

How to do a SWOT analysis.

A well run club is in many ways not much different from a well run business. And one of the things a well run business does is regularly schedule time for the long hard look at their business, their competitors and the market that they operate in.

One of the simplest things to do is brainstorm a SWOT analysis. Schedule 10 to 15 minutes. Don't forget the rules of brainstorming – do it quick- no discussion, every idea is acceptable and there is no criticism. Write up as you go so that everyone can see. You'll see that the first two headings – Strengths and Weaknesses are looking inwards at your club, its leadership and its management. The next two headings, Opportunities and Threats are looking more outwards.

- **Strengths:** Start the ball rolling with a few open ended questions. What does our club do really well? Why do you like coming to meetings?
- **Weaknesses:** What are we not so good at? What puts you off coming to meetings?
- **Opportunities:** You want lots of ideas here so start the ball rolling with some open ended questions that take a wide view of opportunities. For example – What could we do in our community to fulfil our aims? What groups of women in the community would be likely to join our club? Is changing the style of our meetings an opportunity?
- **Threats:** These alas are often all too easy to think of. For example - Competing clubs, new networking style business groups, the busy lives women lead, changing demographics in your area. You'll no doubt think of heaps.

Have someone write it up and circulate it by email. That way women who have not been at the meeting can add their input.

What next? If your club has a marketing plan, congratulations, you have just updated an important section of it. If not, then your executive has some ideas and guidelines for the annual action plan. The thing that I like about a SWOT analysis is that it focuses on the positive as well as the negative and offers ideas for action.

Finally: Schedule your next annual SWOT analysis now.