HOW TO CONDUCT A SWOT ANALYSIS FOR ASSOCIATION PLANNING

WHAT IS A SWOT ANALYSIS?

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Taking time to regularly analyze these factors is an important part of strategic planning and analysis.

Organizations often use SWOT to determine if a project or strategy can be successful and/or is worthwhile. There are two key components to SWOT – internal and external factors. Strengths and Weaknesses are considered internal, while Opportunities and Threats are external.

STRENGTHS **WEAKNESSES** **OPPORTUNITIES** **THREATS**

HOW TO CONDUCT A SWOT ANALYSIS

Begin by drawing a box divided into 4 sections. Each section represents one of the SWOT factors. At the top of the box, write down your objective (what you are trying to determine).

For a general analysis, keep it simple. Just start listing things. You'll probably be surprised by what you come up with.

S

Strengths

Begin with **Strengths.** Strengths are internal and are within your control. List things that are tangible. Examples could include strong non-dues revenue and powerful software. Also include intangibles such as reputation, employee commitment, member engagement, etc.

W

Weaknesses

In the next section, make a list of **Weaknesses.** Ideas could be a poor revenue stream, outdated software, high employee turnover.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE RESULTS

The results of the SWOT Analysis should be used to determine what's working and where improvements can be made. It also allows you to proactively see what issues may be on the horizon (positive and negative).

O

Opportunities

Opportunities should outline, well, opportunities. Opportunities don't have to correlate with weaknesses. For example, do you have an idea for something that could generate more revenue? Is there an event you've been brainstorming about? Have you had an "aha" moment about a social media campaign?

T

Threats

Threats can be anything that puts your organization's success at risk. Is there another organization's event that is impacting attendance (and revenue) at your event? Is an online provider offering classes that duplicate your offerings? Anything that impacts your organization's reputation or success or threatens to make your organization obsolete should be considered a threat.

The first step is making the decision to conduct the analysis. From there the pieces will fall into place.

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