



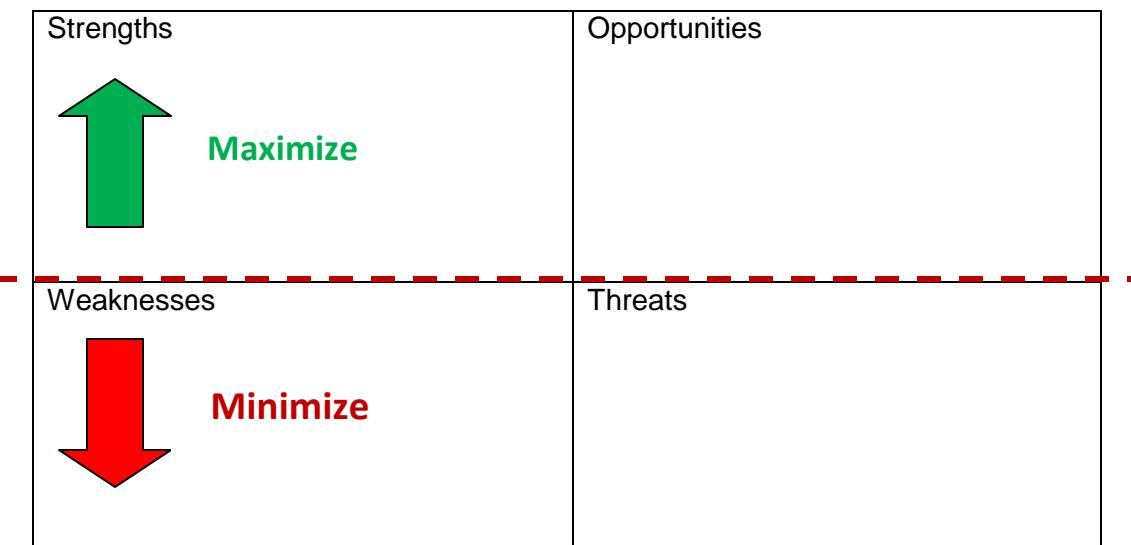
How to conduct a personal SWOT analysis

SWOT, a popular business planning technique, can also be a powerful tool for identifying ways in which you can add value to your work and life.

SWOT – which stands for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats – is an excellent way of taking an inventory of what you're doing well and where you need to improve. It can also give you a keen sense of where future opportunities may lie, as well as any emerging challenges that may get in the way of achieving your goals.

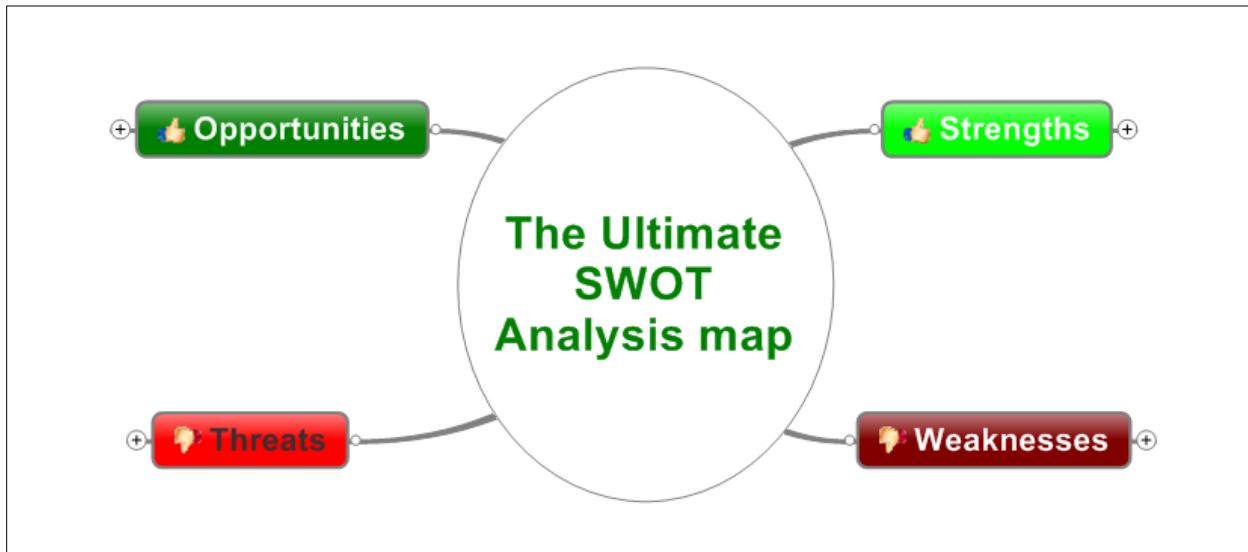
Your goal is to view your life from multiple perspectives give yourself insights into the best ways to add value to your work and life. Seek to maximize your strengths and opportunities. At the same time, develop action steps to overcome your weaknesses and prepare for any potential threats.

Typically, a SWOT analysis is done using a four-quadrant grid, arranged like the example below.



Note how your strengths and opportunities – the top row of squares in the diagram – are grouped together, above the weaknesses and threats. For best results, you'll want to maximize your strengths and capitalize upon your opportunities, while trying to correct your weaknesses and mitigate the effects of any potential threats to your career and life.

You can easily adapt the SWOT format into a mind map, as you can see below:



Here's how to use the mind map to perform your personal SWOT analysis:

1. Select three or four questions from each category that you believe are most relevant to your current situation.
2. Record your thoughts as subtopics
3. If you need to, you can add more information as topic notes, subtopics or attached files or web page links

When you're done with this analysis, select several weaknesses or threats to work on improving. Also pick one or two of the opportunities, and brainstorm some ways that you can start making progress toward capitalizing on them.

I recommend that you repeat this SWOT planning process several times a year to identify new opportunities and potential threats, and to give you a sense of progress toward your goals. Good luck with your analysis!

Resources

This document contains the instructions for a set of personal SWOT mind map templates, which are located here:

[MindManager 9](#)

[NovaMind 5](#)

[MindGenius](#)

[OpenMind](#)

[XMind](#)

[iMindMap 5](#)

Questions?

Please contact Chuck Frey at chuck@innovationtools.com.

Please [visit the Mind Mapping Software Blog](#) for all of the latest news, trends and resources related to visual mapping.

You can also [follow Chuck Frey on Twitter](#) for even more insights and ideas.