

Swot analysis of a person and why it pays to do your homework

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Have you ever needed someone to help you with homework and maybe you tried to find a tutor? You might have interviewed a few people and asked around only to find that there is one person who said they would help you and you didn't know them, but still you said okay.

When you got your next test back, you were probably shocked to find out that you got a lower grade than you would have if you had studied on your own. Maybe you didn't do your homework. Or maybe you did and you just didn't do a background check on the person to know whether or not they understood what they were studying.

Researching people

SWOT analysis can help you to understand a person's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. If you never thought about doing this kind of research on a person, you'd be surprised what you can learn.

As you can see from the example of finding someone to help you study, you might want to ask them about their strengths. You might find out that this person is great at English and really good at history. And then, when you ask them about their weaknesses, you might find out that the person has failed a few times at trigonometry, or that they couldn't get past calculus.

A person's strengths

When you think about strengths, it's not whether or not the person is a threat, but it could be that there are other people who could also help you with your homework. If that person was going to charge you to tutor you, they would lose money because you might find a better tutor elsewhere.
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That's why when you do SWOT analysis of a person, you want to think about them as it relates to something similar like if you're going to hire a new business partner for example.

Your new business partner

It's similar to the tutoring example because you want to make sure you hire someone who's going to have something to contribute. When you do a SWOT analysis of a person, you literally have to get out a sheet of paper and just like you would do a SWOT for a company, you are going to map out their strengths and other SWOT parts.

Strengths: If you're going to hire a new business partner, you don't want someone who necessarily does exactly what you do. Maybe their strengths are that they're better at accounting than you are, or better at math.

Weaknesses: Maybe the weaknesses are that they do a lot of traveling and can only come into the office a few times a month.

Opportunities: Next, when you look at the opportunities you might find that this person has a lot of network connections. That means they know a lot of people, because they travel so much. Your business needs all those connections so you probably want to get on board with this person.

Threats: When you think about the threats, always remember that the threat is the competition. Who is this person's competitor? It would be all the other people who were interviewing for the position that you have available.

That's why when you go into your meetings with your staff, you'll be able to better let them know who you think is your top choice for your business partner. Just like when you would look at a company, when you do your analysis on a person, this can give you a detailed breakdown of every area that they can contribute to. You'll also know areas where that person is going to be weak.

Keep an open mind that this is also something that you want to look at it periodically because it will let you know areas that you need to focus on. For example, if you did hire that business partner, the one who travels all the time, you know that his weakness is that he's not in the office all the time. That might mean that he misses a lot of meetings or he has a certain period of time when he's not connected with the office. That's okay if you don't mind updating him on meetings and letting him know what your staff is now doing if he's been out of the office.

Weighing a person's strengths and weaknesses

Sometimes you'll be able to fill these areas in, and sometimes you won't. If for example, you find that this person is never around when you need them, it's because that area that you marked down as a weakness is something that really is holding them back from being able to work with your company. This happens in business sometimes, when you have people who are great at networking and meeting other people, but you can't pin them down to keep them in meetings or to keep them focused. They're great at bringing business in, but they can't keep business in.

Sometimes companies will hire the type of person anyway, because they need someone who's great at networking and bringing in clients. That's why these people are considered rainmakers, not because they can actually make it rain outside, and not because they could throw dollar bills around, but because they can bring a lot of business in at one time.

Ultimately, with your company, your goal as you do a SWOT analysis of people, is to look at every person on your team and see where their strengths are, their weaknesses, the opportunities that you have working with them. You're also seeing their threats, meaning the other people that you could hire to replace them. You want to ensure you hire the best people and they will have different things to contribute.

If you start to find that you have too many people who have a similar mindset or work the same way, you might have to make some changes in your organization to add more rainmakers, or to take some out!

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