

Final SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

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Unlike many of my colleagues, I did not have the opportunity to complete my initial SWOT analysis during the start of my coursework. I completed my SWOT analysis at the start of my fourth semester at the University of West Georgia. During my time at UWG, I have learned so much about what it means to effectively integrate technology into the classroom. However, I have also learned that, as technological leaders in our school, we are responsible for encouraging systemic change in our building in terms of the technologies available, awareness, and utilization of the available technologies. I had only one goal with each passing semester of my coursework: to learn ways to become a better advocate for the use of technology and to investigate new ways of incorporating technology into my own classroom.

Strengths

During my initial SWOT analysis, I reflected that one of my greatest strengths is my constant desire to improve in all areas of my profession. This has not changed. With the start of each semester, I was excited about the new knowledge that I was to obtain. From learning about instructional design to multimedia to program evaluation, each class has afforded me with a set of skills and information that I can take into my own school and classroom. Even though I am completing my EdS degree this semester, I do not anticipate that this desire to learn will wane. I have always been one to volunteer for professional development opportunities within my school. I see these as chances to learn and become a better teacher.

Another strength that I have is my desire to help other people succeed. It is important that I help teachers who may be resistant or nervous about the implementation of new strategies or technologies in their classroom. As an Education Specialist in technology, it is my responsibility to help encourage others to overcome their fear and trepidation when approaching a new technology. Many times teachers rely on excuses from “It’s how I’ve always done it” to “My way works fine.” It is a frustration to encounter teachers with this mentality; however, I can understand this uncertainty. There have been technologies that I have been nervous about, but it’s important that we, as teachers, overcome these anxieties. This is one way that I have grown as a learner through my time at UWG. Rather than feeling nervous about deciphering a new technology, I feel excited. I am eager to discover ways to incorporate the technology into my classroom and seek ways that the new ideas can improve my own instruction. We should always remember that our students are immersed in technology in all areas of their life. Why should the time in school be different?

Weaknesses

In my initial SWOT analysis, one of the weaknesses that I identified was my becoming frustrated when I struggle with technology. The frustration comes because I tend to succeed fairly easily when trying new things or new technologies, and it is extremely humbling when I find that I have hit a brick wall and no longer know what to do. Through the completion of the EdS coursework, I have come face-to-face with many new technologies and ideas – Comic Life, Voice Thread, the complexities of PowerPoint, and many others. I have always been the type of student who catches on easily to new concepts or topics, so I become frustrated when I struggle with something.

I experienced this whole-heartedly in Web Design. The ins-and-outs of the virtual lab left me stumped at the beginning of the term. However, I kept working and, by the end of the semester, it became second nature. This is one way in which I have grown throughout my time at UWG. I have learned that, when faced with an obstacle, I have to stay calm and regroup. It usually comes through and works out fine.

Opportunities

I feel blessed to have been afforded many technological opportunities in my own school. I was one of the first teachers to have a Promethean Board installed in the classroom. The Promethean Board has been an excellent resource and tool to enhance my instruction. I have used the board in both a language arts and math classroom. There have been so many awesome resources opened to me and my classroom just by having this piece of technology. Because I have seen such success through the use of the Promethean Board, I have been eager to share my knowledge with teachers as more boards were installed throughout the school. This year, the administration asked two other teachers and me to prepare a basic course on the Promethean Board for the faculty. The faculty members were given the option to attend the course if they felt that they needed the additional support.

The completion of the EdS program has given me many tools needed to become a technological advocate in my own school. I have been given the skills needed to critically view and evaluate technology. Additionally, I have been provided with the skills and resources needed to create technological resources to benefit my school. I have helped to integrate Google Docs into my building. The faculty has embraced this resource, and we currently use Google Docs for a multitude of uses – athletic grade

reports, ELL documents, detention sign-ups, and many more. As a resource for the faculty, the administration asked me to create a training document. I chose to create a [PowerPoint](#), similar to the “how-to” project from MEDT 7468. The skills that I learned in this course enabled me to provide a quality presentation for the faculty.

Threats

There are many threats to the integration of technology on a day-to-day basis. As teachers, we have control over one major threat to technology – a negative attitude. Through the five semesters that I have been in this program, I have tried to help convince the nay-sayers that their resistance is futile. For example, when teachers need help with the Google Docs (a.k.a they want someone to do it for them), I patiently show them how to walk through the process. The EdS candidates have a responsibility in their buildings to help encourage change. We need to serve as the examples and the assistance to those who need it. I have found that, more often than not, people want to use new technology and resources, but they just don't know how or where to start. Other threats to technology in the classroom are funding, time, and limited resources. It's important that we attempt to help where we can. While we cannot do anything about time, we can help with funding and resources. A group of teachers created a video applying for a Windstream grant, and we were the recipients of a \$5,000 grant to be used for technology in the classroom. There are lots of grants and resources available for the teachers who are willing to put in a little bit of work.

As each new school year begins, my main goal for the year is simple: to improve and become a better teacher. I seek ways that I can grow and develop my leadership skills. My professional goals include moving into an administrative position, and I am

always looking for ways to develop skills that will lend themselves to my future as an administrator. The completion of the EdS degree has provided me with many skills that will help me to improve as a teacher and as an administrator. I always joke with my students that I hope to be more and more like Ron Clark each year. While I am not going to jump across any desks, I do try to incorporate innovative and creative ideas in the classroom. The courses that I have taken at UWG have given me additional resources in my educational “tool box” that I can pull from to help the students begin to think of school in a different way – as a place where they can creatively express themselves while learning.