


Chapter 4

Intel Cycle for Private Professionals: Acquisition, Management, and Dissemination of Information

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ABSTRACT

This work focused on the method of analysis, to be understood in general terms and following the intelligence cycle as developed by various international realities, with possible variations. This method was exposed, also graphically, before going further into the details of the different phases or the acquisition, processing of data, and news for subsequent dissemination. These procedures have been described in practical terms and from a distinctly private perspective, also providing the necessary connections with the figures responsible for their development up to the description and requirements that the information product must satisfy, also in this case from a customer's perspective.

INTRODUCTION

Enterprises and companies have an important need of intelligence because of the huge amount of information requested for quite every type of purpose in their business. Intel cycle applied in private professionals framework could have some differences with the one aimed at government's concerns.

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The process starts from an organization (i.e. a person or a decision-making group) that needs one or more information to make some decisions. Once the information request has been received and the price of the finished product has been agreed, the intelligence operator (the self-employed professional or the company representative) will use a few days if not a few weeks to get to know the customer. This delicate phase is necessary to study the client's current activities with a sort of identification with his decision-making bodies, managing to define in the 'cleanest' way possible from where the information need derives, what is the purpose that the organization aims to achieve, which business to carry out (or which function in the case of government organizations), when to carry out its activities and where to do it. Defined these premises with precision and simplicity, which in case of new customers can mean up to a month of activity, the operator can start the information collection phase to collect as much data as possible and above all by isolating the so-called news from these.

In this regard, the sources of this news are mentioned, with which a specific type of intelligence is associated.

It is evident that only a part of the whole spectrum will be necessary for the production of the analysis and moreover it is particularly difficult for a company to develop the suitable skills to carry out any type of intelligence. For these reasons, it is desirable and economic to develop only some of these skills in order to be able to entrust any need for news acquisition to third parties, perhaps for instrumental needs that involve expensive investments in associated technologies and skills.

ACQUISITION

The acquisition represents the first step aimed at producing intelligence. It includes the definition of objectives and information research.

After having carried out adequate adherence with the customer, the questionnaire will be elaborated, ideally broken down into increasingly refined details aimed at clearly identifying the objectives that will connote the final product. This questionnaire will originate from the client's needs which will not necessarily be translated into objectives directly related to information research. The level of detail of the questionnaire is related to the customer's needs but also to the time available and the contingencies of the activity (risks, legal constraints, budget, etc.) (Carter, 2009).

Acquisition is made up by different sources which are linked to intel disciplines. Anyway, this means using many approaches to acquire data and information that need to be collected and analyzed. Some approaches are based on useful tools that scan the web in order to set links and visualize different pattern of data related to a particular theme. These softwares could be free or very expensive, their aim

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