

Preface

Martha Gleason
Chair, Competitive Intelligence Foundation

The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage. Peter M. Senge

You hold in your hands the first publication to comprehensively cover the issues and strategies relevant to *Starting a Competitive Intelligence Function*. This publication takes us to the beginning of the competitive intelligence (CI) process, where we have the first opportunity to define and implement an effective CI function for our organizations.

The editors tapped the unique knowledge of over 40 skilled practitioners who took the time and effort to share their hard-won experiences with us. Contained in the 35 chapters are all the aspects of starting a competitive intelligence function, from organizational issues to required resources to internal processes, based on the knowledge gained by those practitioners through their own implementation experiences.

This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the necessary elements and implementation strategies for creating an effective competitive intelligence function in your organization. And it includes case studies of the extraordinary efforts made by specific practitioners to increase their companies' competitive advantage by establishing successful competitive intelligence operations.

This book is a must-read if you are:

- an individual who is new to competitive intelligence and wants to understand its process
- an experienced practitioner who is starting a new or reviving an existing CI function
- a corporate manager involved in designing, leading, using or overseeing your company's competitive intelligence effort
- a senior executive who can benefit from the output of a first-class intelligence function,
- an academic who is teaching intelligence

On behalf of the Competitive Intelligence Foundation's Board of Directors, I congratulate Kenneth Sawka and Bonnie Hohhof for assembling an impressive array of authors and bringing this publication into existence. It stands as a proud complement to the Foundation's two earlier books, *Competitive Intelligence Ethics* and *Conference and Trade Show Intelligence*.

And consider supporting the Competitive Intelligence Foundation's efforts to develop, maintain, and promote the body of knowledge for the competitive intelligence community by contributing time or resources to its upcoming projects (see www.scip.org/CIFoundation).