

SWOT Analysis

What is a SWOT Analysis?

A SWOT Analysis provides programs and organizations with a clear, easy-to-read map of internal and external factors that may help or harm a project, by listing and organizing a project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. SWOT can clearly show a program its chances for success, given present environmental factors.

How to Conduct a SWOT Analysis

Create a chart with columns titled "Helpful" and "Harmful," and rows titled "Internal" and "External."

Sort out factors that impact your organization, and place them in the appropriate rows/columns:



	Helpful (Positive Impact)	Harmful (Negative Impact)
Internal	<p>Strengths may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of the organization that will help it achieve successful outcome or reach goals • Resources, capabilities that will contribute to success 	<p>Weaknesses may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of the organization that might hinder successful outcome/reaching goals • Absences of strengths • "Flip sides" of strengths • Things to avoid when executing program • Factors contributing to past failures • What other organizations might do better than yours • "Achilles Heels"
External	<p>Opportunities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental factors that might influence/contribute to successful outcome • Unfulfilled/open niches not served by other programs (unmet customer need) • Upcoming changes to status quo (regulatory, political, social, etc.) • Chances made possible by unique strengths/eliminating weaknesses • Factors: Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological 	

Remember:

- Try to look at your organization from an external perspective, even when assessing internal factors: What would others say about your organization?
- Try to verify/quantify statements when possible, rather than making general statements about your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- You may end up with what seems like too many factors to consider, at which point it might be helpful to start prioritizing them
- Consider: How can you convert weaknesses into strengths? Use strengths to overcome threats? Use strengths to maximize opportunities? Use strengths to compensate for or minimize weaknesses?
- SWOT analyses can be performed on multiple levels of an organization: Might it be more helpful to perform one just on your program? Division? A specific process?