



Pre-Session Work: Conducting a Sustainability SWOT Analysis

We are looking forward to our in-person deep dive into sustainability planning. In order to make best use of the training and time with your peers, please complete this homework with your team prior to the in-person session.

About SWOT Analysis

SWOT stands for: Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat. A SWOT analysis guides you to identify your organization's strengths and weaknesses (S-W), as well as broader opportunities and threats (O-T). Developing a fuller awareness of the situation will help with your sustainability planning.

Instructions

Gather your core team (minimally including those that will be attending the training; feel free to include others as needed/ useful). Ask team members to answer these simple questions: what are (internal) strengths and weaknesses of the sustainability of your initiative, and what are the (external or contextual) opportunities and threats facing the sustainability of your initiative?

LISTING YOUR INTERNAL FACTORS: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES (S, W)

Internal factors include your resources and experiences. General areas to consider:

- Human resources - staff, volunteers, board members, target population
- Physical resources - your location, building, equipment
- Financial - grants, funding agencies, other sources of income
- Activities and processes - programs you run, systems you employ
- Past experiences - building blocks for learning and success, your reputation in the community

Although the strengths and weakness of your organization are your internal qualities, don't overlook the perspective of people outside your group. Identify strengths and weaknesses from both your own point of view and that of others, including those you serve. Do others see problems—or assets—that you don't?

LISTING EXTERNAL FACTORS: OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (O, T)

Cast a wide net for the external part of the assessment. No organization, group, or program is immune to outside events and forces. Consider your connectedness, for better and worse, as you compile this part of your SWOT list.

Forces and facts that your group does not control include:

- Future trends in your field or the culture
- The economy - local, national, or international
- Funding sources - foundations, donors, legislatures
- Demographics - changes in the age, race, gender, culture of those you serve or in your area
- The physical environment (Is your building in a growing part of town? Is the bus company cutting routes?)
- Legislation (Do new federal requirements make your job harder...or easier?)
- Local, national or international events

Please record your group's identified Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats relating to sustainability in the PowerPoint template provided, and email them to cholt@ku.edu at least five days prior to the training. Be prepared to share at the meeting in an 8-minute presentation.

Adapted from the University of Kansas Community Tool Box:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main>