

# SWOT analysis

A quick-reference guide

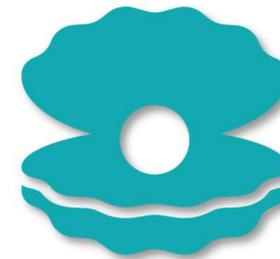




# What is SWOT?

SWOT is a strategic analysis technique for identifying and organisation's internal strengths, and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats it is likely to face.

Using SWOT can help the organisation compare and select the most appropriate strategies to achieve its goals.





# Why use SWOT?

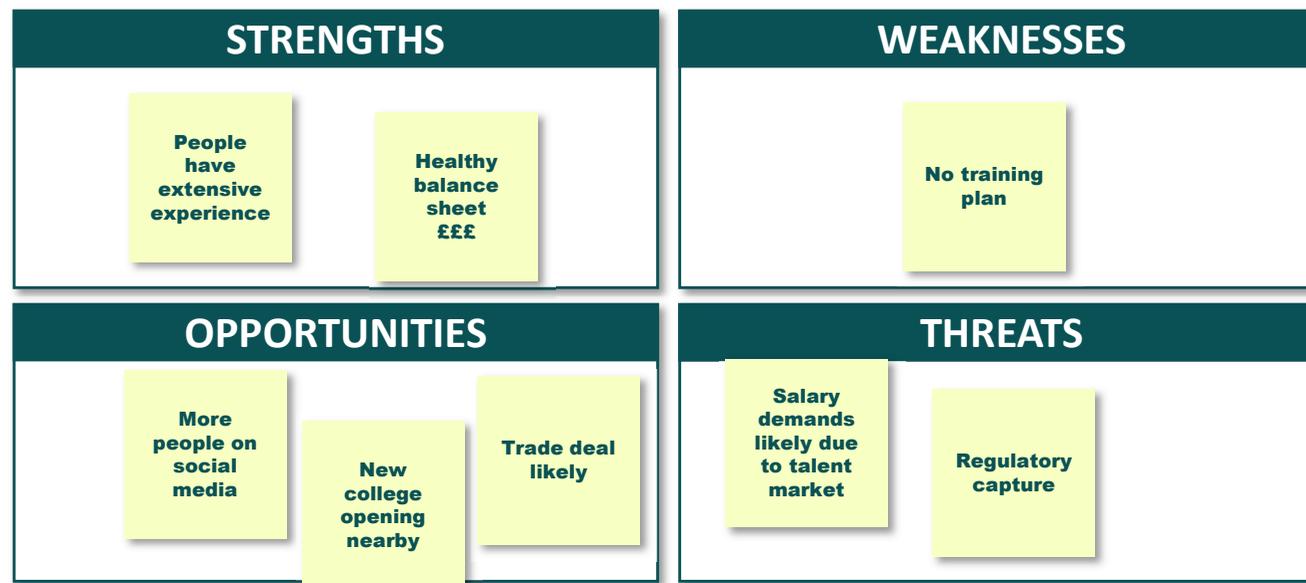
The SWOT technique has some great advantages:

- Provides a **great starting point** for deeper discussions.
- **Easy to use**, requiring no special preparation or tools, and doesn't use any complex rules or jargon.
- Identifies a range of **potential strategies** for the organisation to pursue that will help it achieve its goals.
- **Challenges assumptions** about the organisation's capabilities and resources, and about the future external landscape.
- Can be used at a **range of levels**, from organisation-wide down to individual projects or products.



# Performing a SWOT analysis

In a workshop setting, draw a grid with sections for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Brainstorm the factors that might help or hinder the organisation, and add these to the appropriate sections.



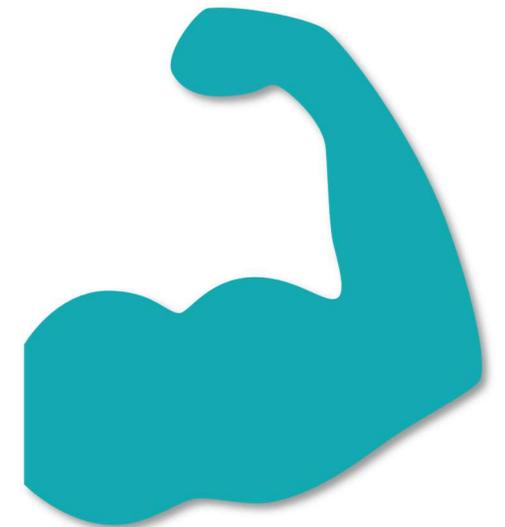
The following pages provide some suggestions for areas to consider.



# Strengths

An organisation's strengths are the internal resources it can bring to bear that will help it achieve its goals:

- Strong **financial** resources and security
- Great **people** – talent, engagement, and relationships
- Capable **technology** (hardware, systems, integration)
- **Products / services** offering great value to customers
- Effective and efficient **processes**
- Useful **information / data**

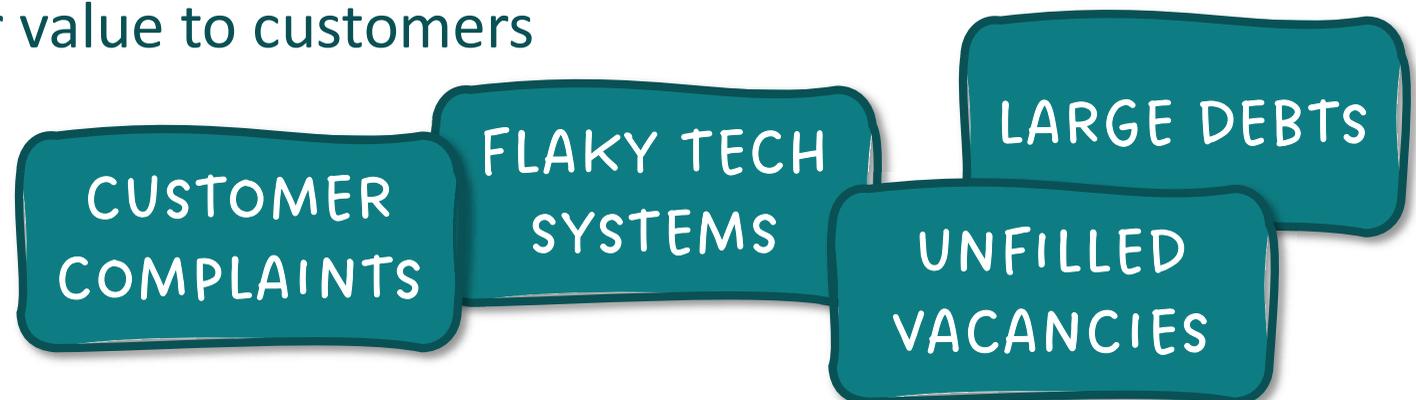




# Weaknesses

An organisation may have gaps or weak points in its resources, making it harder to achieve its vision:

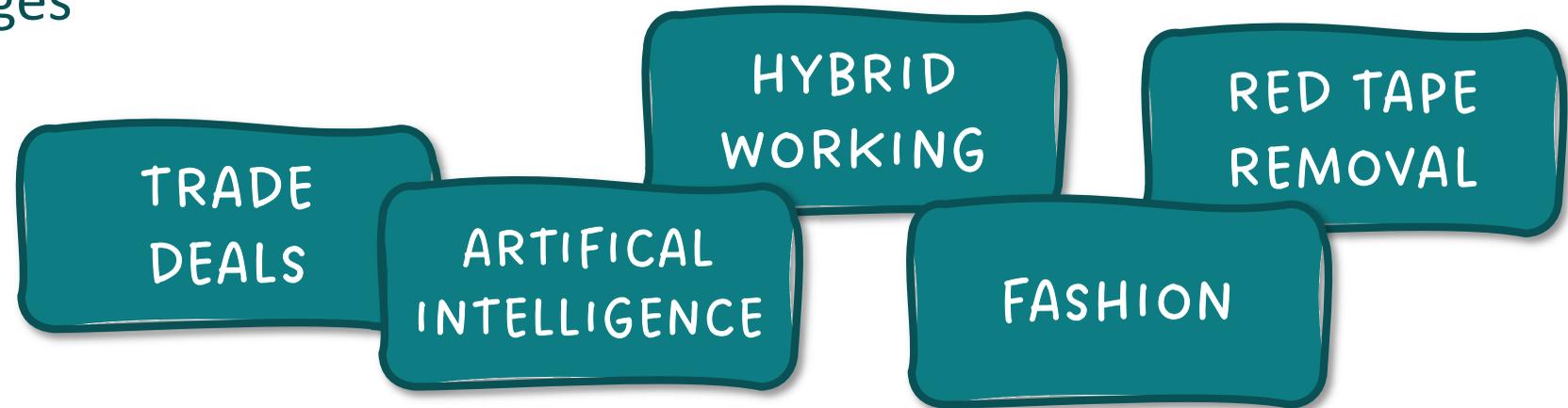
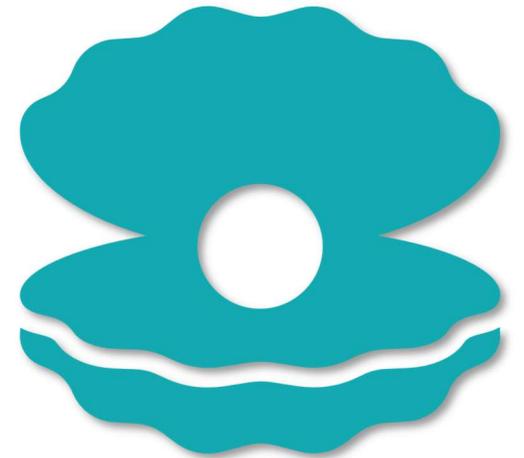
- Weak or insecure **financial** resources
- Gaps in **people** talent, poor engagement, or failing relationships
- **Technology** gaps (hardware, systems, integration)
- **Products / services** that don't offer value to customers
- Poorly-performing **processes**
- Lack of **information / data**



# Opportunities

The changing external landscape can be a source of great opportunities for the organisation.

- **Political** direction
- **Economic** changes (globally, nationally, or locally)
- Shifts in **social** attitudes or behaviours and demographics
- Emerging **technology**
- **Legal** and regulatory changes
- **Environmental** drivers



# Threats

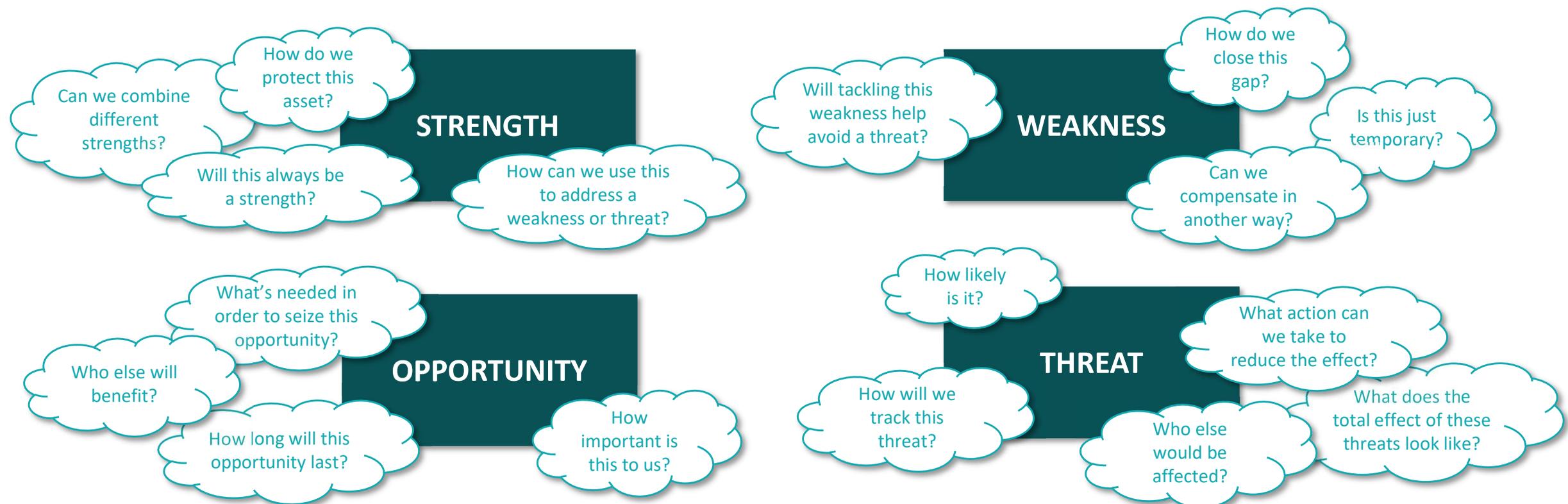
External factors outside the control of the organisation can create critical risks in the future.

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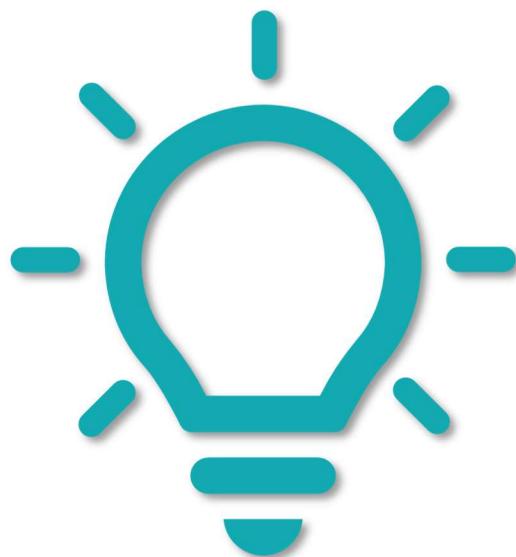
# Responses and further investigation

After generating ideas, consider how the organisation can capitalise on strengths, address weaknesses, seize opportunities or mitigate threats. Further investigation is likely to be needed!



# Hints and tips

Here's a few pointers to help you identify plenty of valuable insights!



Resource Audits are great for assessing internal strengths and weaknesses.

PESTLE analysis is ideal for identifying external opportunities and threats.

An organisation's people can be an internal strength or weakness, but don't assume they are unaffected by external social trends.

Remember that *context* is really important when using this technique – it's all about how these factors relate to the organisation's goal. A strength that helps one goal may be a weakness in the context of a different goal.

While SWOT is often performed in a workshop setting, you can use the technique "offline" or solo, building up the analysis over time through conversations and investigation.

You'll inevitably end up with a lot of assumptions on your SWOT grid. Don't discount these too early during brainstorming, but do follow up with some fact-checking later!