

How do I assess the strengths and weaknesses of my business?

One of the most common methods of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of your business is to conduct a SWOT analysis, where SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths

Essentially, this defines your company's competitive advantage. Some questions to answer include:

What does your business do well?

What resources do you have access to (human, financial, intellectual property)?

What are you known for in the market?

What is it about your business that your competitors cannot match?

Weaknesses

This looks at the areas where you and your business need to improve. Some questions to answer include:

What doesn't your company do well?

What don't customers like about your products or service?

Where are the pressure points in your business?

What do competitors do better than you?

Opportunities

This sets out the areas where you could grow your business in the future. Some questions to answer include:

What are the trends in your industry that could create opportunities (technology, demographic or social changes, regulation)?

What new products do your customers need?

What products would complement your current offering?

What geographic areas could you target?

Threats

These are external and internal factors that could create problems for your business. Some questions to answer include:

Do you lack the resources to grow your business?

Are your competitors threatening your business in any way?

Are industry trends such as changing technology or regulations a threat to your business?

Are you vulnerable to an economic downturn or other economic changes?



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