

Strategic Planning: A Tool for Fire Department Success

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Our Contemporary Fire Department Operational Environment

- Dynamic
- General Environment
- Task Environment

Environmental Changes

- Social Issues
- Cultural Issues
- Legal Issues

Environmental Changes

- Political Issues
- Economic Issues
- Technological Issues

Organizational Response to Environmental Change

- Proactive
- Reactive

Strategic Planning

- **Scope**
- **Time Horizon**
- **Individuals
Involved**

Environmental Scanning

A process used by modern fire departments (organizations) to monitor important aspects of the environment wherein they operate.



SWOT Analysis

- **Strengths**
- **Weaknesses**
- **Opportunities**
- **Threats**



Strengths

An advantage or distinction of the **organization** from which the organization can gain a potential benefit – Something they are really good at



Strengths

- 1. A skill**
- 2. Special expertise**
- 3. Valued assets**
- 4. Special capabilities**



Weakness

A disadvantage or limitation of the organization from which the organization can suffer potential harm. Something they lack, or do poorly



Weaknesses

- 1. Missing skills**
- 2. Missing equipment or assets**
- 3. Lack of training**
- 4. Failure to have a mission**



Opportunities

A positive situation in the environment of the organization from which the organization can potentially benefit – Doing what it does best, as good as it possibly can



Threats

A negative situation in the environment of the organization from which it can potentially suffer harm.

Potential Strengths *Potential Weaknesses*



- **Leadership**
- **Human Resources**
- **Training & Knowledge**
- **Internal Climate**

*Potential
Strengths*

*Potential
Weaknesses*



- **Morale**
- **Apparatus & Equipment**
- **Response Preparedness & Capability**
- **Financial Situation**

Potential Opportunities *Potential Threats*



- **Municipal Support**
- **Fund-Raising Potential**
- **Changing Laws & Regulations**
- **New Technologies**
- **New Initiatives**

*Potential
Opportunities*

*Potential
Threats*



- **Redistricting**
- **Changing Social Norms**
- **Changing Cultural Norms**
- **Economic Developments**
- **Political Developments**

The Goal in SWOT Analysis



- **Maximize Strengths**
- **Minimize Weaknesses**
- **Capitalize on Opportunities**
- **Avoid Threats**

Planning Without SWOT Analysis ...



... is Reactive!!

Planning With SWOT Analysis ...



... is Proactive!!

SWOT Analysis

- **Enables you to improve your organizational effectiveness**



Discussion Questions

- **Does your emergency service organization engage in a strategic planning process?**
- **What area of environmental change presents the greatest challenges to your emergency service organization?**

Discussion Questions

- **Do you feel that learning more about your environment would help you plan for the future success of your agency?**
- **Do you feel that there are lessons to be learned from other agencies?**

Recommending a Strategy

**It is important for you to
develop ideas for today and
tomorrow**

Recommending a Strategy

**How can you possibly reach
the future unless you
understand the present?**

Vision Statement

- **State the vision**
- **State the long term direction**

What is Your Mission Statement?

- **What is it that you do?**
- **Why do you exist?**
- **What might you want to do?**

Goals and Objective

- **State the desired goal**
- **State the desired objective**
- **Use multiple points if necessary**

Today's Situation

- **Summary of the current situation**
- **Use brief bullets, discuss details verbally**

How Did We Get Here?

- **Any relevant historical information**
- **Original assumptions that are no longer valid**

Available Options

- **State the alternative strategies**
- **List the advantages and disadvantages of each available strategic option**
- **State cost of each option**

Recommendations

- **Recommend one or more of the strategies**
- **Summarize the results if things go as proposed**
- **What to do next**
- **Identify Action Items**

I Value Your Input

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