

### **Activity 15.2. Professional Development SWOT**

*Use this activity as a foundational assessment to enhance your professional growth.*

The purpose of this activity is to either help you outline a plan for how to get from where you are now on Figure 15.1 to where you'd like to be as a change adopter, OR, to enhance your professional success, or lifelong learning in a way that gives you an edge or prevents age-related decline.

#### **Part 1: Complete your SWOT**

##### **1. My Strengths**

*Based on topics discussed in this chapter or related to courage, changing, open-mindedness, learning, credential or skills, keeping your mind sharp, or your professional development, list as many strengths as you can.*

**2. My Challenges (Weaknesses).** *Based on topics discussed in this chapter and what you know about yourself list at least three weaknesses related to change, overcoming fears, flexibility, open-mindedness, creativity and/or learning, memory/mental function, credentials and skills or professional development.*

### 3. My Opportunities!

a. **How does life long-learning benefit you?**

*Suggestion. Place check marks next to the tips you are doing well already; star ideas you want to pursue.*

- ◇ Financial security (\$\$)
- ◇ Enhance my technological skills
- ◇ Stay abreast of new research, skills and/or products
- ◇ Keep my mind sharp: delay age-related dementia.<sup>136</sup>
- ◇ To allow me to keep doing other things I enjoy or need to do like:
- ◇ Because I like to \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ Personal Reason:

b. **How can you sharpen your mind?**

*Suggestion. Place check marks next to the tips you are doing well already; star ideas you want to pursue.*

- ◇ Read for at least twenty minutes every day, ideally some of it in a non-digital format.
- ◇ Play games: which ones?
- ◇ Listen more: what could you listen to?
- ◇ Write: what could you write?
- ◇ Learn new physical activities: what would you like to learn?
- ◇ Other:

c. **What do you need for professional success?**

Professional success requires a large tool set including innovation, credentials, and continuing education (CE, or lifelong learning.) Typically one's lifelong earning potential is highest when education and credentials are obtained at younger ages, meaning that from a financial point of view, the best time to commence lifelong is now.

-My professional vision of what I'd like to achieve over my lifetime

-Credentials needed to secure this vision

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<sup>136</sup> R. Vitelli, "Can Lifelong Learning Help As We Age?" *Psychology Today*, 2012, retrieved on June 5, 2016, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/media-spotlight/201210/can-lifelong-learning-help-we-age>.

What else, i.e. experience or resources, do you need to acquire this level of success?

**4. Threats or Consequences if I don't change:**

Cons: What are the threats, consequences, obstacles, costs, risks of NOT changing or growing professionally?

**Part 2: SWOT Analysis. Is it worthwhile to change?**

Do the Pros, particularly the opportunities, outweigh the Cons (weaknesses and/or threats)? If yes, Why? If no, Why not? If Yes, how useful could it be to explore strategies and develop a plan (Scale of 0-5).

What strategies could you use to accomplish your plan or vision?

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**Suggestion.** Check the strategies that you think could actually implement in the next few months that will work: star the activities that you want to implement.

**How important is it for you to implement at least one of these?** Scale of 0-5 \_\_\_\_\_

By when do you need want to accomplish this?

**Caution:** Before you implement any aspects of this plan you are first encouraged to skim the contents of chapters 16-19 to see if something else you there are other aspects of your life that you should consider in addition to your current ideas.