

## Excelerate Personal Impact: SWOT for Career Planning

### Using a SWOT Analysis in Your Career Planning

A key tool in the strategic planning process, the SWOT Analysis, can also be used with career planning. A SWOT analysis focuses on examining strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment and opportunities and threats in the external environment.

To complete your own career planning SWOT examine your current situation.

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How can you capitalize on your strengths and overcome your weaknesses?
- What are the external opportunities and threats in your chosen career field?

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| <b>INTERNAL</b> | <p><b>What are your Strengths</b><br/>Internal positive aspects that are under control and upon which you may capitalize in planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work experience</li> <li>Education and training</li> <li>Strong technical knowledge within your field</li> <li>Specific transferable skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, leadership skills)</li> <li>Personal characteristics (e.g., strong work ethic, self-discipline, ability to work under pressure, creativity, optimism, or a high level of energy)</li> <li>Good contacts/successful networking</li> <li>Membership of professional organizations</li> </ul> | <p><b>What are your Weaknesses</b><br/>Internal negative aspects that are under your control and that you may plan to improve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of work experience</li> <li>Lack of goals, lack of self-knowledge, lack of specific job knowledge</li> <li>Weak technical knowledge</li> <li>Weak skills (leadership, interpersonal, communication, teamwork)</li> <li>Weak job-hunting skills</li> <li>Negative personal characteristics (e.g., poor work ethic, lack of discipline, lack of motivation, indecisiveness, shyness, too emotional)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>EXTERNAL</b> | <p><b>What Opportunities in your Career Field</b><br/>Positive external conditions that you do not control but which you can plan to take advantage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive trends in your field that will create more jobs (e.g., growth, globalisation, technological advances)</li> <li>Opportunities you could have in the field by enhancing your education</li> <li>Field is particularly in need of your set of skills</li> <li>Opportunities for professional development in your field</li> <li>Career path you've chosen provides unique opportunities</li> <li>Geography</li> <li>Strong network</li> </ul>     | <p><b>What Threats in your Career Field</b><br/>Negative external conditions that you do not control but the effect of which you may be able to lessen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative trends in your field that diminish jobs</li> <li>Competitors with superior skills, experience, knowledge</li> <li>Competitors with better job-hunting skills</li> <li>Obstacles in your way (e.g., lack of the advanced education/training you need to take advantage of opportunities)</li> <li>Advancement is competitive in your field,</li> <li>Limited professional development in your field, so it's hard to stay marketable</li> <li>Companies are not hiring people with your skills/qualifications</li> </ul> |

Refine your SWOT using these questions

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| <b>INTERNAL</b> | <p><b>Strengths</b><br/>What is your greatest asset?<br/>What do you do well?<br/>Why did you decide to enter the field?<br/>What were the motivating factors and influences?<br/>Do these still represent some of your inherent strengths?<br/>What need do you expect to fill within the organization?<br/>What have been your most notable achievements?<br/>To what do you attribute your success?<br/>How do you measure your success?</p>  | <p><b>Weaknesses</b><br/>What could be improved?<br/>What do you do badly?<br/>What should you avoid?<br/>What are your professional weaknesses?<br/>How do they affect your job performance? (These might include weakness in technical skill areas or in leadership or interpersonal skills.)</p>   |
| <b>EXTERNAL</b> | <p><b>Opportunities</b><br/>Where are the promising prospects facing you?<br/>Are you doing everything you can to enhance your exposure to this area?<br/>What formal training and education can you add to that might position you appropriately for more opportunities?<br/>Useful opportunities can come from such things as:<br/>Changes in technology and markets<br/>Changes in government policy related to your field<br/>Changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyle</p> | <p><b>Threats</b><br/>What obstacles do you face?<br/>Are the requirements for your job field changing?<br/>Does changing technology threaten your prospective position?<br/>What is the current trend for your area of expertise?<br/>Could your area be fading in comparison with more emergent fields?<br/>How might the economy negatively affect your future company and your work group?<br/>Will your future company provide enough access to new challenges to keep you sharp and marketable - in the event of sudden unemployment?</p> |

**Excellerate Personal Impact: SWOT for Career Planning**

Your Personal S W O T @ \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

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|-----------------|---|---|
| <b>INTERNAL</b> | <b>What are your Strengths?</b>                         | <b>What are your Weaknesses?</b>                  |
|                 |   |   |
| <b>EXTERNAL</b> | <b>What are the opportunities in your Career Field?</b> | <b>What are the Threats in your Career Field?</b> |
|                 |   |   |

