



the dtic  
Department:  
Trade, Industry and Competition  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GVP

GLOBAL EXPORT PASSPORT PROGRAM

# SWOT ANALYSIS

PART 1



A comprehensive framework for strategic planning and business development in international trade

2025-09-22

Phase 1: Introduction to Exporting

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## Course Overview and Objectives

GVP

This module provides foundational knowledge and application methods of SWOT analysis for businesses in the GEPP. The module focuses on helping businesses develop effective export marketing plans and achieve sustainable development in international markets.

### Key Objectives

 <b>Understand SWOT Fundamentals</b> Gain clear understanding of SWOT analysis components and their application in export context	 <b>Develop Analysis Skills</b> Acquire practical skills for conducting effective SWOT analysis for export markets
 <b>Strategic Planning</b> Learn to develop export strategies based on SWOT analysis results	 <b>Sustainable Export Development</b> Create sustainable approaches to international market expansion

*These objectives align with the overall GEPP mission to build export capacity and enable businesses to develop their own export marketing plans.*

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## GEPP Course Background



GEPP was initiated by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic) with a focus on building export capabilities through strategic capacity building.



### the dtic's Initiative

Established to strengthen South Africa's export competitiveness and create sustainable export opportunities for businesses across various sectors.

### Key Program Objectives



#### Capacity Building

Develop export knowledge and capabilities within businesses



#### Export Marketing Plans

Enable businesses to develop their own export strategies



#### Market Access

Help businesses enter and succeed in international markets



#### Sustainable Development

Prepare businesses for long-term export market growth

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## GEPP Course Delivery Format and Goals



GEPP is delivered by the dtic with a focus on building export capacity and preparing businesses for sustainable market development.



### Delivery Format



#### Educational Modules

Structured learning materials covering key export topics including SWOT analysis



#### Interactive Workshops

Hands-on sessions to develop export strategies and SWOT applications



#### Digital Resources

Online materials and tools to support learning and implementation



### Primary Goals



#### Knowledge Development

Equip businesses with export knowledge and strategic planning skills



#### Practical Application

Enable businesses to develop their own export marketing plans



#### Sustainable Development

Prepare businesses for long-term success in international markets

For more detailed information on the GEPP course structure and specific goals, please refer to the program handbook or contact the dtic directly.

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## Introduction to SWOT Analysis



SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning tool that helps businesses identify key factors in their internal and external environments. It provides a framework for understanding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relevant to export market development.



**Strengths**



**Weaknesses**



**Opportunities**



**Threats**

### How SWOT Helps Exporters



#### Strategic Positioning

Positions business strengths against market opportunities



#### Risk Management

Identifies and mitigates threats to export success



#### Targeted Strategies

Develops strategies based on specific market conditions

SWOT analysis provides a structured approach to planning that helps businesses capitalize on market opportunities while addressing their unique challenges.

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## What is SWOT Analysis?



SWOT analysis is a strategic planning technique that helps businesses identify and analyze:



### Strengths

Internal positive factors that give a business competitive advantages



### Weaknesses

Internal negative factors that may hinder a business's performance



### Opportunities

External factors that may benefit a business if leveraged effectively



### Threats

External factors that could potentially harm a business's operations



**Business Context:** SWOT analysis helps businesses in international trade develop strategies by analyzing internal capabilities and external market conditions.

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## Importance of SWOT Analysis for Exporters



SWOT analysis is a critical tool for businesses looking to expand into international markets. It provides a systematic framework that helps exporters identify key factors that can lead to success or failure in foreign markets.



### Strategic Planning

Provides a structured approach to export market entry and sustainable development



### Market Intelligence

Helps businesses identify opportunities and threats in international markets



### Risk Management

Anticipates challenges and prepares appropriate responses before entering markets



### Targeted Approach

Enables businesses to focus resources on the most promising export opportunities



By systematically analyzing internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external opportunities and threats, businesses can develop robust export strategies that lead to sustainable international market success.

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## Internal Factors: Strengths



### ★ What are Strengths?

Strengths are internal positive attributes and resources that provide a company with a competitive advantage in export markets.

### ✔ Why Strengths Matter

- > Builds confidence when entering new markets
- > Creates foundation for export strategies
- > Maximizes competitive position



### Tip for Analysis

Focus on resources that differentiate your business from competitors.

### ☰ Common Strengths in Export



#### Quality Products

Superior product quality compared to competitors.



#### Price Advantage

Cost efficiency leading to lower prices.



#### Strong Brand

Recognized brand name in target markets.




#### Technical Expertise

Unique technical capabilities or innovations.


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## Internal Factors: Weaknesses




Weaknesses in SWOT analysis represent internal limitations or deficiencies that could hinder a business's export performance and success. Identifying these factors is crucial for developing strategies that address or mitigate these challenges in international markets.




### Strategic Weaknesses

Gaps in export strategy, lack of focus on target markets, insufficient planning for cultural differences




### Financial Weaknesses

Limited financial resources, inadequate budget allocation for export activities, poor cost control




### Operational Weaknesses

Inefficient production processes, quality control issues, logistics and supply chain challenges



### Marketing Weaknesses

Poor brand awareness in international markets, ineffective promotion strategies, lack of digital presence




**Key Insight:** The most effective SWOT analyses identify weaknesses that are both material and actionable, focusing on issues that can be realistically addressed within the business's capabilities.

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## External Factors: Opportunities




Opportunities are external favorable factors that can be leveraged for export market growth and expansion. Identifying and capitalizing on these opportunities is crucial for successful international market development.

### Leveraging External Opportunities

#### Export Potential




Partnerships




Market Growth




Policy Support





### Strategic Partnerships

Forming alliances with local businesses to gain market access and distribution channels



### Market Growth

Expanding into emerging markets with increasing demand for products and services

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## External Factors: Threats



Threats are external challenges and risks that could negatively impact export business operations. Identifying and addressing these threats is crucial for developing effective export strategies.



### Market Competition

Strong competitors with established market share, price wars, and aggressive marketing campaigns that could erode export market share.



### Political Risks

Unfavorable trade policies, tariffs, embargoes, and political instability that could disrupt export operations.



### Economic Fluctuations

Currency exchange rate volatility, interest rate changes, and economic downturns that could affect export competitiveness and demand.



### Supply Chain Disruptions

Logistics challenges, port congestion, and distribution network issues that could delay exports and increase costs.

**Key Insight:** Effective SWOT analysis requires businesses to identify potential threats early and develop strategies to mitigate their impact on export operations.

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## SWOT Analysis Framework



The SWOT framework provides a structured approach to analyzing your business's position in export markets.

Example SWOT Grid



### Strengths

- Core competencies
- Unique advantages



### Weaknesses

- Key challenges
- Areas for improvement



### Opportunities

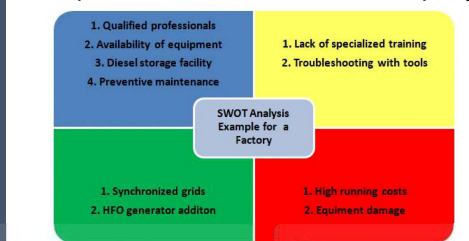
- Market openings
- Strategic advantages



### Threats

- External challenges
- Market disruptions








Example of a SWOT Grid for a Company



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## Conducting a SWOT Analysis: Step-by-Step Process

A systematic approach to SWOT analysis helps businesses identify key factors for export strategy development.

- 1  **Prepare and Plan**  
Define objectives, scope, and team responsibilities. Set timeline and collection methods. 
- 2  **Collect Data**  
Gather information from internal and external sources. Use surveys, interviews, and market research. 
- 3  **Analyze and Interpret**  
Categorize information into SWOT components. Evaluate relationships between factors. 
- 4  **Formulate Strategy**  
Develop export strategies based on SWOT findings. Prioritize actions and resources. 
- 5  **Implement and Review**  
Execute strategies and regularly review results. Update analysis as market conditions change.

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## Data Collection for SWOT Analysis

Effective SWOT analysis requires reliable data from appropriate sources. The quality of your data directly impacts the quality of your SWOT analysis and subsequent export strategies.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  <b>Strengths Data Collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal audit and performance reviews</li> <li>• Customer feedback and testimonials</li> <li>• Market position analysis</li> </ul> |  <b>Weaknesses Data Collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gap analysis between current and ideal performance</li> <li>• Competitor benchmarking</li> <li>• 360-degree feedback from employees</li> </ul> |
|  <b>Opportunities Data Collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market research reports</li> <li>• Industry conferences and exhibitions</li> <li>• Government trade data</li> </ul>             |  <b>Threats Data Collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitor analysis</li> <li>• Supply chain vulnerability assessment</li> <li>• Political risk analysis</li> </ul>                                |

### ★ Data Collection Best Practices

-  Use multiple data sources
-  Ensure data is current
-  Focus on export markets

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# From SWOT to Strategy Development

The journey from SWOT analysis to actionable strategy requires a systematic approach to translate findings into concrete export marketing plans. This process involves transforming insights into strategic initiatives that address specific market opportunities.

### Prioritize Findings

Focus on high-impact opportunities

### Strategic Positioning

Leverage strengths to target opportunities

### Tactical Planning

Develop specific actions and timelines

### Implementation & Review

Execute and regularly evaluate

## Key Elements of Effective Export Strategies

#### Clear Objectives

Set specific, measurable goals for export market entry

#### Market Entry Path

Identify the most promising markets and entry strategies

#### Adaptation Plan

Address weaknesses while leveraging strengths

#### Contingency Measures

Develop alternatives to address potential threats

### Implementation Tips

Effective strategies are iterative and adaptive. Review and refine your approach regularly as market conditions and

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# Common Mistakes in SWOT Analysis

Avoid these common pitfalls to ensure your SWOT analysis for export planning is effective and insightful.

### Imbalance Focus

Focusing too much on strengths and opportunities while neglecting weaknesses and threats.

✔ Balance all four quadrants equally

### Subjectivity

Being too subjective or biased in the analysis.

✔ Include diverse perspectives

### Information Quality

Using outdated or inaccurate information.

✔ Ensure data is current and reliable

### Lack of Stakeholder Input

Not involving key stakeholders in the process.

✔ Include diverse stakeholders

### Detail Extremes

Including too much or too little detail.

✔ Find the right level of granularity

### Strategy Disconnect

Not linking the SWOT analysis to specific export strategies.

✔ Connect analysis to actionable strategies

### Pro Tip:

Review your SWOT analysis with a critical eye and be willing to revise as your understanding evolves.

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# SWOT Analysis Case Study

**Case Company:** Tech Innovations Inc., a mid-sized technology company looking to enter the European market for the first time.

## Strengths

- Strong R&D capabilities and innovative products
- High-quality manufacturing processes
- Direct market access to emerging European markets
- Competitive pricing compared to local alternatives

## Weaknesses

- Limited awareness of European market regulations
- Insufficient local distribution channels
- Over-reliance on a few key products
- Less mature export infrastructure

## Opportunities

- Expanding EU market with increasing technology adoption
- Emerging startup ecosystems in key European cities
- Government incentives for green technology imports
- Strong consumer demand for innovative solutions

## Threats

- High tariffs and trade barriers
- Strong local competitors with established market share
- Cultural differences affecting business relationships
- Regulatory compliance challenges

**Key Insight:** Tech Innovations' SWOT analysis reveals both promising opportunities and significant challenges in the European market. The company needs to leverage its strengths while addressing key weaknesses to successfully navigate the competitive landscape.

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# Module 1 Key Takeaways

Key concepts and learnings from the SWOT Analysis Module

## SWOT Components

Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, while opportunities and threats are external factors

## Data Collection

Effective SWOT analysis requires diverse data from multiple sources and stakeholders

## Strategic Integration

SWOT analysis is a foundation for developing export strategies and action plans

## Common Pitfalls

Avoid subjectivity, incomplete analysis, and failure to update the SWOT regularly

## Continuous Process

SWOT analysis is a dynamic tool that should be regularly updated with market changes

## Export Focus

Apply SWOT specifically to international market contexts and export challenges

“ SWOT Analysis provides a structured framework for strategic thinking and planning in international trade ”

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## Practical Exercise: Your Export SWOT



### Exercise Instructions

- 1 Define Your Export Business**  
Clearly identify the products, markets, and target customers
- 2 Complete the SWOT Analysis**  
Fill in the provided template with evidence-based information
- 3 Identify Key Insights**  
Focus on 2-3 most important strengths and opportunities
- 4 Develop Initial Strategies**  
Outline 1-2 strategic initiatives based on your SWOT

#### Tips for Success

- ✓ Be specific and factual
- ✓ Focus on market context
- ✓ Use data where available

### Your Export SWOT Template

#### Strengths

- Core competencies
- Unique resources
- Market position

#### Weaknesses

- Resource constraints
- Knowledge gaps
- Operational issues

#### Opportunities

- Market trends
- Policy changes
- Strategic partnerships

#### Threats

- Competitive pressures
- Trade barriers
- Supply chain risks

- 1 Use the template to create your own export SWOT analysis. Focus on evidence-based information and market context.

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## Next Steps and Resources



### Next Steps

- Apply SWOT to Your Business**  
Complete the practical exercise to develop your export SWOT analysis
- Develop Export Strategy**  
Transform SWOT insights into actionable export marketing strategy
- Implement and Evaluate**  
Put strategies into practice and regularly review effectiveness

### Additional Resources

**SWOT Template**  
Blank template for conducting SWOT analysis

**Online Tools**  
Digital SWOT analysis tools

**Support Network**  
Connect with other GEPP participants

**Training Materials**  
Recordings and additional reading

**Need Support?**  
Contact your GEPP facilitator or visit the resources portal

✓ Congratulations on completing Module 1!

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