

How to do a swot analysis of your school

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SWOT analysis is a guideline to understanding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relevant to your school. It helps you see:

- Which areas need developing?
- Which areas are thriving?
- Which areas are stagnant?
- And which areas could ruin everything?

To understand your school's competitive advantage and minimize instability, we're going to teach you how to do a SWOT analysis of your school.

Strengths: What's going right for the school

The first step is to identify strengths; that is, benefits which enhance the quality of your school.

It's easier to write down overall strengths, then narrow to the specifics. To prevent thought-block, consider if these strengths are relevant to your school.

You have:

- An abundance of co-curricular activities.
- Highly-trained teachers/professors.
- Strong funding/financial backing.
- High graduation percentages.
- Great location for families.

You need to know existing strengths to keep them as strengths. And plan how to enhance them to see more benefits.

Once you feel it's complete, we move onto the " W" in SWOT analysis: weaknesses.

Weaknesses: What's holding the school back

Seeking out weaknesses can be tricky. Sometimes we try to minimize the effect of weaknesses because they're blights we'd rather not see.

But weaknesses aren't to be ashamed of. And to build a strong school and reduce impact, weaknesses must be acknowledged.

When we acknowledge weakness, we're one step closer to creating a plan of attack. The plan will eliminate or reduce any impact the weakness may have on the school.

Here are a few weaknesses to consider for this SWOT analysis:

- Not enough co-curricular and sports activities.
- Lack of funding for specific sports/programs.
- Enhanced reports of cyberbullying.
- Not enough staff/faculty members.
- Staff unable to meet with parents.
- Lack of proper training for faculty.
- An overabundance of students.
- Poor internal communications.
- Poor testing scores.
- Bad reviews online.

How severe are your weaknesses?

Let's use an example from the above list. Starting with "staff unable to meet with parents".

To parents, this can have a big impact on their child's grades. But for the school it's a minor inconvenience. Especially compared to not having enough staff for every position in the school. Finding appropriate staffing is an issue requiring immediate attention.

There's another good thing about weaknesses; it helps to create opportunities.

Opportunities: The positive changes for your school

Opportunities have the ability to just happen. But why leave it up to fate?

SWOT analysis helps us to identify opportunities to benefit the school. And we also have the ability to create opportunity — especially now that we've identified weaknesses.

Let's look at how we can turn a weakness into an opportunity.

Weakness: Poor testing scores.

Opportunity: Introduce a new program designed to help students, after school or during their lunch period, to address previous test concerns.

This new program will assess students' ability to understand the curriculum. Not only will the students receive the help they deserve, the school will be praised by students and parents alike.

Another weakness turned opportunity...

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Weakness: Bad online reviews.

Opportunity: Respond to these reviews professionally, while also highlighting how the school plans to correct the issues presented in the reviews.

This shows the school is actively assessing problems and seeking out methods to correct said issues. It's damage control. Without it, the reviews could get out of hand and fully tarnish the school's reputation.

We're creating opportunities out of weaknesses to limit their impact.

Other opportunities to include:

- Activate a volunteer committee for school related events.
- Seek out new investors and funding for programs.
- Cut or merge programs to move funding elsewhere.
- Ask students and parents for feedback.
- Highlight new program developments.

You also want to note which opportunities are coming up. Look at it this way:

- How can you use these opportunities to increase the school's strengths (from the list you created?)
- How can you use these opportunities to decrease weaknesses?
- And where can we start creating opportunities?

Threats: Where weaknesses develop for your school

Threats aren't weaknesses. Weaknesses already exist and must be dealt with. Threats might lead to complications... but they might not.

We acknowledge threats to create a plan. Because if we don't understand the threat, it can't be dealt with accordingly.

Let's look at some threats:

- Poor planning of curriculum/activities.
- Too much internal communications.
- Lack of internal communications.
- New high school development.
- Plumbing complications.
- Parent complaints.
- Employee/work strikes.
- Lack of funding.
- Pulled funding.

Threats are to be on your radar at all times. If you can create a plan of action to address these threats, hop to it.

But if you can't — such as the risk for strikes or labor disputes — being aware is a good first step. Because you can create a plan of response if these threats manifest into reality.

You do a SWOT analysis of your school because...

It highlights and expands strengths. It minimizes or even erases weaknesses. It allows the creation of opportunities. And it identifies threats to prevent blow ups.

It's a framework to understand the present and future situation of your school. And all it takes to complete is time.

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