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SWOT Analysis Overview
Free Geek
submitted by Michael Kelly
April 26, 2013

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A need has been identified for Free Geek to be able to change and grow in relation to changing marketplace demands; stagnant organizations die, agility is the key to successfully meeting the mission of the organization.

As part of the change process we identified a need to have a better understanding about where we currently are as an organization. Current best practice for organizational strategic thinking/change includes a SWOT analysis, (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats) This tool was designed for, and has been used by many organizations to provide, real information about the organizational status. Taken together, the information collected from a SWOT analysis exercise can be used to provide directional markers that guide decision makers onto healthy and durable paths for growth and stability.

SWOT is a brainstorming/analytic process wherein the participants (ostensibly from inside the organization, but can be from the outside as well) focus their observations along four lines; strengths weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths – Outlines the strengths of the organization, what they do best, what they are known for. Could be procedural, conceptual, operational.

Weaknesses - Identification of areas where the organization can improve.

Threats – Perceptions external to the organization that might interfere with current practices or norms

Opportunities – Advantageous circumstances or situations which could be leveraged for progress

Strengths and Weaknesses are deemed to be internal factors, while Threats and Opportunities can be classified as external.

A cogent understanding of organizational strengths can be leveraged to seize opportunities and reduce vulnerabilities stemming from threats.

By contrast, weaknesses can constrain the organization from taking advantage of growth opportunities, and reduce agility from external threats that could negatively impact on the organization.

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Meta Data Notes
submitted by Richard Seymour and Dina Dickerson
April and May, 2013

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After the Strategic Planning Committee developed a SWOT for Free Geek, Dina Dickerson categorized each item on the chart. This will make it easier to compare and align specific types strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats with each other. Each item was categorized as **business**, **organization**, or **people**. Each item was then sub-categorized, and a data element was identified. For example, the weakness "conflicting visions of success" was categorized as people: community: vision.

It might be more obvious now—due to the categorization—to compare this to other people related elements or other community related elements in the other quadrants. These classifications may seem a bit arbitrary and in fact there are several ways we could have chosen to categorize several of the elements. People should feel free to make connections between any elements, even if these seem to cross category lines. Hopefully, the classification will help make sense of what might otherwise be an overwhelming list.

(The accompanying spreadsheet may be best viewed online. Printing it on tabloid paper, portrait has been found to be useful for hard copies.)