



Wells Mountain Initiative

Community Development Growth Grant Evaluating Ideas with SWOT Analysis

Use this handout as a guide to honestly examine your on-going initiative and goals for expansion/growth. This activity will help to develop a broader awareness and assist with developing a strategic plan that focuses on achieving your goals. Your official SWOT analysis should be included in your written proposal under section 5.

**You are required to complete a SWOT analysis for your on-going initiative (community group, organization, business) as part of the Community Development Growth Grant application. However, you are encouraged to complete additional SWOT analyses to support your planning and decision making for each of your goals as well.*

What is a SWOT analysis?

A SWOT analysis is a planning tool that helps individuals, groups, organizations, and businesses assess internal capacities and external factors when creating new goals, implementing a new idea, program, or expansion plan, etc.

What does SWOT stand for?

SWOT stands for **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats**. Strengths and weaknesses are **internal measurements**. While opportunities and threats are **external factors**.



How can I use this handout to help me apply for the Community Development Grant program?



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Choose your focus: You should perform a SWOT analysis on your on-going initiative (Organizational SWOT Analysis) AND you can also choose to perform a SWOT analysis on specific goals and objectives.

Chart, questions, and prompts: Use the SWOT analysis chart below, guiding questions and prompts to begin thinking about the specific focus of each analysis.

Dedicate time to brainstorm by considering the internal and external factors related to the particular focus you have identified.

This exercise will help you to take a step back to evaluate what factors will either aid, influence or create challenges for your expansion/growth. There are no wrong answers in a SWOT analysis brainstorming session.

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you do well?• Are there specific areas/activities that you do better than others?• What unique resources do you have access to?• What unique capabilities do you have?• What do others see as your strengths?	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What could you improve?• Where do you have fewer resources than others?• What are others likely to see as weaknesses?
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What opportunities are available to you currently?• What trends could you take advantage of to create growth?• How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What threats could harm you?• What is your competition doing?• What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?

Use the following prompts to generally consider the following areas:

Internal Factors (Strengths and Weaknesses)

- Human resources - YOU!, staff, volunteers, board members, supporters of your work
- Physical resources - Your location, office space, and equipment
- Financial resources - Sources of income, grants, current additional funding sources
- Visibility within the community/market - Physical and online presence
- Activities and programs - Activities that are run as part of your organization or business
- Processes - Systems used to help create organization and efficiency
- Past experiences - Lessons learned to improve outcomes in the future



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External Factors (Opportunities and Weaknesses)

- Current local, national, global circumstances
- Trends - Current and future
- Economy - Local, national, and international (if applicable)
- Funding sources - External sources from foundations, donors, government
- Beneficiaries/customers - Changes in needs/preferences, culture or demographic differences if expanding into a new city, county, region
- Physical location/environment - Growing/declining town, public transportation access
- National legislation - Do new laws make your work easier to do or more difficult
- Cultural practices/beliefs - Long standing beliefs and traditions or new cultural practices

Once I complete a SWOT analysis, what can I do with the information?

Taking time to step back and fully examine internal and external factors is not a practice that is usually conducted regularly.

The time that you have dedicated to the SWOT analysis process will enable you to:

- Create, adjust or reaffirm goals that have been set
- Identify areas that you have the ability to successfully work in
- Design a strengthened action/implementation plan acknowledging ever changing internal and external factors

You will also benefit from:

- Achieving a clear understanding of how you can best use resources
- Select projects/expansion areas that you have the most strengths and opportunities to aid with success
- Understanding where weaknesses and threats exist and building institutional support systems to protect from these issues

Reflection questions:

- How can strengths be leveraged?
- How can weaknesses be improved?
- How can opportunities be capitalized on?
- How can each threat be minimized?

Resources for additional reading:

- <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/CLD2/CLD25/CLD25.pdf>
- <https://www.thegrassrootscollective.org/situational-analysis-nonprofit>
- https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_05.htm
- <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main>