

TOWS Analysis

SWOT Analysis is a useful technique for understanding Strengths and Weaknesses, and for identifying both the Opportunities and Threats.

A SWOT is particularly powerful in helping uncover opportunities that the business could be well placed to take advantage of. By understanding the business's weaknesses, it is possible to manage and eliminate threats.

To develop strategies to take advantage of strengths and opportunities, mitigate weaknesses and threats, it is necessary to conduct a TOWS analysis.

Once you have completed your SWOT, ask the following questions:

How do you:

- Make the most of your strengths?
- Circumvent your weaknesses?
- Capitalise on your opportunities?
- Manage your threats?

Then use your answers to develop strategic alternatives:

- 'Maxi-Maxi' – strategies that use strengths to maximise opportunities (SO)
- 'Maxi-Mini' – strategies that use strengths to minimise threats (ST)
- 'Mini-Maxi' – strategies that minimise weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities (WO)
- 'Mini-Mini' – strategies that minimise weaknesses and avoid threats (WT)

Use the templates below to develop your ideas.

‘Maxi-Maxi’ – strategies that use strengths to maximise opportunities (SO)

Internal Strengths	External Opportunities	How do you use your strengths to take advantage of your opportunities?

‘Maxi-Mini’ – strategies that use strengths to minimise threats (ST)

Internal Strengths	External Threats	How can your strengths reduce the probability of threats?

'Mini-Maxi' – strategies that minimise weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities (WO)

Internal Weaknesses	External Opportunities	How do you overcome weaknesses preventing you from taking advantage of opportunities?

'Mini-Mini' – strategies that minimise weaknesses and avoid threats (WT)

Internal Weaknesses	External Threats	What can you do about your weaknesses to make threats less likely?