

KEY ACCOUNT GROWTH PLANNING
MODULE 4 – GROWTH FROM OUR
COMPETITORS
Pre-Tutorial

ACCOUNT MANAGER'S WORKBOOK



Welcome to Module 4 – Generating growth from our competitors

Welcome to Module 4. In this Module we shall explore the critical aspect of understanding the competition.

Some Account Managers make their Key Account plans in apparent isolation, forgetting that their competitors will have a big impact on their business and on the Key Account.

This Module will help you to understand your competitors' activities the implications for the Key Account and for your business.

This WorkBook contains the preparatory work for the Group Tutorial.

When you are ready to start, turn to the next page and the first Task.

Topic 1 – Are you taking note of the competition?

Watch the first video in Module 4. This video points out the importance of including a proper competitor assessment in your account planning process.

Then consider the following question:

If you are honest with yourself, how much understanding do you have about the main competitors' likely moves?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Are you clear about the impact on the Key Account?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Task 1 – From whom exactly will you be taking business?

Much of the growth you need will come at the expense of a competitor – it is very unlikely that you will be winning completely new business for which you are the only possible supplier. Generally when you win – someone else must lose.

In the past, when you consider your growth, have you considered which competitors will lose and how will they react?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Topic 2 – Assessing the threat from indirect competitors

Most of the time we all know who are main direct competitors are because we encounter them in all the time and customers will mention them.

Watch Video 2 in Module 4 (M4U2) which introduces the idea of the indirect competitors.

Use the competitive threat model discussed in the video to identify your potential indirect competitors.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Topic 2 – Discovering the competitive threat

Now watch Video Unit 3 in Module 4 (M4 U3) which will discuss need to assess the threat.

Do you have an example of a competitor attacking your business with a Key Account directly?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

This is what other Account Managers have said:

- I want to feel confident that I know their strengths and weaknesses – this tells me what to attack and defend - I want to know which battles to fight and which to leave
 - I want to test my own plan to predict the competitor response
 - I want to be able to take an objective view when the key account threatens me with a competitor – especially when demanding a price reduction
 - I want to take action to neutralise the threat before it is made
 - I want to know the best opportunities for me - I want to know where the competitor is vulnerable
-
- Finally to finish this unit here are a couple of typical quotes from key account managers who have worked through this module –
 - *“Everyone knows who their competitors are – I thought I knew all about them but really I had never asked the difficult questions.”*

“A lot of the things we said about our competitors were not really true – we just wanted them to be true. It was not till we sat down and really analysed them that we found out”

Topic 3 – Assessing the competitor

Now watch Video 4 in Module 4 (M4U4) which discusses the information we need about the competitors.

What specific information should you hold about your competitors?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

How will you do this?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Topic 4 -Explaining the ideas - Preparation for the Tutorial

The best way to ensure that you fully understand a topic is to explain it to someone else. Please be ready to explain the following at the Tutorial...

What do you need to know about competitors?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What should you anticipate?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Next step

Now that you have completed all of the pre-Tutorial work, we will look forward to seeing you at the next group session.

KEY ACCOUNT GROWTH PLANNING
MODULE 4 – GROWTH FROM OUR
COMPETITORS
Post-Tutorial

ACCOUNT MANAGER'S WORKBOOK



Post Tutorial Work Book

Welcome to the second part of the Module 4. This Work Book covers the post-Tutorial activity.

When you are ready to start, turn to the next page and the first Task.

Topic 1 – Reviewing your competitive assessment

Individual Task – part 1

Review the work you did before the Tutorial in the light of the discussions

Do you want to add anything to the competitive assessment?

.....

.....

.....

.....

How will you get and maintain the competitive information?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Topic 2 – Competitive assessment - Buddy Task

Now you have a clear understanding about the competitive assessment necessary

Consider the following questions – then make a time to review your answers with your Buddy:

Do I have a good competitive understanding?

.....
.....
.....

Do I know who will lose as a result of my plan and what they will do?

.....
.....
.....

What is the most important thing I have gained from this Module?

.....
.....
.....

Topic 3 – Competitive assessment

Assessed Task

Present you call competitive assessment for one Key Account as a summary to your line manager, another manager or a colleague for their input

Topic 4 – Competitive assessment - Assessed Task – Line Manager’s Review

Having reviewed the results of the Assessed Task on Call Preparation, are you satisfied that the Manager:

Has clarity about the competitors, threats and opportunities for you? **Yes/No**

Has done the right level of research? **Yes/No**

Has anticipated which competitors will lose business? **Yes/No**

Has considered the implications of the threat? **Yes/No**

Comments:

.....
.....
.....

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Module 4 - Key Points Summary

Use this summary to remind yourself about the key points in this Module – note any point which is not clear and raise this at the next Group Tutorial

- **You can't avoid competitors**
- **Your plan must anticipate the competitive threats and opportunities to you**
- **You must formally define your main direct competitors and their respective strengths and weaknesses**
- **Your assessment must be objective - get evidence to support it**
- **You should consider the indirect threat also - often more damaging in the medium term**
- **You must define what information you should know about your competitors**
- **Have a simple process for gathering and holding the information**
- **You already have lots of knowledge in the business but not shared – you need a process to share the knowledge**
- **Take a cold objective view about the real threat rather than the imagined threat**
- **The better your understanding the stronger your position**

My Capability Scorecard

Complete the Scorecard for Module 4. Identify any issues which need further development. You can discuss these in the next Group Tutorial if you would like input from the Group or with your Group Buddy, your Line Manager or by booking a one-to-one coaching session with a Group Coach.

CAPABILITY BEST PRACTICE SCORECARD - GROWTH MODULE 4 GROWTH FROM COMPETITORS			
<p>This Scorecard defines the Best Practice for Module 4 of the Face to Face Selling Skills Program – Sales Call Preparation. Having completed the Module, each Delegate should be able to answer 'Yes' with a high confidence level for each of the 10 Best Practice Criteria</p>			
Best Practice Component	Yes/No	My confidence level (1-10)	Is there anything I must do to improve this?
1 I recognise the importance of competitive understanding			
2 I have identified my main direct competitors			
3 I have assessed their strengths and weaknesses			
4 I have tested my assumptions to ensure they are objective			
5 I have identified the indirect competitors			
6 I have defined the threats and opportunities to each of my Key Accounts			
7 I have identified where my growth will come from			
8 I have considered the competitors' response			
9 I have defined what information I should hold			
10 I have a system for collecting and sharing competitive knowledge			

