

## What is a SWOT Analysis?

Typically, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis is conducted in a group setting – ideally in-person but may be a cameras-on virtual meeting – with a facilitator moving a brainstorm-styled conversation through the four quadrants of a SWOT analysis. One benefit of the group versus individual approach lies in the collaboration that can develop during the SWOT session. By fostering a collaborative spirit during idea analysis, you are more likely to sustain a partnership-based approach through to implementation, whose success often hinges on collaboration.

## Internal Factors: Strengths and Weaknesses

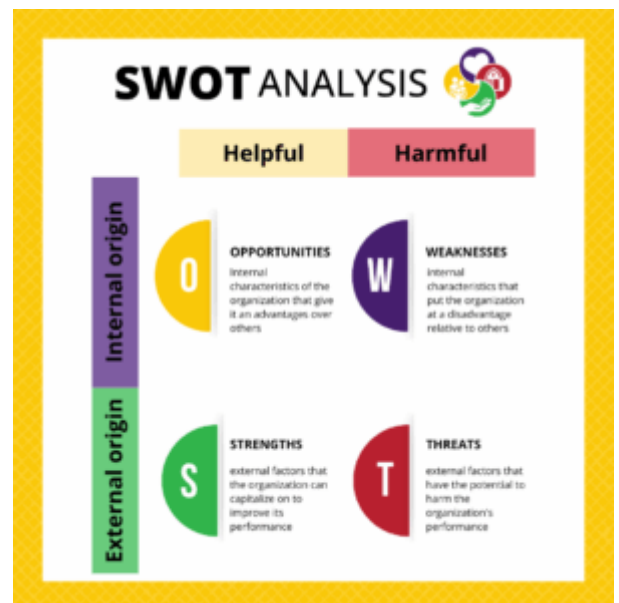
Two of the SWOT focuses are on the program idea itself. What elements of the program idea make it strong? These elements are named in the Strengths quadrant and likely coincide with the factors you associate with what makes your idea different or otherwise additive to the community's support services network. Weaknesses are those attributes of your program idea that you are concerned may inhibit or prevent success. Those may be available funding, staff capacity, and similar considerations.

## External Factors: Opportunities and Threats

The other positive-negative pairing of the SWOT analysis addresses external factors: opportunities and threats. Opportunities are those items that program leaders may pursue or leverage to facilitate success. The possibility of an ECF grant award to support the project is an example of an opportunity. Threats are factors outside of program design or the leadership's control that may negatively impact program operations. For instance, a perceived risk of inflation may be a threat if the program is heavily reliant on individual donor contributions.

## What to do with SWOT Analysis Findings

A SWOT analysis can lead to several different outcomes. For example, suppose the negative factors – weaknesses and threats – feel insurmountable to the gathered partners. In that case, the assessment may result in starting anew with a new or significantly revised program idea. Alternatively, the opportunities may be significant enough to counterbalance the perceived weaknesses and threats, so that the decision to move forward with the concept may be pursued cautiously. In this case, the program's full implementation may depend on whether the opportunities come to fruition or otherwise positively impact the effort's path to success. You can also use your SWOT Analysis findings to help complete your [logic model](#) when applying for grant funding.



## What's Next

Suppose the SWOT findings are that strengths and opportunities are more prominent and likely, respectively, than any identified weaknesses or threats. In that case, you will want to move forward to step four in the program idea implementation process: seek support. You can start by seeking support commitments from those partners who participated in the SWOT session. If you believe your project might be a fit for ECF grant funding, you can seek our support by [arranging a conversation with our Executive Director](#).



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