

## The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

The SWOT Analysis addresses every area of your career situation. As the box on the next page reveals, SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, and it helps you see if the job you seek is a good match and a good idea. If it's not, you may want to pick another!

Doing a SWOT Analysis requires you to analyze all you've learned. Your experience with completing assessments, compiling information for your Career Planning Folder, and investigating the world of work should have given you an idea of what type of job to seek. The SWOT Analysis and Gap Analysis will help you decide if this is the work for you.

In addition to the information gathered from Steps 1 and 2, the SWOT Analysis and Gap Analysis will be used in creating your **Career Action Plan**. Creating a **Career Action Plan** will be explained further in Step 4.



### Do a SWOT Analysis

First, compare your personal strengths and weaknesses with the job requirements. You don't have to be an exact match but you need to be fairly close.

**Helpful Hint:** *You can use the occupations listed within your 2 or 3 Holland Codes discussed in Step 1.*

Next, identify challenges and opportunities in your career area. For example, will this occupation soon disappear as technological advances render it obsolete? If so, choose another job type! You can get information about occupational challenges and opportunities from the Occupational Information Handbook, California Occupational Guides, and Occupational Outlook Reports. If the job type seems promising, do a Gap Analysis.

### Fill in the Gaps

Use what you learned in the SWOT Analysis to focus on the part you have control over: personal weaknesses, especially those that education and training can improve. If, for instance, the job you want is viable but you lack certain skills that it requires, develop an action plan to help you attain them. If you lack personal characteristics, such as honesty, begin working TODAY to improve yourself. Use the Gap Analysis and Action Plan as your guide.

Be realistic. If the gap between your strengths and the job requirements is great, focus on other work in the short term. You can train for that other job down the road.

SWOT Analysis (continued)

| SWOT ANALYSIS                  |   |   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| INTERNAL<br>you can control    | <b>Strengths</b> you have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skills, knowledge, abilities</li> <li>• work experience</li> <li>• positive characteristics</li> <li>• network of connections</li> </ul> | <b>Weaknesses</b> you have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of certain skills, etc.</li> <li>• lack of certain experience</li> <li>• negative characteristics</li> <li>• lack of goals and/or education</li> </ul> |
| EXTERNAL<br>you cannot control | <b>Opportunities</b> in your career field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• likelihood of job growth</li> <li>• chances to increase skills</li> <li>• chances for advancement</li> </ul>             | <b>Threats</b> in your career field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• likelihood of downsizing</li> <li>• amount of competition for jobs</li> <li>• dead-end type of work</li> </ul>                                     |

Use the SWOT Analysis to make sure you're in the right direction and the Gap Analysis to guide you to your goal.

| GAP ANALYSIS and CAREER ACTION PLAN  |                                    |                      |   |   |                             |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Employer Needs<br>(job requirements) | I have<br>(skills, knowledge)      | Gaps<br>(difference) | Action Needed<br>(steps to bridge gap)                                    | Who Can Help?<br>(people I know)  | Timeframe<br>(start/finish) |
| Spreadsheet software knowledge       | Know only word processing software | Software knowledge   | Enroll and complete short spreadsheet training class at community college | Sylvia will baby-sit while I'm at class; I can borrow Sam's laptop to practice. | June 5 - July 8             |

Examples

The result is:

The type of job I'm looking for is: \_\_\_\_\_