How well do you know your competition? Answer these questions about your most significant competitors, and you’ll get an accurate reading of your “Competitor Information IQ.” If you have enough information to answer each question adequately, then you and your company have a high competitor IQ – a sustainable competitive advantage!

1. **Customers**
   Who are your competitors’ major customers? Where are their customers located? How much of a product or service does each customer buy from your competitor?

2. **Distribution**
   How does your competition get their products or services to market? Do they own their own distribution channel? Are they outsourcing? Can you use the same channel, or part of the same channel? What type of training do agents undergo? What level of oversight does your competitor have over the agents in their network?

3. **Marketing**
   What pricing, product, or regional marketing strategies are your competitors using? What parts of the market are they targeting? Do they have the intention to serve the same market segments you plan to reach?

4. **Sales**
   How large are your competitors’ sales forces – in relation to their distribution channel, in relation to customer acquisition? Are the sales people parts of your competitors company or are they outsourced? What are their sales terms and conditions with various portions of the distribution channel?

5. **Advertising**
   Where does your competition advertise? How much do they spend on advertising? How much is “above the line”? How much “below the line”? Which approach seems to be most successful? Do they provide customer financial literacy training?

6. **Finance**
   Is your competition profitable in the business lines in which they will be competing with you? If so, by how much? What are their associated overhead costs? Do they provide financial support to their agents?

7. **Operations**
   What is the size, location, and capacity of the team associated with your competitor’s mobile financial services business? How efficiently do they deliver their products?

8. **Organization**
   What is your competitor’s organizational structure – overall? As it relates to their MFS business? Who makes the key decisions?

9. **Research and Development**
   Where did they source their MFS technology? How well is their technology solution regarded in the market? How easy is it to use? Can it be used by all customers in the market? What new features are your competitor’s working on? How much of the company’s energy goes into improving their MFS products?
10. Strategic plans
   What are their short-term and long-term plans? If MFS is not part of their core business, do you expect them to expand their MFS or seek other vertical opportunities?