



# SWOT Analysis

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# SWOT Analysis - Introduction

SWOT = Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

- Provides organizations an opportunity to accurately assess their position in their particular market.
- Allows OHSLA's Executive Committee to report the survey results to the membership in an effective way.
- Identifies needs, potential problems and issues.
- Plays an important part in strategic planning.
- The four features can be divided along two dimensions
  - Internal/external
  - Positive/negative

# SWOT Analysis – Internal / External Dimension

- Internal features – the organization's own strengths and weaknesses.
  - Found by analyzing the state of the organization – they are things that already exist.
- External features – the organization's opportunities and threats to its future performance.
  - These exist on the horizon; less easy to assess and measure.
    - Examples: changes in technology, demography, institutional policy (i.e. travel budgets)

# SWOT Analysis – Identifying Strengths

- Quality and Reliability
  - Always strengths for any organization
- Strengths should be viewed as the resources and capabilities that can be used to development a competitive advantage. (Ioannou, 2012)
  - Always analyze strengths in relation to the competitors.
    - “What are the unique features of your organization?”

# SWOT Analysis – Identifying Weaknesses

- Weakness is the absence of strength.
  - What wasn't listed as a strength, is the first place to look for weaknesses.
    - i.e. brand recognition, marketing, budget, networking tools.
      - Goal is to turn the weaknesses into strengths.
  - Need to be honest in the assessment of the organization.

# SWOT Analysis - Opportunities

- Main goal – to identify opportunities for growth.
  - Assess opportunity in relation to competition.
- Technology is an external factor that will always present new opportunities, but it will also pose new threats.
- Opportunities must be acted on.

# SWOT Analysis - Threats

- Look at the risks that the organization is up against.
  - These are usually events or forces outside of the organization's control.
    - Need a plan to overcome.

# SWOT Analysis

- Forces and Facts OHSLA does not control:
  - Future trends in librarianship
  - The economy
  - Funding sources
  - Demographics
  - The physical environment
  - Legislation
  - Local, national events

# SWOT Analysis – Purpose to the Organization

- Where are we? Where can we go?
- Recognizing the Weaknesses and Threats that exist is the first step to countering them with a robust set of strategies that build upon the Strengths and Opportunities.
- SWOT identifies OHSLA's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to assist in making strategic plans and decisions.

# SWOT Analysis - Strengths

- Communication – distribute Newsletter to all current members via e-mail list (at least link to it).
- Communication – Send alerts and updates featuring certain topics (i.e. Emergency HealthNews updates, new members introductions, info about other HSL and Librarians activities, publishing, anniversaries, promotions, engagements, etc.).
  - Post same regularly via LinkedIn, other social media
- Meeting – All business reports sent ahead of time for people to review.
- Activities – Roundtables/panel discussions during OHSLA meetings

# SWOT Analysis – Strengths

- Years of experience in the organization is fairly evenly spread across the organization. In other words, we don't have an imbalance in terms of long-time members versus new members (Q 28)
- OHSLA is already using the communication tools most useful to the majority of the survey takers (Q 44)
- CE is offered at all of our meetings and CE is still a highly popular choice for programming among survey-takers (Q 42, Q 49, & Q 50).
- Part of the strength of OHSLA is the expertise and experience of its members, which is very valuable. This is suggested by the recurring requests for more time for networking/sharing of best practices, sharing of innovative ideas, etc. (Q 43, Q 44, Q 49, Q 50)

# SWOT Analysis - Weaknesses

- Communication – *the Voice* could be enhanced by adding more web-based features with a lively and exciting presentation; include links to other relevant websites that share similar missions and objectives.
- Meeting – Look for online CE opportunities from OhioNET, MLA, ALAO, etc.
- Activities – There is a great need for more discussion on the changing nature of how librarians interact with their clientele, especially how new and emerging technologies influence the interactions between librarians and clientele.
- Activities – Think outside the box – do not always go to MLA/GMR for CE class topics.
- Other – Emphasize need for diversity of OHSLA leadership. Engage new members!

# SWOT Analysis – Weaknesses

- Almost half of our members are not engaged in our organization (Q 31):
  - 25% of members have not attended a meeting in the last 5 years
  - Another 22% of members have only attended 1 or 2 meetings in the last 5 years
- We don't schedule our meetings far enough in advance (Q 43)
- There is some feeling that we have too much emphasis on CE in our programming, especially now that so much CE is available online (Q 43)
- Some members may find the business meeting uninteresting (Q 49)
- Having the meeting always occur on Fridays may preclude some from attending (Q 43)

# SWOT Analysis - Opportunities

- Membership – Engage proactively leaders and managers of all Ohio HSL/Medical/Academic libraries; share membership opportunities and more information about OHSLA in their organizations, hospitals, universities, colleges.
- Membership – Seek opportunities to be present at events to promote OHSLA (i.e. OPAL, OhioLINK, health events, fairs, conferences, meetings).
- Membership – Connect with regional and national organizations to promote OHSLA (i.e. NNLM/GMR, MLA).
- Membership – Ask SLO to distribute information about OHSLA and offer membership to all Librarians regardless of which kind of libraries they are working.
- Membership – outreach to public librarians; communicate CHIS and other initiatives which highlight the supporting role that public librarians play in promoting health sciences librarianship.

# SWOT Analysis – Opportunities, cont'd

- Membership – Outreach to KSU MLIS students
- Communication – Set up discussion list similar to MLA Section lists.
- Communication – Emphasize need for diversity of OHSLA leadership; engage new members.
- Meeting – Organize annual meeting as two day event that can include two opportunities for CE (one each day; afternoon and morning), business meeting (1 hour max), and other diverse activities.
  - Provide opportunity to choose one or two day attendance, reduce and make more efficient cost of food, travel and lodging; opportunity for more social time/networking, etc.

# SWOT Analysis – Opportunities, cont'd

- Meeting - The in-person spring and fall meetings could be supplemented by 1 or 2 hour videoconference or phone conversations held at strategic times through the year to discuss new issues/developments and perhaps generate feedback discussions.
- Meeting - Establish meeting with panel discussions on various topics with opportunity to gain CE.
- Activities – Organize poster sessions (as part of annual meeting); presenting an innovative program or service might be interesting and valuable.
- Activities – organize groups of interests (similar to MLA); create space on website that they can share news and discussions.

# SWOT Analysis – Opportunities, cont'd

- Activities - Establish Grant Writing Group for people to gain experience in writing in order to produce revenue to support other professional development opportunities.
- Other – organize task force to do a comprehensive and SWOT analysis of OHSLA.
- Other – Organize and support collaborative projects of joining interests of diverse libraries and librarians from different HS libraries (i.e. creating of posters, presentations, working on publishing efforts, community engagement, etc.).

# SWOT Analysis – Opportunities

- 40% of survey respondents were not members – perhaps these people are potential new members (Q 27)
- OHSLA has a very low student membership – there may be potential for growth among students (Q 29)
- There is interest in devoting some meeting time to roundtable/discussion/breakout session activities that would enable sharing of best practices, exchange of ideas, etc. (Q 43, Q 44, Q 49, Q 50)
- There is interest in a mentoring program (Q 49)
- Online meeting and/or CE could replace or supplement an in-person meeting. Survey results show an interest in this format and it might engage new people who have not participated in the in-person events. (Q 45, Q 48)

# SWOT Analysis - Threats

- Activities – provide a funding mechanism for membership to be awarded for travel/lodging expenses if members or their institutions do not fund the expense to attend OHSLA meetings.

# SWOT Analysis – Threats

- 80% of survey respondents are members of other library organizations. Many libraries have been downsized in the last 15 years and are getting by with fewer staff, but OHSLA is competing against other organizations for the time and attention of members and potential members. (Q 37 – Q 39)
- There is a graying of our membership. 58% of our members are over 50 years old. (Q 9)
- There is a lack of diversity among our membership. We are 84% white. Do non-white librarians feel welcome and comfortable in our organization? (Q 10)
- There has been at least one case where we have failed to follow up with someone who volunteered to serve on a committee. We cannot afford to alienate someone who is willing to be on a committee. We need a procedure to ensure that people who volunteer are contacted and, at the very least, acknowledged, if not actually assigned to a committee. (Q 50)

# SWOT Analysis - Conclusion

- The purpose of the SWOT analysis is to assess the organization's current position.
- OHSLA needs to look to "stretch", not just to "fit".
- The analysis identified areas of need and/or growth.

# SWOT Analysis - References

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