

Strategic Planning Tools

SWOT Analysis for Your Company

Benefits of a SWOT Analysis

1. The analysis provides a good overview of your company's current situation.
2. It is a fairly easy tool to use and helps define strategic direction.
3. Each of the 4 SWOT elements can provide strategic intelligence to help make decisions.
4. A good SWOT analysis can help drive change because of improved awareness & urgency.

How to develop a SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis is an evaluation of your company based on internal company traits & external environment attributes related to your business. While it does not directly provide a recommendation for your improvement projects & strategic direction, it is the fastest way to identify potential improvements and direction.

Recommended Actions for Each Element

Strengths (Internal, Positive)

Expand your strengths and market them to clients & potential clients.

Weaknesses (Internal, Negative)

Mitigate (lessen) the impact of your weaknesses through outsourced expertise or consider strengthening a weak area with high potential activities.

Opportunities (External, Positive)

Opportunities are where strategic actions are born! You should focus on developing good opportunities that grow or strengthen your company. Not all opportunities can be implemented, but you should consider tracking opportunities that have been identified in previous years.

Threats (External, Negative)

If you identify significant threats to the well-being of your business, consider doing a formal risk management exercise. All risks should be evaluated on Probability of Occurrence and Impact of Threat. High probability risks that also have high impact should be addressed first. An example of a high probability/high impact risk is getting flood damage when you are in a flood zone.

Use the form on the next page with a team of 4-5 people to develop ideas. List your ideas in the SWOT table. Ideally your team will be willing and able to communicate, have a good facilitator, and be off-site or in a quiet location.



SWOT Worksheet Instructions: Everyone in the meeting should identify 1-2 items for each SWOT element. Gather the items on a wall that can be easily viewed. Gather more items on the wall from each person. Identify the top two most important items for each block.

		BENEFICIAL	RISKY
INTERNAL		STRENGTHS <i>What are you good at? What are your competitive advantages? What unique resources do you have? What do customers like?</i>	WEAKNESSES <i>What are you bad at? What improvements do you need most? What resources do you need? Do customers complain?</i>
EXTERNAL		OPPORTUNITIES <i>What products/services can you create from a strength? How can you grow size or profitability? No limits - what would you try for growth?</i>	THREATS <i>What would a competitor do based on your weakness? What external conditions might hurt your company? Fears?</i>