

The Economy, Stupid!

Overview of Key Note Speech given by Richard Withers, Founder of Deallus Consulting, at CI in Pharma, New Jersey, 9th September 2014

Drawing upon nearly 30 years in the intelligence community, Richard began by asking 'How do we measure our progress as a profession, as a function as a discipline? How do we know if the intelligence profession has had a good year? How do we know it is moving on and becoming increasingly relevant? How do we wish to define winning for ourselves?' He noted that "success" for the CI department in one company may be different to "success" in another, but that as a community, 'we have to generate the great stories and build an exciting "feel good factor" about, around and through the CI profession.'

Richard then talked about the CI profession as a people business, and the importance of knowing what decision makers value and then knowing how to present it to them. 'People are different, they have different expectations, they have different agenda and they play different games. It's a people business, know the person you are dealing with. I have seen brilliant CI Managers, struggle to make an impact because they were so focused on the data and the evidence, the product if you like, that they lost sight of the customer, they hadn't done their needs analysis of the person.

Reducing the uncertainty in a decision is fantastic for the business it impacts the P&L. But reducing uncertainty has a personal benefit too, it lifts and builds confidence, it reduces stress and it has a very positive effect on morale. A bi-product of these very personal benefits are that it shines a very positive light on the intelligence effort. It builds trust and rapport, yes because the decision made was a better one but yes too because of the very visceral, physical and emotional benefits you have released in the decision maker or decision making team.'

The final part of the presentation focused on the need for change within the CI profession.

'Business has got to be taking a holistic view of this broader, more complex more dynamic

market that it competes in. At product, disease and at corporate level an intelligence manager, an intelligence group, must be looking for the threats and opportunities the business faces, not presented just by competitor activity but those based on the changes in behaviour, (that is changes to the capabilities and intentions) of all stakeholders, from patients, to regulatory bodies, to physicians, to KOL's, to breakthroughs in surgery, to device companies, to nutraceutical players, to health clubs, to local formulary management, to politicians in China, to the bureaucrats of Brussels ... the list goes on and on. I would argue strongly that the greatest insights and gains are to be made, not by having perfect, 20/20 vision of your arch competitor's strategy but instead, by having a vision that is just 1% better than your competitors'. Our scope is the external market, identifying the threats and opportunities in the marketplace that are beyond our reach and beyond our control.....we should be talking about ourselves as **Market Intelligence professionals**, not competitor intelligence or competitive intelligence.'