



## Conducting a Career SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method used in business to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of a project. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture and identifying the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving that objective.

A person's career objectives can be mapped out and planned in the same way companies go about strategising and identifying their short and long term goals. The SWOT analysis may also assist in your selecting a career path based on achieving your goals which may range from financial, flexibility, qualification and interests.

By taking the time to think rationally about your future career, you can avoid landing in a position where you hate your job, find out that you are not good at it, that it pays poorly or that there are no further opportunities available in your chosen field.

By using the SWOT technique young people who are entering the workplace or job seekers can realistically test their proposed career against their strengths and weaknesses, develop a plan to improve on any identified weaknesses and maximise their strengths. At the same time, it allows new work entrants to evaluate their desired profession against the external opportunities and limitations of that particular field.

Strengths would include your qualifications; any previous work experience including part time jobs, charity work or learnerships; technical knowledge such as computer skills; and personal characteristics like a solid work ethic, the ability to cope under pressure, self-discipline, leadership or creativity. Similarly, your weaknesses would be the negation of the same skills and qualities or limitations to gain the required qualification.

Opportunities and threats are those things over which you have no control but still have an influence on your chosen profession. Things to consider here include the demand for your profession and the scarcity of your skills; the salary bands of your chosen profession and whether that salary will meet your future financial needs such as sustaining a family; and the opportunities for advancement in your field.

So before making your next career move, we suggest taking the time to put a SWOT together which will help guide your career path and ensure you achieve your aspirations.