



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Certificate of Higher Education in Employability Skills

Problem Solving and Innovation (BMSW4014)

Jaliya de Silva/ Arpu Kumar
Lecture 3

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Agenda

- Recap of Week 2
- Familiarise ourselves with SWOT when used in the context of an organisation and a current problem.
- To understand how and why SWOT is used in Problem Solving and Innovation.
- Exploration of other models that help to analyse the external environment an organisation operates in.
- QUIZ.

SWOT analysis



- Strengths – Internal factors that give the organisation a competitive advantage.
- Weaknesses – Internal factors that place the organisation at a disadvantage.
- Opportunities – External factors that the organisation could utilise to its' advantage.
- Threats – External factors that could pose challenges or risks to the organisation.
- SWOT analysis is typically more focused on the immediate internal environment of the organisation.

What is SWOT analysis?

- A planning tool used to understand key factors involved in a project or an organisation.
- Often used as part of strategic planning but can be applied to help understand an organisation or a situation, and also decision making.

SWOT analysis within an organisation



What value does SWOT add?

- Offers self-assessment for management.
- Flexibility - Can be used as both a quick tool or a comprehensive management tool.
- The process can be more complex than it first appears.
- Be mindful of making incorrect assumptions.

The SWOT process

- How and who?
- What information is needed?
- Gather the information.
- Plot findings and identify important issues.
- What are the strategic options?
- Complete a write-up.
- Share findings.
- Determine priorities and create action plan.

SWOT template (CIPD, 2024)

INTERNAL FACTORS

STRENGTHS

What advantages and value proposition do you have to rival other businesses?

People, skills capabilities

- Staff development, investment in training
- Communication
- Engagement levels
- HR strategy
- EVP
- Knowledge and expertise
- Benefits
- Succession plans
- Culture, philosophy and values
- Data

Resources, assets

- Properties and locations
- Equipment
- Financial reserves
- Technology

Competitive advantage

- Intellectual property
- Products and, or services
- Markets and reach
- Innovation
- Unique selling proposition

Internal processes

- HR and operational
- Cooperation across different departments (finance, marketing, IT, legal/risk, etc)

WEAKNESSES

Identify vulnerabilities: areas of your business and/or HR function that require change to be more efficient, or stopped?

People, skills capabilities

- Staff morale
- Budget constraints
- Skills gaps
- Employee turnover
- Expertise
- Internal disruption
- People analytics/data
- Historical data
- HR recognition, impeding contribution
- People management

Resources, assets

- Core activities
- Reliability
- Cash flow
- Dated technology/equipment

Competitive advantage

- Reputation and brand perception
- Quality
- Procurement strength
- Bureaucracy
- Reactive rather than proactive

Internal processes

- HR and operational

SWOT template (CIPD, 2024)

EXTERNAL FACTORS

OPPORTUNITIES

What opportunities and trends can you capitalise on?

People, skills capabilities

- Workforce planning
- Organisational design
- Restructure
- Personal and professional development expectations
- Transparency of benefits

Resources, assets

- Development of international sustainability reporting standards

Competitive advantage

- The gig economy
- Industry trends
- Technology development
- Target markets
- New product developments
- Expansion and growth
- Partnerships
- ESG/increasing Social reporting regulations

Internal engagement

- Board demands/upskilling expected by regulators
- Support to board committees on people risks and opportunities

THREATS

What external factors could impede your progress?

People, skills capabilities

- Competitors attracting staff away
- Personalisation of benefits

Resources, assets

- Lack of common international standards
- Competitive advantage
- Changes to demographics
- Increasing regulation
- Labour market conditions
- New competitors
- Changes to market demand
- PESTLE factors (see factsheet)
- Innovations in technology
- Cost of investments
- Loss of market share

External Factors/Stakeholders

- Investor expectations
- NGO expectations
- Regulators expectations
- Climate change
- Economic environment
- Geopolitics

SWOT analysis tips

- Collaborate.
- Expertise and resources.
- Use other techniques.
- Use for ongoing processes.
- Avoid information overload.
- Do not make assumptions.

When to use SWOT

A SWOT analysis can be used for:

- Workshop sessions.
- Generating ideas and solutions.
- Problem solving.
- Planning.
- Strategic planning (with PESTLE).
- Product evaluation.
- Competitor evaluation (with Porter's five forces).
- Personal development planning.
- Decision making (with Lewin's force field analysis).

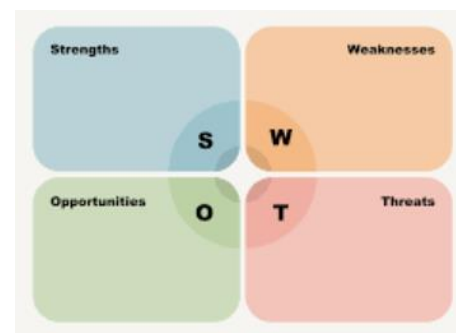
Activity

- In groups, chose an organisation and conduct a SWOT analysis on it's current position.
- Keep the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats brief in description.
- Aim to get at least 3 in each section.



Advantages

- It's a simple four box framework.
- It facilitates an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation.
- It encourages the development of strategic thinking.
- It enables senior managers to focus on strengths and build opportunities.
- It can enable an organisation to anticipate future business threats and take action to avoid or minimise their impact.
- It can enable an organisation to spot business opportunities and exploit them fully.
- It's flexible.



Disadvantages

- Some SWOT analysis users oversimplify the amount of data used for decisions – it's easy to use insufficient data.
- The risk of capturing too much data may lead to 'paralysis by analysis'.
- The data used may be based on assumptions that later prove to be unfounded.
- Access to quality internal data sources can be time consuming and politically difficult (especially in more complex organisations – parent company, etc).
- It lacks detailed structure, so key elements may get missed.
- The pace of change makes it increasingly difficult to anticipate developments that may affect an organisation in the future.
- To be effective, the process needs to be repeated on a regular basis.

Problem solving with SWOT

- Leverage your strengths to exploit opportunities and overcome threats.
- Address weaknesses that limit performance or expose you to risks.
- Seize opportunities that offer growth or improvement potential.
- Mitigate threats that pose challenges.



Problem solving with SWOT

- Strong team – use it to enter a new market or deal with a customer issue.
- Skills gap – provide training or hire new talent.
- New technology – use it to enhance productivity or quality.
- New competitor – differentiate your product or service or improve customer service.



Activity

In groups, discuss the following:

- How can the organisation you have discussed use one of its' strengths to reverse/limit one of its' weaknesses?
- How can they avoid a threat through taking advantage of an opportunity?
- Can they use a strength to take advantage of the market opportunities?
- Might one of the organisation's weaknesses hold it back from opportunities?

Why use SWOT analysis?

- Builds a comprehensive picture of a situation.
- Creates links between positive and negative sides of a situation (conversion strategies).
- Creates links between internal and external sides of a situation.



Porter's 5 forces



Porter's 5 Forces – Practical example

Starbucks - UK

- **Competitive Rivalry** – Highly competitive market (Costa Coffee and a growing industry in general).
- **Bargaining Power of Buyers** – Customers have the ability to switch easily and many products available. Loyalty programme in place to increase customer retentions and reduce buyer power.
- **Threat of Substitutes** – high availability of substitutes, UK is traditionally a tea drinking nation.
- **Bargaining Power of Suppliers** – Their global scale may provide some leverage in negotiations, focus on ethical sourcing and sustainability may limit supplier options.
- **Threat of New Entrants** – Starbucks has strong brand reputation and range of stores in UK creates a barrier to entry to newer brands.

Porter's 5 Forces - Continued

Possible challenges include:

- Lack of depth
- Lack of structured analysis
- Lack of strategic insight

Can be used alongside SWOT analysis to provide a more in depth view of opportunities and threats.

References

CIPD (2024) *SWOT analysis*. Available at: [SWOT analysis | Factsheets | CIPD](#) (Accessed: 3 May 2024).

Danao, M. (2024) *Porter's Five Forces: Definition & How to Use The Model*. Available at: [Porter's Five Forces: Definition & How To Use The Model – Forbes Advisor](#) (Accessed: 11 October 2024).

Dobbs, M.E. (2014) 'Guidelines for applying Porter's five forces framework: a set of industry analysis templates'. *Competitiveness review*, 24(1), pp. 32–45. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/CR-06-2013-0059>.

Gov.uk (2024) *Fighting retail crime: more action*. Available at: [Fighting retail crime: more action \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#) (Accessed: 22 January 2025).

Swanson, D.J. and Creed, A.S. (2014) 'Sharpening the Focus of Force Field Analysis', *Journal of change management*, 14(1), pp. 28–47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.788052>.

Taylor, S. and Perkins, G. (Graham M. (2021) *Work and employment in a changing business environment*. London: Kogan Page

Usdaw (2024) *Alarming 29% increase in shoplifting across England and Wales – Usdaw welcomes the Labour Government's commitment to tackle retail crime*. Available at: [USDAW - Alarming 29% increase in shoplifting](#) (Accessed: 22 January 2025).

Waitzman, E. (2024) *Retail crime: Impact on workers, the community and local economies*. Available at: [Retail crime: Impact on workers, the community and local economies - House of Lords Library](#) (Accessed: 22 January 2025).



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Thank You

Next Lecture

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk