

# Directions for Conducting a SWOT Discussion

## Group Size

### Directions

SWOT analyses can take place in small or large groups.

- If more than 15 people are in the group, divide them into smaller groups of about 5 – 7.

### Facilitator Tips

Smaller groups encourage everyone to actively participate.

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## Assign Small Group Roles

### Directions

Each small group will need:

- A **facilitator** to:
  - ◇ Keep the discussion moving and on track
  - ◇ Ensure everyone gets a turn to speak and actively participate.
- A **recorder** to:
  - ◇ Write down ideas from the discussion using a flip chart or using the 5 Whys Graphic Organizer
  - ◇ Review with the group to ensure accuracy of what is recorded
- The **facilitator** and **recorder** should also actively participate in the discussion.

### Facilitator Tips

- A quick way to appoint a facilitator:
  - ◇ Say: ‘On the count of 3, point to the person in your group who will act as facilitator’
  - ◇ Expect some laughter – it’s Ok to have fun
  - ◇ Provide some wait time.
  - ◇ In less than a minute, everyone in the group will be pointing at the same person.
  - ◇ Generally, that person agrees to serve as the facilitator. Try it, it works!
- Remind the recorder if needed, to write down each contribution exactly as stated with no discussion or evaluation. That comes later.

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## Prepare Chart Paper

### Directions

Prepare flip chart paper for recording the SWOT list generated for each factor.

- Post two sheets of chart paper on the wall near each group or in a visible location for a whole group discussion.
- The recorder draws a ‘T’ on each sheet, labels each and numbers the charts as shown to the right.

### Facilitator Tips

See either of the following forms for assistance with this process.

[Internal Strengths & Weaknesses](#)

[External Opportunities & Threats](#)

## Facilitate Brainstorming

### Directions

Tell the group that the SWOT analysis will follow the rules for Brainstorming:

- Ideas are offered in a rapid-fire manner, moving quickly from person to person
- Ideas are offered as single words or short phrases
- Ideas are not evaluated, expanded upon or clarified – that will come later
- The goal is quantity (up to 15 items) in a short period of time (about 5 min per SWOT factor)
- Depending on the size of the group, set a short amount of time. For a group of 5 – 7 people, no more than 5 minutes per each factor (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is suggested.
- • Once responses to Internal Strengths and Weaknesses are exhausted, go onto the two External factor areas (Opportunities and Threats) in the same way
- • In each of the 4 factor areas, strive for no more than 15 and no less than 10 responses.

### Facilitator Tips

Generating the list is only the first component to the SWOT analysis. Other components provide the opportunity to explain, discuss and analyze the SWOT lists, resulting in a workable set of ideas that define priorities and challenges common to the group who generated them.

It is suggested that a group focus on a single factor area (i.e. strengths) at a time. However, since the 2 Internal and 2 External Factors are listed on the same flip chart, it's OK to go back and forth on the same chart.

It may be necessary to remind people that this is not the time for discussion, editorializing, evaluating or explaining. The time for that will come later in the process.

The goal for this first step, is to generate quantity only. The next steps will address clarity, accuracy, appropriateness and other qualitative aspects of the statements

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## Start the SWOT Analysis Internal Strengths

### Directions

- The Facilitator uses the SWOT Analysis Question (to the right) about Internal Strengths to get the ideas flowing.
- Emphasize that the focus is on Strengths Internal to or within one or more of the agencies represented on the Core Team.
- Recorder writes each response as it is given in the column for the matching factor area
- Move on to the Weakness question, as Strength responses wind down.

### Facilitator Tips

- Ask the SWOT Analysis Question Internal Strengths:
  - ◊ What are your agency's strengths in its ability to collaborate with other agencies to support youth in transition to adulthood?
- Paraphrase the Question as needed to prompt the group.
- Keep the responses short and quick paced, offered in a rapid fire manner.
- Add your own ideas if people get stuck.
- Remind the Recorder, if needed, that responses offered by the group should not be edited or critiqued in any way.

## SWOT Analysis Internal Weaknesses

### Directions

- The Facilitator uses the SWOT Analysis Question (to the right) about Internal Weaknesses to get the ideas flowing.
- Emphasize that the focus is on Weaknesses Internal to or within one or more of the agencies represented on the Core Team.
- Move on to the External Opportunities question as the Weakness responses wind down.

### Facilitator Tips

- Ask the SWOT Analysis Question Internal Weaknesses
  - ◇ What are your agency's weaknesses in its ability to collaborate with other agencies to support youth in transition to adulthood?
- Paraphrase the Question as needed to prompt the group
- Add you own ideas if people get stuck

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## SWOT Analysis External Opportunities

### Directions

- The Facilitator uses the SWOT Analysis Question (to the right) about External Opportunities to get the ideas flowing.
- Emphasize that the focus is on Opportunities External to or outside of one or more of the agencies represented on the Core Team.
- Move on to the External Threats question as the Opportunities responses wind down.

### Facilitator Tips

- Ask the SWOT Analysis Question External Opportunities
  - ◇ What opportunities exist beyond your agency that could benefit our region's capacity for collaboration across systems in support of transition youth?
- Paraphrase the Question as needed to prompt the group
- Add you own ideas if people get stuck

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## SWOT Analysis External Threats

### Directions

- The Facilitator uses the SWOT Analysis Question (to the right) about External Threats to get the ideas flowing.
- Emphasize that the focus is on Threats External to or outside of one or more of the agencies represented on the Core Team.

### Facilitator Tips

- Ask the SWOT Analysis Question External Threats
  - ◇ What threats exist beyond your agency that could undermine our region's capacity for collaboration across systems in support of transition youth?
- Paraphrase the Question as needed to prompt the group
- Add you own ideas if people get stuck.