

Essentials to Leadership: Strategic Planning

Lesson designed by: Bob Turner

Course description: Strategic Planning– part 5

In this lesson we continue to focus our attention in the area of strategic planning. The necessity of goals is critical to the success of the church. Too many congregations coast along hoping that everything will be different with a new preacher or once they have elders. As essential as vision is to the growth and development of the church, so is strategic planning.

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Identified the four components of the S.W.O.T. analysis process.
- B. Conducted a S.W.O.T. analysis with one of the goals. This process can and should be continued each week until all of the goals are completed.

Outline of the class:

- A. The work in today's class involves every person contributing toward the project of conducting a S.W.O.T. analysis.
- B. S.W.O.T. stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A number of ways have been suggested in how to conduct a S.W.O.T. analysis and we will attempt our best through this lesson to find the way that fits best for you and your congregation. Before then, consider the identification of each of these areas.
 1. Strengths:
 - a. This is an area that is of *internal* origin. The attributes of the organization (capabilities, processes, experience, knowledge, resources, etc.)
 - b. These include areas that are *helpful* to achieving the objective.
 - c. When listing out the strengths in this section, keep this in mind.
 - d. Depending on the goal discussed, Strengths can include:
 - i. Strong biblical foundation
 - ii. Qualified and knowledgeable Bible class teachers
 - iii. Plenty of space
 - iv. Abundant resources
 - v. Accessible technology
 - vi. Friendly atmosphere
 - vii. Young families

2. Weaknesses:

- a. This is also an area of *internal* origin. The attributes of the organization (lack of capabilities, processes, experience, knowledge, resources, etc.)
- b. However, this addresses areas that are *harmful* to achieving the objective.
- c. Again, when listing out the weaknesses, it is important to remember these thoughts.
- d. Depending on the goal discussed, Weaknesses can include:
 - i. Lack of motivation
 - ii. No vision or goals by leadership
 - iii. Poor communication
 - iv. Disinterested in teaching (they may be qualified, but don't want to teach)
 - v. No skills in the use of technology (the technology is there, but no one is really trained to use it, or they have only limited knowledge)
 - vi. Tight budget (resources are there, but so much has been committed, there isn't enough to do more)
 - vii. Too busy with secular activities

3. Opportunities:

- a. This is an area that is of *external* origin. The attributes of the surrounding environment (location, receptivity, influences, partnerships, etc.)
- b. These include areas that are *helpful* to achieving the objective.
- c. When listing out the opportunities in this section, remember these.
- d. Depending on the goal discussed, Opportunities can include:
 - i. Good location for the church building (high visibility)
 - ii. Growing community
 - iii. Excellent school system for children
 - iv. Access to newspaper and radio advertisement
 - v. Community oriented business organizations (Lions, Optimist, and Toast Master's clubs, etc.)
 - vi. Poor community (the lack of material blessings drives people to always ask for help from the church)

4. Threats:
- a. This is also an area of *external* origin. The attributes of the surrounding environment (lack of location, receptivity, influences, partnerships, etc.)
 - b. However, this addresses areas that are *harmful* to achieving the objective.
 - c. When listing out the threats, it is important to remember these thoughts.
 - d. Depending on the goal discussed, Threats can include:
 - i. Members live too far away to meet more often than Sunday and Wednesday
 - ii. Disinterest in spiritual discussions in the community
 - iii. Scheduled school activities on Wednesday nights
 - iv. Land-locked (the building is in a good location, but the ability to grow is limited because there is no space around to expand)
 - v. Affluent community (the abundance of material blessings seems to keep people from thinking they need God)
 - vi. Satan

C. Please keep in mind that the information above is just a sample and not to be used per se. The idea is to get all the information about each of these areas from the members of the class. Get them thinking. The teacher should just be the tool to write the information on the whiteboard, not make suggestions to lead their thinking.

D. Now, it is time to utilize these areas to conduct an analysis of the first goal listed from last week.

1. In order to conduct this analysis, you must have a large amount of whiteboard space, or the large Post-it pull-off sheets of paper that can be placed on the wall around the room. The size I prefer to use is 25 x 30, but any size you prefer to use will work. Find something that allows you to write out everything mentioned. You may need several sheets for each area of the S.W.O.T.
2. Start with the strengths, then move to weaknesses, then opportunities, and then threats.
3. Ask the group to list out everything they can think of for each category before moving on through the discussion about the goal.
4. It is not uncommon for people to mention ideas that are opportunities while you are talking about strengths, or threats when talking about weaknesses. You can ask them to hold that thought, or go ahead and write it under that section, and guide everyone back to the section discussed and what it involves.

Conclusion:

- A. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of a S.W.O.T analysis for developing the goals and plans for the church.
- B. Remember, if the weaknesses and threats are greater than your strengths and opportunities, you may need to modify the goal or get rid of it completely. Be honest enough to know how to move forward with setting new goals and establishing new plans for the future.
- C. Next week, we will continue our discussion this subject, but focus specifically on the importance of legacy.

Recommended Reading:

Below are a couple of examples of S.W.O.T. information that might be helpful in thinking about how to approach conducting this type of analysis.

The links for each are located at the bottom of each example.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- What advantages do you have?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What unique or lowest-cost resources can you draw upon that others can't?
- What are your strengths according to clients?
- What is your USP?

WEAKNESSES

- What can improve?
- What should you be avoiding?
- What are your weaknesses according to people in the market?
- What is losing you sales?
- Are there unavoidable issues that are costing you?

OPPORTUNITIES

- What are some events/holidays etc. that you can take advantage of?
- Interesting trends are you aware of?
- Opportunities for collaboration?
- What are some brands that align well with your organization's mission and vision statement?

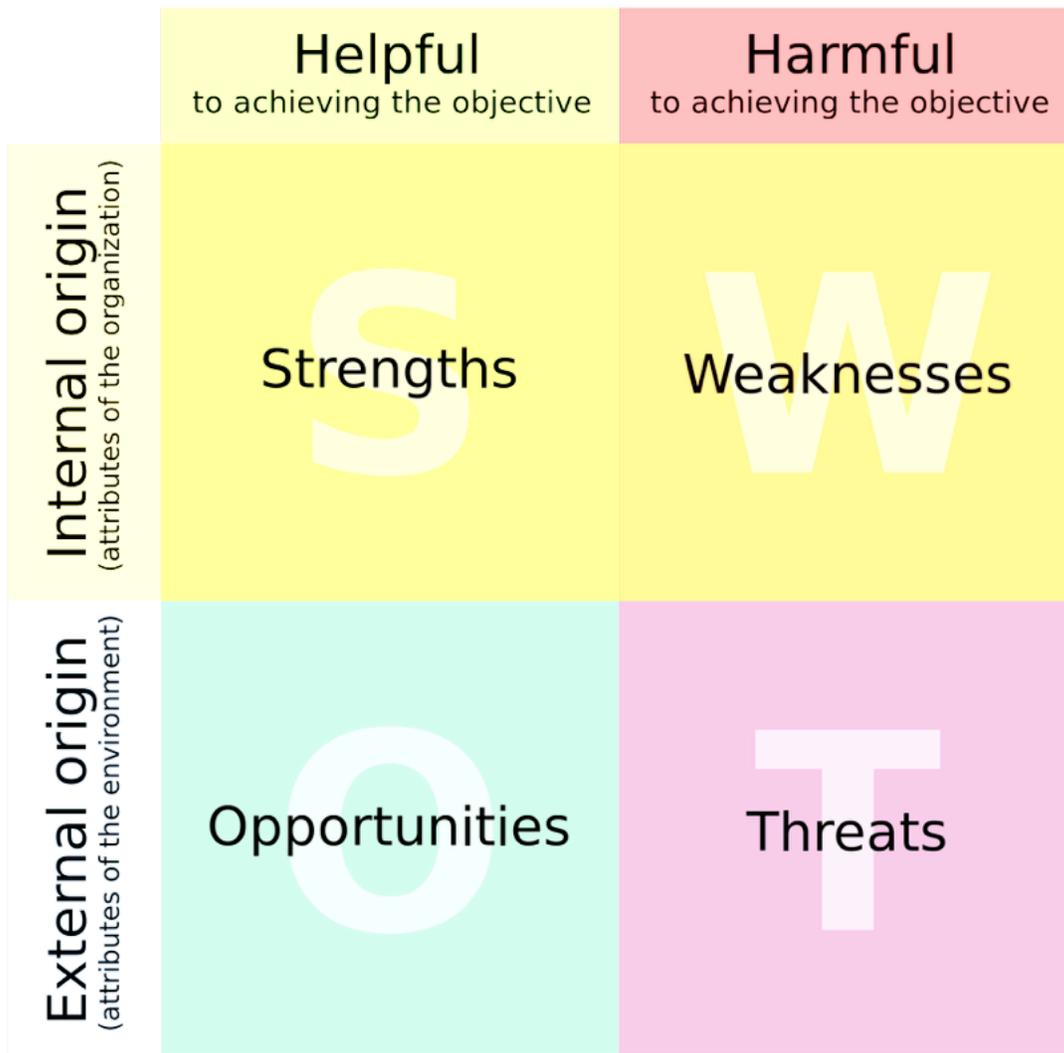
THREATS

- Are changes in technology threatening your position?
- Do you have money problems?
- Are your weaknesses threatening your biz?
- Who are your competitors?

THESCRIBESMITH

<http://rottenraw.com/swot-analysis-for-event-planning-business/swot-analysis-stands-for-strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-and-event-planning-business-b0f32a7024e740842ed9b8f6cff/>

SWOT ANALYSIS



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SWOT_en.svg