

USE SWOT ANALYSIS TO HELP DEVELOP YOUR CAREER PLAN

The Professional Assignments Group (PAG) says that SWOT analysis, a key tool in the corporate strategic planning process, can easily be adapted by graduates and school-leavers to develop a career plan.

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of a project or business venture. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture of project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving that objective.

“A person’s career objectives can be mapped out and planned in the same way companies go about strategising and identifying their short and long term goals,” says Wordon. “And by taking the time to think rationally about your future career you can avoid landing in a position where you hate your job, find out that you are not good at it, that it pays poorly or that there are no opportunities available in your chosen field,” he says.

By using the SWOT technique, says Wordon, young people who are entering the world of work can realistically test their proposed career against their strengths and weaknesses, develop a plan to improve on any identified weaknesses and maximise their strengths. At the same time, it allows new work entrants to evaluate their desired profession against the external opportunities and limitations of that particular field.

“Strengths include your training and qualifications; any previous work experience including part time jobs, charity work or internships; technical knowledge such as computer skills; and personal characteristics like a solid work ethic, the ability to cope under pressure, self discipline, leadership or creativity. Similarly, your weaknesses would be the negation of the same skills and qualities,” he says.

“Opportunities and threats are those things over which you have no control but still have an influence on your chosen profession,” Wordon says. “Things to consider here include the demand for your profession and the scarcity of your skills; the salary bands of your chosen profession and whether that salary will meet your future financial needs such as sustaining a family; and the opportunities for advancement in your field,” he says.