**SOCIAL JUSTICE 106 CREATING YOUR MISSION STATEMENT, STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION**

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN**

**SWOT**

**TOPIC 1**

**What is a SWOT analysis?**

**SWOT analysis is a framework for making calculated, informed decisions.**

SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

SWOT analysis is just one of the tools in a project manager’s or Executive Director’s toolbox, and it can be very helpful during strategic planning and decision making.

SWOT can be used to analyze teams, projects, businesses, organizations, or even individual products. In fact, you can use it to make routine decisions in your everyday life.

What to have for breakfast? SWOT it. Where to go this weekend? SWOT it. How to lose weight? SWOT it.

If SWOT analysis sounds a little ambiguous it’s because it is very open-ended.

In a SWOT analysis, you essentially take a long, hard look in the mirror—preferably as a group—and determine what your organization is really good at, what it could get much better at, areas for growth, and what external factors could undermine your efforts.

SWOT analysis doesn’t so much help you determine **what** to do, as much as it helps you determine **whether** or not to do something. In other words, SWOT analysis is less of a crystal ball and more of a compass.

The ultimate goal of SWOT analysis is to match strengths with opportunities to determine a clear path to success, or uncover weaknesses that could be exploited so that they can be avoided in your organizational strategy.

In this way, SWOT analysis informs risk management.

**How do I use a SWOT analysis?**

Start by looking for connections. If you can draw clear lines between strengths and opportunities—say your sunglasses business caters to young people and you have an opportunity to open a new location near a college campus—it’s a good time to be aggressive.

On the other hand, if your weaknesses and threats seem to outweigh your strengths and opportunities—say you’re a traditional printing company and the industry is being overtaken by digital press—it may be time to come up with some new objectives, like expanding into digital markets.

\*\*\*\*Topic 1

In our last course Social Justice 105 you had an opportunity to start thinking of answers for your SWOT. Now is the time to go forward using our last classes work and starting new utilizing the examples and template below. Please fill in the same way the template is shown.

**How to write a good SWOT analysis**

Writing a good SWOT analysis starts with brainstorming and brainwriting Get your team together in a room with a whiteboard, and start coming with strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.​

Here’s a quick glance at each element of SWOT to help you get started.

**Strengths:** What is your team really good at? What do you offer people that others can’t or don’t?

**Weaknesses:** What are some things that your team is not very good at, that others do much better?

**Opportunities:** What are some areas that your organization could thrive in that it isn’t currently taking advantage of?

**Threats:** What are some external factors—competitors, consumer demand, economic conditions—that could make it more difficult for your team to succeed?

You’ll notice that the first two letters focus on things that you have some control over internally, while the last two focus on external, environmental conditions that your organization will have to respond to.

Once you have a handful of ideas for each quadrant, you’re ready to populate the template and start making connections.

**SWOT analysis template to get you started**

Here’s a SWOT analysis template that you can copy and fill in with your own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Then, in the next section, we’ll look at what to do once you’ve filled out the template. We’ve also included some example SWOT analyses below, using this same template.

📷 Once you have filled out the SWOT worksheet, it’s time to turn your brainstorming into tangible next steps.

**5 SWOT analysis examples**

Here are some basic examples of SWOT analysis so you can see how it’s done.

**1. SWOT Examples: Banana for breakfast**

**Strengths**

* Potassium and vitamin c
* Portable
* Good value

**Opportunities**

* Banana split
* Topping on cereal
* Frozen bananas

**Weaknesses**

* Not filling enough
* Peel is slipping hazard
* Small ripeness window

**Threats**

* Missing out on an apple
* Banana allergies
* Losing the heartiness of oatmeal

**Strategy:** The cost, nutritional value, and versatility of the banana make it a wise choice, despite its negligible shortcomings and different options.

**2. SWOT Examples: Weekend trip to the lake**

**Strengths**

* Tranquility
* A body of water
* Starry skies

**Opportunities**

* Go water skiing
* Have a campfire
* Drink a beverage on the porch swing

**Weaknesses**

* Waterfront prices
* Machete-wielding killers
* Gators

**Threats**

* Missing out on a weekend at the beach
* Getting bit up by mosquitoes
* It rains all weekend

**Strategy:** The natural beauty and the selection of outdoor activities makes the lake a tantalizing destination for a weekend getaway, but its high cost and risk of bodily harm could warrant a look at other locations.

**3. SWOT Examples: Jog after work**

**Strengths**

* Calorie burn
* Fresh air
* Sense of accomplishment

**Opportunities**

* [Meet your future significant other](https://socialruns.com/)
* [Be filmed for a viral video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPTt6MgsOt8)
* [Discover a briefcase full of money](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GSXbgfKFWg)

**Weaknesses**

* Sweaty clothes
* Hostile commuters
* Shin splints

**Threats**

* Getting attacked by a feral cat
* FOMO when you see cyclists speed by
* Missing out on the camaraderie of CrossFit

**Strategy:** The combination of getting your cardio in and giving yourself a chance to find a mate, internet fame, and/or riches far outweighs the downside of dodging traffic and having to do laundry afterward.

As you’ll see below, SWOT analysis can also be used to make project management decisions in the workplace.

**4. SWOT Examples: Free or open source project management software**

**Strengths**

* Free
* Community support makes open source more agile
* Basic versions are often easier for new users

**Opportunities**

* Try out PM software without a financial commitment
* Save company resources for the annual holiday party
* Stick it to the man by using open source

**Weaknesses**

* Limited features
* Limited customer support
* Infrequent updates

**Threats**

* Missing out on all the extra features of paid software
* Your open source PM software is abandoned by the developer
* Trying to get customer service on a free version in the middle of a hectic project

**Strategy:** Free project management software has its limitations, but can be a good fit for small teams or freelancers looking to try it out for the first time. But it is not a replacement for full featured project management software.

**5. SWOT Examples: Hiring a summer intern**

**Strengths**

* Energetic and hard working
* Up on the latest technology
* Cost effective

**Opportunities**

* Learn about hip music and TV shows
* Learn new slang
* They could turn into full-time employees

**Weaknesses**

* Takes time to train them
* They have to go back to school at the end of the summer
* They’re still learning

**Threats**

* They could fall asleep at their desk
* They might cut out early on a Friday to go to a music festival
* They use your training to get hired at a rival company

**Strategy:** With preparation and proper expectations, summer interns can be cost effective and productive.

**TOPIC 1**

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 1**

Take the examples you have seen and the prep work you have already accomplished and answer the chart below:

**Strengths:** What is your team really good at? What do you offer people that others can’t or don’t?

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Once you have filled out the SWOT worksheet, it’s time to turn your brainstorming into tangible next steps.

Strengths

1.

2.

3.

Weakness

1.

2.

3.

Opportunities

1.

2.

3.

Threats

1.

2.

3.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 2 with the Dean**

**PLEASE SET UP A PHONE CALL OR ZOOM CALL WITH THE DEAN FOR 15-30 MINUTES.**