



Assessment 2 Instructions: TOWS Matrix Analysis and Strategic Plan

Prepare a TOWS matrix (1-2 page grid) that summarizes a health care organization's threats, opportunities, weaknesses, and strengths. Write an analysis paper (4-5 pages) highlighting key findings from the TOWS matrix. Create a draft strategic plan (1-2) pages that describes four strategies for the organization to pursue based on findings from the first two course assessments.

Note: Each assessment in this course builds upon the work you have completed in previous assessments. Therefore, you must complete the assessments in the order in which they are presented.

An essential element in evaluating a health care organization's overall strategy entails examining the company's resources and competitive capabilities. Are they sufficient to allow the organization to pursue the best market opportunities, while minimizing external threats?

The most widely used tool in conducting this evaluation is a TOWS matrix. A well-executed TOWS analysis provides the basis for crafting the organization's strategic plan. A key difference needs to be addressed here. SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis has been a popular way to display pertinent external issues and internal strengths and weaknesses. This type of analysis involves listing the organization's strengths and weaknesses and perceived external opportunities and threats. SWOT, however, does not provide much insight into what strategy decisions might result from the list of strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats. As a result, the TOWS matrix (threats, opportunities, weaknesses, and strengths) was developed to provide a better way to develop and evaluate specific adaptive strategic alternatives.

This assessment provides an opportunity for you to complete a TOWS matrix and corresponding analysis, as well as draft a high-level strategic plan based on your TOWS matrix.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Analyze organizational structure, design, culture, and climate in relation to environmental forces.
 - Incorporate methodologies from the knowledge-economy management approach appropriate for the organization.
 - Integrate recent strategy management research findings into a strategic management plan.
- Competency 2: Develop a strategic organizational plan that provides human and financial resources to support targeted organizational outcomes.
 - Synthesize operational and financial components into a strategic planning process.
- Competency 3: Recommend an organizational structure and design to optimize a strategic plan.
 - Determine the organizational structure that best facilitates the strategy.
- Competency 4: Communicate in a manner that is scholarly, professional, and consistent with expectations for professionals in health care administration.

- Create a clear, concise, well-organized, professional TOWS matrix analysis and strategic plan draft.
- Apply proper APA formatting and style guidelines to citations and references.

Note: Complete the assessments in this course in the order in which they are presented. For this assessment, you will continue to work with the organization you selected in Assessment 1.

Preparation

Use the following to complete the assessment.

- [TOWS Analysis Worksheet \[DOCX\]](#).
- [Common Strategies and Goals Health Care Organizations Develop and Monitor \[DOCX\]](#).

To prepare for the assessment, you are encouraged to create a practice TOWS matrix, using the TOWS Analysis Worksheet. The practice matrix enables you to jot down your initial thoughts and then come back to it later to see whether anything could be expanded on in the matrix that you submit as part of your next assessment.

Consider your selected organization's threats, opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses. In addition, keep the following key points in mind:

- **Assumptions:** What assumptions do people in the organization's internal and external environment have? What alternative assumptions might be useful in these situations?
- **Information:** What information do your organization's internal and external stakeholders have? What information are they missing?
- **Evaluation Criteria:** What criteria would you use to evaluate the quality of the information and the effectiveness of existing or suggested strategies?

In addition, you may wish to review the assessment instructions and scoring guide to ensure that you understand the work you will be asked to complete.

Note: As you revise your writing, check out the resources listed on the Writing Center's [Writing Support](#) page.

Scenario

Your manager congratulates you on a fantastic job on the environmental analysis. She now needs your help with the next step in developing a strategic plan for the CEO—completing a TOWS matrix and accompanying analysis. After completing the TOWS matrix and analysis, your manager also wants you to prepare a high-level, draft strategic plan for the organization.

You know that a TOWS matrix is a decision-making tool for developing strategic alternatives. You also know that you will be better able to develop a more effective strategic plan based on an in-depth analysis and understanding of the current environment.

Requirements

Complete this assessment in two parts:

Part 1: TOWS Matrix and Analysis

Complete a TOWS matrix and accompanying analysis. Download the TOWS Analysis Worksheet and complete it for your selected health care organization. Incorporate your findings from the current environmental analysis you completed in Assessment 1. Be sure to include a minimum of 3–5 items in each quadrant of your matrix, which will give you a total of 12–20 identified and categorized items.

After completing your matrix, summarize the findings from your analysis of each of the four quadrants and develop a high-level, draft strategic plan containing alternative strategies.

Part 2: Draft Strategic Plan

Prepare a high-level, draft strategic plan for your selected organization.

The focus of this assessment is to apply the insights you have gained from your TOWS matrix and the environmental analysis you completed in Assessment 1 to the strategic plan. The information from the matrix quadrants will serve as the foundational criteria for developing your draft plan.

You must be able to look at your TOWS matrix results and then formulate four overarching strategies with at least one operational goal to support each strategy. Whether your strategies are to enhance the strengths you have identified or to improve weaknesses, your draft strategic plan must align with your organization's mission, vision, and values.

As you prepare your plan, it may be helpful to review common strategies and goals that many health care organizations develop and monitor. Use the following document to guide your analysis of the TOWS results for your selected health care organization: Common Strategies and Goals Health Care Organizations Develop and Monitor.

Include with each of your strategies the core assumptions regarding environmental opportunities and threats, organizational strengths and weaknesses, and organizational behavioral dynamics that are foundational to the strategy. For example, consider:

- Service/product life cycle.
- Product development.
- Organizational culture.
- Available funding to execute strategies.

Strategic Plan Requirements

The requirements, outlined below, correspond to the grading criteria in the TOWS Matrix Analysis and Strategic Plan Scoring Guide, so be sure to address each point. Read the performance-level descriptions for each criterion to see how your work will be assessed.

- Incorporate methodologies from the knowledge-economy management approach in a strategic plan appropriate for your organization.
- Integrate recent strategy management research findings into your strategic plan.
- Synthesize operational and financial components into your strategic planning process.
- Include your determination of the organizational structure (functional, divisional, or matrix) that best facilitates your strategies.
- Create a clear, concise, well-organized, and professional TOWS matrix analysis and strategic plan draft.

- Apply proper APA formatting and style guidelines to citations and references.

Additional Requirements

- **Formatting:** Prepare your TOWS matrix analysis and draft strategic plan using a familiar and appropriate document format used by health care organizations, such as a memo, business report, or white paper.
- **Length:** 1–2 pages for TOWS matrix.
 - 4–5 pages for TOWS matrix analysis (roughly one page per quadrant).
 - 1–2 pages for the draft strategic plan.

Submit all three documents for this assessment: 1) TOWS matrix, 2) TOWS matrix analysis, and 3) Draft strategic plan. Remember, you do not need to submit your practice matrix.

Proofread each document to minimize errors that could distract readers and make it more difficult for them to focus on the substance of your work.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save your TOWS matrix analysis to your ePortfolio.

Supporting Evidence

Health care is an evidence-based field. Consequently, readers of these documents will want to know the sources of your information, so be sure to include applicable APA-formatted source citations and references.



SCORING GUIDE

Use the scoring guide to understand how your assessment will be evaluated.

[VIEW SCORING GUIDE](#) 