

Analyzing our firm v. our competitors

No verbal answers to questions in green, they're for you to think about as a team.

Using the Capstone Courier (for the most recent year & two years back)

- Which key statistics among those listed reach out and impress you about this round?
- Who received Emergency loans – what caused their cash-flow problems?
- Wage rates remain identical until the labor negotiation round (if applicable) – are they still?

Look for industry stock market and long-term debt trends.

- Which teams issued or bought back stock? Is there a trend in that team's policy?
- Check dividend policies – is there a trend there?
- Compare closing stock prices – what key performance indicator is the stock price consistent with?
- Look at long term debt-loads – are they increasing? (as a percent of total capital?)

How are they dealing with assets?

- Is your competition buying new plant & equipment?
- Which other teams are cash rich or poor?
- How do your margins (sales - COGS) stack up against the other teams? (express as rankings, perhaps?)

Benchmark products and production abilities against competitors

- Sales volume by product – in each of your segments, whose products dominate? Is there a trend?
- Inventory – Who stocked out? Who has high inventory levels remaining?
- R&D revisions – who is going to have a product come out next year? Is this a trend?
- Investments in automation – who has invested in automation? To what extent? Is there a timing (early / late / continuous) nature to their investments?
- Investments or sales of production capacity - is there a significant change in a competitor's capacity coming?
- Labor or material cost changes – which of the competitors in your (ea.) segment has a trend in lowering costs?

Sales activity in each of the five market segments

- Segment demand versus actual sales – What's been the trend among your 3 most important competitors over the last 3 rounds?
- Factors driving purchasing behavior – Who's doing the best job meeting these?
- Strength of distribution channels as measured by ease of access to product – who dominates here? How does this correlate with invested money and effort?
- Actual sales - versus potential – How did stock-outs affect sales?