

PERSEN 1: FOUNDATION OF SELF LESSONS & ACTIVITIES

ILO4: Identifying and understanding strengths and weakness - Strengths and Weaknesses (SWOT Analysis)

The SWOT analysis is a foundational strategic tool used to evaluate the internal and external factors affecting an organization. The primary objective is to take the knowledge gained from this evaluation to formulate a strategy that aligns with the organization's environment.

Definition: SWOT stands for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats.

-**The Micro Environment (Internal):** Evaluates strengths and weaknesses inherent to the organization.

-**The Macro Environment (External):** Evaluates opportunities and threats outside the organization's control.

-**Strategic Goal:** To identify core competencies that create a sustainable competitive advantage. Received

- **Internal Analysis: Strengths & Weaknesses**

Internal analysis focuses on resources and capabilities to pinpoint the source of a firm's competitive advantage.

A. Resources and Capabilities

- **Resources:** These are the inputs required to produce a service or product.
 - **Tangible:** Physical items like raw materials, machinery, and equipment.
 - **Intangible:** Non-physical assets such as brand equity, patents, trademarks, and firm reputation.
- **Capabilities:** The capacity of a firm to use its internal resources efficiently and combine them into competitive products.
- **Core Competencies:** Derived from capabilities; if these are unique in the industry, they create a sustainable advantage that is difficult for rivals to imitate.

B. Functional Categories for Assessment

When conducting an internal audit, managers look at several functional areas:

1. **Financial:** Access to capital and the strength of cash flow.
2. **Managerial:** Skills related to planning, leading, and controlling functions.
3. **Infrastructural:** The digital and physical backbone of the company, such as IT systems.
4. **Marketing & Brand:** The reputation and perceived quality of the brand in the marketplace.

Example: Professional football clubs like Manchester United have moved from relying on a single star player to developing a "pool of highly skilled players" and a management style that rewards team performance.

- **External Analysis**

External analysis helps organizations recognize major developments and future implications that are beyond their direct control.

A. Three Key Areas of External Focus

- **Competitor Environment:** Focusing on the resources and likely future actions of rivals.
- **Industry Environment:** Based on Porter's framework (threat of new entrants, power of buyers/suppliers, etc.).
- **General Environment:** Using the PEST framework to look at Political, Economic, Social, and Technological factors.

B. Practical Examples

- **Opportunities:** Commercial openings that can be exploited, such as the rise of mobile money transactions for telecom operators.
- **Threats:** Obstacles to competitive advantage, such as online readership surpassing print readership, which threatens traditional publishers like Wiley or Pearson.

Challenges and Best Practices

- **Avoid "The Long List":** A common mistake is listing every possible factor. This makes it difficult to translate the analysis into strategic action.
- **Focus on Relevance:** Only include factors that have a direct bearing on competitive advantage. For example, cleanliness is a basic requirement in a hospital, not a unique strength.
- **Competitive Comparison:** An internal analysis is most effective when attributes are reviewed in comparison to the competition.

Activity 5: Personal SWOT Analysis

To practice this framework, apply it to yourself as a professional or student. Use the template below to evaluate your current "competitive position" in your career or field of study.

Activity Instructions:

1. **Strengths (Internal):** What unique skills do you have? What do you do better than anyone else? (e.g., Certifications, technical skills, soft skills).
2. **Weaknesses (Internal):** Where do you have fewer resources than others? What tasks do you avoid because you don't feel confident? (e.g., Lack of experience in a specific software, public speaking anxiety).

3. **Opportunities (External):** Are there trends in your industry you can take advantage of? Is there a need in the market that no one is filling? (e.g., Growing demand for AI-literate workers, networking events).
4. **Threats (External):** What obstacles do you face? Is technology changing your job requirements? (e.g., Increasing competition for roles, economic shifts affecting hiring).

ILO5: Formulate clear, realistic goals.

- Personal Goal Setting (SMART goals)

Growth Mindset:

- A growth-mindset represents a focus on associating performance with effort and process rather than through judgments on ability.
- The growth mindset shows an adaptability based upon continuous improvement when individuals focus on a predetermined set of goals.
- **S – Specific:** Goals should be well-defined and focused. A specific goal answers the "What," "Why," and "How".
 - **Explanation:** Avoid ambiguity. Instead of "I want to do better," state exactly what "better" looks like.
 - **Example:** Instead of "Increase sales," use "Increase sales of our new software package by cold-calling 10 new leads per week".
- **M – Measurable:** You must have a yardstick to track progress and know when the goal is achieved.
 - **Explanation:** This involves using numbers, percentages, or milestones.
 - **Example:** "I want to lose weight" is not measurable. "I want to lose 5 kilograms" is.
- **A – Achievable:** A goal must be attainable given your current resources and constraints.
 - **Explanation:** It should stretch your abilities but remain within the realm of possibility.
 - **Example:** Setting a goal to "Become a billionaire by next month" is likely not achievable for most, whereas "Increase monthly savings by 10%" is.
- **R – Realistic:** This refers to the "will" and "relevance" of the goal.
 - **Explanation:** Are you truly willing and able to work toward this goal? Does it align with your broader objectives?
 - **Example:** A goal to "Run a marathon in two weeks" is not realistic if you have never run a mile and have a busy work schedule.
- **T – Time-related:** Every goal needs a target date or a deadline.
 - **Explanation:** Without a timeframe, there is no sense of urgency, and the goal can be postponed indefinitely.
 - **Example:** "I will finish my certification exam by December 31st".

The Power of Written Goals

- **Visibility:** Writing your goals down makes them "real" and serves as a constant reminder.
- **Clarity:** The act of writing forces you to refine the SMART components.

- **Psychology:** There is a strong correlation between physically writing a goal and the psychological commitment to achieve it.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- **Setting too many goals:** This dilutes your focus and energy.
- **Lack of Measurability:** If you can't track it, you can't manage it.
- **Ignoring the "Realistic" aspect:** Setting "impossible" goals leads to demotivation and burnout.

Activity 6: Goal-Setting Scavenger Hunt

Objective: To bridge the gap between abstract planning and physical reality.

Instructions:

1. **Draft:** Take 3 minutes to write down one **SMART** goal for yourself (either academic or personal). Ensure it meets all five criteria.
2. **Hunt:** find one physical item in the room (or a digital image on your phone) that represents or symbolizes that goal.
 - *Example:* If your goal is to "Read one industry book per month," you might find a book or a bookmark.
 - *Example:* If your goal is "Improve physical fitness," you might show your running shoes or a water bottle.
3. **Share:** in 1 paragraph explain:
 - What your SMART goal is.
 - Why that specific item represents your commitment to achieving it.

ILO6: Develop a personal vision and mission.

- Achievable You: Personal Vision and Mission

Activity 7: My Vision Board

- **Think:** Identify at least 3 achievable goals for your 2026 and 3 words that describe who you want to be this year
 - **Find:** Look for pictures and words that match your goals.
 - **Cut:** Snip out anything that inspires you or makes you feel excited.
 - **Arrange:** Move your cutouts around the page of your notebook until you like the layout.
 - **Stick:** Glue your pieces down (put your favorite quote or your name in the center).
 - **Personalize:** Use markers to draw symbols or write extra notes in the empty spaces.
- Note: you may make a digital version and just attach it to document for your midterm activities.**

ILO7: Prioritize and manage time.

- Prioritization: Time Management and Planning

Activity 8: Time Management Challenge

1. **Brainstorm:** List all the tasks, appointments, and personal commitments you have for the upcoming week.
2. **Rank:** Look at your list and rank them from 1 to 10 based on their urgency and importance to your long-term goals.
3. **Schedule:** Assign a specific day and time block for your top three highest-ranked tasks on a weekly calendar to ensure they are protected from distractions.

Deadline and guidelines:

Deadline: April 19, 2026 5pm

Guidelines:

- Compile all your activities in one file/Document only.
- Format: Arial 11, 1.5 spacing, short size
- Convert file as pdf. And name your file with this format: (Last name, First name_ Block)
Example: (Lods, Mapagmahal_BSIT 1 F).
- Upload it in a google drive folder.

Note: each class beadle will make a google drive folder for their class and they will email me the access link on or before the deadline.