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Strategic Priorities

The following strategic planning process pulls from two classic business frameworks that are more valuable when combined. This process helps teams identify and reassess strategic priorities based on both internal and external changes.

STEP ONE

PEST Framework

A PEST analysis is an overview of four outside factors you can't control. This tool helps organizations discover, evaluate, and track the macro-level changes that can impact their field–now and in the future. In each category, identify the top 5 factors which may impact your organization.

Political
Political or politically-motivated factors that could impact the organization

Guiding Questions:

What government policies or political groups could be beneficial or detrimental to our success?

Is the political environment stable or likely to change?

(e.g. charter renewal policy changes, school board elections, COVID-19 response legislation)

Economic
Overall economic forces that could impact your success

Guiding Questions:

What government policies or political groups could be How is the economy affecting us now?

What economic factors will affect us moving forward?

How are our revenues and costs impacted by each economic factor?

(e.g. unemployment rate, benefits adjustments, private funding & philanthropy trends)

Social
Social attitudes, behaviors, and trends that impact your organization and stakeholders

Guiding Questions:

How do our stakeholders' beliefs and values influence their habits?

How do cultural trends and human behaviors play a role in our work?

(e.g. Pandemic perspectives, racism towards Asian Americans, student learning loss, public transit use)

Technological
Technology that can affect the way you make, distribute, and market your products and services

Guiding Questions:

What role does technology play in our work?

What technological advancements are available or on the horizon?

How will this technology impact our operations?

(e.g. Hardware & software costs of online learning; quality of virtual learning resources; smart thermometers)

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SWOT Framework

A SWOT Analysis combines an internal assessment of strengths and weaknesses with an external analysis of opportunities and risks. In response to the external factors mapped in your PEST framework above, evaluate your organization's readiness to respond and adapt.

Strengths
(Internal)

Guiding Questions:

What are our organization's current strengths in our ability to respond to these changes?

How are we well equipped? What can we leverage?

Weaknesses
(Internal)

Guiding Questions:

What are our organization's weaknesses in our ability to respond to these factors?

Where are the gaps? Where are our blind spots?

Opportunities
(External)

Guiding Questions:

How are we uniquely positioned to capitalize on opportunities?

What should we prioritize?

Threats
(External)

Guiding Questions:

Which of these changes are most urgent and important for us to address?

How might we mitigate threats?

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STEP THREE

Strategic Priorities

Completing a SWOT Analysis in response to a completed PEST Analysis will help you develop clear strategic priorities that are grounded in reality. Based on our external analysis (PEST) and our internal assessment of our organization's readiness to respond (SWOT), identify key insights at the intersection of the two frameworks. These insights reveal strategic priorities (goals) for your consideration.

What are our top 5 priorities? (e.g. Operations, Finance & Funding, Talent Recruitment, Community Partnership, Training, etc.)
Example: Given the new health guidelines (PEST) and our current lack of outdoor space (SWOT), a strategic priority for our school over the next 1-3 years is to invest in developing dynamic outdoor space for instruction and play.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Honorable Mentions:

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