

SWOT Analysis

Background:

A SWOT Analysis is a tool often used by a group when they are entering into strategic planning. It can be used by existing groups or by groups that are entering into the development of a co-operative. The four parts to the analysis are:

Strengths: What resources, talents, experiences, does the group/co-operative have that will enable it to perform well in its chosen core businesses?

Weaknesses: What is the group/co-operative lacking to be able to deliver in its chosen core businesses?

Opportunities: What is happening outside of the group which the group may capitalize upon to create or improve its core businesses?

Threats: What is happening external to the group that may pose risk as the group seeks to move ahead with its core businesses?

What you'll need:

- Chairs and writing surfaces for each participant. If the group is small enough, have everyone sit around a table with one end open for focus on the flipchart and facilitator.
- Flipchart, flipchart pens, masking tape or sticky tack
- Paper and pens for each participant.
- Projector, screen, SWOT Analysis PowerPoint, and notebook computer.

Steps:

1. Introduce the concept (slide #2)
2. Ask participants to silently brainstorm in writing as many responses as they can think of for each of the above SWOT categories.
3. When participants have finished brainstorming, begin a flipchart page with the heading: "Strengths" and ask each participant to provide one strength and then move on to the person next to him/her. Ask participants not to add an item if it has been contributed by someone else. If a participant does not have any strengths to add to the list, they may simply say "pass". After each participant has contributed one idea for a strength, continue around the group again. Repeat until all strengths have been recorded on the flipchart. Then repeat the process for "Weaknesses", "Opportunities", and "Threats" respectively.

4. When all ideas have been recorded, discuss the implications for the group's areas of business focus (slide #3).