

SWOT is Not Enough

Upgrade This Basic Strategic Planning Tool

By Matt Lehrman & John Little

Powering through unprecedented disruption and prolonged uncertainty requires more strategic brainpower than a conventional SWOT analysis can deliver.

Missing from SWOT is any sense of the determination that fuels an organization's forward progress – encompassing its sense of certainty, excitement around a compelling vision, its capacity for reinvention, and its genuine openness to diverse thinking and creative partnerships.

Sure, it's still relevant to start with the basic SWOT questions:

- **Strengths** – What do we do better than others?
- **Weaknesses** – What must we improve or what should we avoid?
- **Opportunities** – What other possibilities could be explored?
- **Threats** – What challenges may interfere with our plans?

But don't stop there. We recommend upgrading your strategic planning with these 4 deeper questions:

Second SWOT

- **What is Sacred?** – Right up front, take a moment to ask what should be left unchanged. Recognizing and respecting what's immovable makes it far easier to change anything (and even everything) else.



- **What would be Wonderful?** – Indulge the need to dream. Especially in challenging times, it's revitalizing to set aside today's worries and constraints. Take some time to imagine anew what momentous value you have the potential to bring to your beneficiaries, stakeholders, and community.
- **What are we Over?** Your indefatigable pursuit of "Mission Accomplished" is admirable, but have you considered what you might achieve by declaring "Enough"? You can't pick up new goals until you let go of old ones, so how about identifying the beliefs, practices, and projects that deserve to be concluded.
- **Who should be on our Team?** – With resources scarce, this is an ideal time to determine what diverse range of people, perspectives, and partners share your objectives and values.

In sum, a SECOND SWOT opens the door to a richer exploration of your organization's potential:

- **Sacred** – Reaffirm the essential core of your organization's mission.
- **Wonderful** – Assert what's desirable rather than settle for what seems possible.
- **Over** – Discard dead weight to free up capacity for new opportunities.
- **Team** – Recognize that a strategic plan isn't merely a list of intentions; it's your ability to marshal the people, resources, and attention necessary to accomplish them.

Now let's be clear: adding 4 new SWOT questions is no magic strategic planning solution. But in this time of disruption and stress, it's a useful tool to orient leaders, teams, and stakeholders to recognize and defy the sense of *hunkerdownism* that too-easily permeates organizations under stress.

Is your organization suffering from
Hunkerdownism?

Take this 2-minute quiz:

www.Hunkerdownism.com

Upgrade to our SECOND SWAT to orient your organization toward a powerful and productive new direction.

Let us help

In response to unprecedented challenges and prolonged uncertainty, we've joined our years of experience facilitating courageous conversations with a collection of evaluation, learning, threat-assessment, scenario modeling, and agile decision-making tools to directly help community, nonprofit and business leaders define and gather support around making necessary progress.

When you're ready to move forward, **Social Prosperity Partners** specializes in creating safe and satisfying avenues for groups to assess their situations, explore creative possibilities, and gather consensus around newly relevant, bold, and compelling strategic plans.



Matt Lehrman and John Little are co-founders of Social Prosperity Partners, a trusted service provider to municipalities, nonprofits, and companies providing expertise in processes of visioning, strategic planning, and group decision-making.

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