to develop profile-specific core skills**

Experimental matching of SI capability areas and profile-specific core skills to evaluate strategic options to anticipate proficiency upon an intermediate level of SI maturity:

- VL develops adjustable instruments to comply with competitive environment pressures.
- IP seeks to improve organizational processing.
- OC develops its capability to capture distant opportunities before rivals and owns the capacity to detect the advantageous market niche.
- OD develops its capability to mislead competition with regard to its own strategy.

Entrepreneurs should avoid the risk of being overconfident in their ability to develop SI profile-specific core skills. They could be tempted to have high degrees of confidence that their company is prepared to fully adapt to a specific SI profile. Gaining effectiveness in strategic early warning is a chance in this step.

### **2.5 SIRL 5: Activating profile-specific core skills through strategic trajectories already selected**

- OD is capable of internally employing mechanisms focused on results protection in order to exploit the ignored opportunities.
- OC is capable of anticipating the dynamics of the most advantageous market segments.
- VL is primarily oriented toward change anticipation.
- IP is focused on sharing knowledge designing instruments.

Developing agility and quickness

#### *IP strategic agility*

- Decision making abilities

- Focus on anticipatory cues of the industry
- Key future challenge recognition
- Coordination with ready-to-adjust capability

#### *VL business model process agility*

- Refinement of interpreting early competitive challenge
- Capacity to align managerial decisions to competitive environment
- Learning from experimenting scenarios with non-consequential mistakes

#### *OC portfolio agility*

- Quick response to capture only specific signals displayed by opponents
- Gain competitive experience
- Learning from competition failures

#### *OD operational agility*

- Wait and react to minimize consequential mistakes

Activating the SI profile specific core skills should overcome the risks of underestimating new sources of competition and/or impossibility to keep pace with disruptive trends in the next three to five years. Companies have to gain autonomy in interpreting market insights if possible, to act early enough.

## **Phase 3 Consolidate SI core skills with SIRL 6 and 7**

### **2.6 SIRL 6: developing foresight skills to anticipate unexpected changes related to industry trends (SI sense-making)**

- IP is developing a portfolio of anticipative scenarios based on market dynamics
- VL is fully aware about the importance of successfully embedding the customer experience in order to incessantly offer adaptation
- OC is systematically pursuing the premium market segments
- OD is deploying knowledge protection early warning mechanisms

The profile-specific facilitators of strategic positioning lie with OC and OD embracing a flanking attack for price sensitive segments and undisputed markets due to their sharpness in picking an own battles approach. In turn, IP and VL act as savvy sense-makers and refine

interpretive judgment with incomplete information about positioning payoffs by carefully checking for decision biases.

## **2.7 SIRL 7: mastering the capacity to influence future markets as a trendsetter (SI sense-giving)**

The capacity to become proficient in future markets relies upon a cultural change approach. Therefore, each profile core skill should be consolidated to enhance the effective market response.

IP, endowed with sensing changes in facilitators and challenges, will become influential in promoting technological innovation. It will pursue a proactive approach to match facilitators and challenges; generate enablers to gain in the future value chain while consolidating the capability to cope with uncertainty and complexity.

VL focuses on seizing changes in facilitators and challenges; it will become proficient in orchestrating matching of selected dynamic capabilities to the competitive environment's future key success factors. Moreover, VL pursues proficiency in leveraging cultural differences through ambiguity and volatility tolerance.

OC will master the ability to capitalize upon its unique ability to rank opportunities with adopting sharpness in selecting its own battles. It will become proficient in leveraging cultural dissonance. Due to context unicity, nonreplicable performance is at stake.

OD will gain strength from small consequential mistakes while mastering vigilance in avoiding systematic failure.

## **3. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

In the attempt to fully evolve from the fragile capacity to monitor cultural change to the most profitable capacity to recognize the value of cultural differences, a SI new profile emerges, Opportunity Provider (OP), as a repository of outliers and mismatches, due to ambiguous trajectories in each profile maturity journey. OP enacts as a test maker of SI core skills renewal, consistent with an emergent competitive identity prone to the knowledge discovery vocation, as SI's unique feature is to influence organizational intelligence maturity.

OP profile's core responsibility is to collect and interpret outliers and mismatches of IP, VL, OC, OD behavior when relying upon transient competitive advantage during an instable stage of maturity assessment.

OP's main features lie with coordination and sharing SI common knowledge to enhance preparedness in forward-looking competitive pressures. OP will monitor the risk of strategic dissonance upon the features of organizational cultural change and experiment with a therapeutic approach, through more refined decision-making support, as a basis for non-repeatable behavior.

The OP profile is built upon promoting a strategic leadership approach to master transient competitive advantage while trained to behave in an agile way, it embeds learning on organizational fitness to various competitive contexts. The OP profile identity lies with competitive capital influence in mastering and tracks pattern recognition when capturing opportunities.

SIRL 1 to 5 provide improvements in developing the capacity of what we do with what we see, while SIR 6 and 7 inquire about what we see and what we do not see, therefore OP focus on blind spots to capture distant opportunities.

Stages 6 and 7 make sense of Stages 1 to 5 of SI knowledge acquisition and provide improvements on SI actionability while developing foresight skills to anticipate unexpected changes.

OP acts as an early warning control of each profile capacity to cope with unexpected consequences associated with roadmap implementation of selected strategic trajectories on SIRL1 to 5.

The need for SI instruction level 1 through level 7 lies with profile specific learning support, ranging from sharing common SI knowledge (Level 1-5), while tailored guidance should focus (level 6-7) on developing managerial capability to active experimentation of enhancing competitive response. Sharing commonality focus is about gaining trust with the learning content and about capitalizing on past competitive successes and failures. The maturity gain lies with collective judgment in filtering causal associations of conditions in success and failure stories. Tailored organizational preparedness guidance supposes assisted experimentation of anticipated future competitive pressures with a focus on developing new SI core skills to enhance competitive responses.

Future research aims at exploring causal configurations of conditions (sensing change, seizing opportunities, business model innovation) affecting competitive response

preparedness (SIRL 6 and 7) through QCA methodology.

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