Ethical Issues in Competitive Intelligence

Author: John McGonagle

There are many ethical issues in dealing with competitive Intelligence. Some of the major ethical issues to be dealt with are why? Who should be involved? What to cover? Routine CI data collection and receipt of unwanted data (trade secrets).

1. Major Ethical Issues in CI Data Collection
   Undue influence: Can entail actions ranging from bribery to pressuring interviewee seeking a job with your firm. Deception: Involves, for example, affirmatively misleading an interviewee as to your identity, such as in classic ethical violation, posing as a “student doing a paper.” Covert practices: Surveillance of a factory from an airplane in factory’s airspace - distinguished from purchase of commercial satellite photos (Google Earth) of same site. Handling unsolicited data: Ways in which any unsolicited data should be handled should be made very clear. For example, employee who comes into accidental possession of a document marked “trade secret” should know exactly what to do, when and how to do it, and what not to do. A personal point of view: “Avoid doing anything you cannot explain.” Never be influenced by what you may think your competitors are doing, or might do, with respect to collecting data on your firm.

2. Need for SCIP Code of Ethics
   The Strategic and Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP) code of ethics is required for the following purposes. To continually strive to increase the recognition and respect of the profession. To comply with all applicable laws, domestic and international. To accurately disclose all relevant information, including one's identity and organization, prior to all interviews. To avoid conflicts of interest in fulfilling one's duties. To provide honest and realistic recommendations and conclusions in the execution of one's duties. To promote this code of ethics within one's company, with third-party contractors and within the entire profession. To faithfully adhere to and abide by one's company policies, objectives and guidelines.

Related Webinars

Competitive Intelligence Compliance Issues

Upcoming Webinars
The Secure and Fair Enforcement Banking (SAFE) Act of 2019 and the Protections It Provides

Stepping Up to Management: Tips for New or Soon-to-Be Supervisors

3 Hour Excel Automation Boot Camp: Top Ten Excel Functions, Lookup Functions and Basics of Excel Macros with an Introduction to VBA

CFPB Audits: Being Prepared and Staying Compliant to Save Time and Money

Validation of Pharmaceutical Compressed Gasses

Top Articles

Requirements for Medical Device Training under FDA

Calibration Programs Required by Regulatory Authorities

Top 10 Tips to Pick Out the Finest Health Benefits Plan


White Collar Exemptions under the FLSA