

Final SWOT Analysis and Reflection

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FINAL SWOT ANALYSIS

Final Technology SWOT Analysis, Goals, and Plans

Technology has always been of interest to me. In high school, I took a computer programming class as an elective when other options were available. My first year in college, I enrolled in the only English class where papers were composed and submitted on the computer. We shared with classmates on the network peer reviewing and editing. I have continued my interest in technology, so enrolling in the Educational Specialist program at the University of West Georgia was a natural progression. Technology is a part of our society and we must learn to use it to our advantage in education. I have learned a great deal in this program. My instructors have been excellent. They were organized, knowledgeable and helpful. I have improved upon my teaching skills and leadership abilities due to this program.

Strengths

As stated in my initial SWOT Analysis, one of my greatest strengths remains a willingness to try new teaching methods and technologies. Throughout my time in the Instructional Technology program, I have tried to use new tools and technologies available. Even when class requirements may have allowed for several presentation methods, I tried to select a method that was new to me in order to gain new skills. I have been able to use the new skills or technologies in my classroom and throughout my school. I created an article discussion wiki for my faculty, created tutorials for students and teachers, and created engaging lessons using technology. Primarily I have learned that if there is something you want to do with technology just get out there and look for it.

In addition to my willingness to try new things, I am not afraid to work closely and share with colleagues. In order for education to be successful, we must work as a team. I have collaborated with many of my colleagues in order to enhance student learning using technology.

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I created custom search engines to ensure safe searching when investigating certain topics. I worked with several teachers creating Glogsters with their students. Several teachers asked me to create websites and online activities for student learning. Using moviemaker to create audio books has been very useful as well.

My knowledge of technology and technology tools is an additional strength I possess. I do not have the extensive technical knowledge of our Education Technology Support Staff, but I have the ability to troubleshoot technology issues within my school and classroom. In addition, I have knowledge of technology tools available to assist teachers in integrating technology into the classroom. One teacher wanted to limit the websites students could search a topic. I was able to create a Google custom search for the teacher and assist her in making her own Google site. Many of our students do not have presentation software on their home computers. With my technology knowledge, I was able to direct them to several free technology tools available to their family.

After completing the evaluation process, I believe I have the skills necessary in leading evaluations within my school. The evaluation process is integral in the educational process. We must strive to improve up our instructional practice. The evaluation process identifies areas of need, gathers data, and recommends strategies for improvement.

Weaknesses

My largest weakness continues to be knowledge of networking and hardware. Through the Data Network for Instruction class, I learned a great deal more about networks and hardware. I have had the opportunity to use the knowledge gained to configure the computers in the computer lab. Even though I gained valuable knowledge in the class, I do not use the knowledge on a daily basis. I have referred to my textbook several times especially when my school was

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recently re-wired. When a colleague wanted to purchase a laptop for our news network, I was able to help her determine if the school had adequate wireless capabilities.

An additional weakness that I have is my tendency to be overcommitted. In trying to help my colleagues, I will take responsibility for tasks at the school building leadership meetings. I have volunteered several times to create surveys and disseminate the results to the faculty. My knowledge of web design has led me to maintaining the school website even though we have an Education Technology Support Specialist (ETSS). The ETSS serves several schools, and I have more knowledge of the events at the school. Even though being over committed can be a weakness, I think it can be a sign of leadership in volunteering to take on responsibilities that are not required.

Opportunities

My opportunities are great within my school. I can assist my colleagues in developing websites and integrating technology. I try to meet with the grade level teams regularly and correlate my technology lessons with their classroom teacher. The technology activities in my classroom can inspire others to integrate technology more often. In using Google docs, wikis, and surveys for School Building Leadership activities, I influence my colleagues to try something new and increase productivity.

My teaching position allows me to teach every student in the school. I have the ability to expose every child in the school to the many wonderful uses of technology. Students should know an alternative method for achieving the same goal is usually available with technology. In addition, showing students to investigate and problem solve when a technology issue arises is an important component of technology use.

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Another opportunity is the lack of technology use by students as observed by the accreditation team when they visited my school system. Even though this lack of use would appear to be a problem, it is an opportunity for me. With my knowledge, I can lead my colleagues into using more technology and becoming a technology leader in the system. In the using more technology, we will better educate our students and prepare them for life outside school.

Threats

The principal threat I encounter is a decrease in the budget. I find we have fewer personnel and fewer resources for technology implementation. If we want to implement more technology uses, we will need improved hardware, networking, and access to online resources. With fewer personnel, correcting technology issues may take longer. If teachers do not use technology regularly, they begin to omit technology from lesson planning because they are unable to depend on it to function properly. The budget deficits have led to larger class sizes. Due to the large number of students, technology equipment may not be available for all of the students in a class. A class may not have enough ActiVotes or computers for everyone to use. The lack of monetary resources can imply lack of training resources. During my program evaluation, I found teachers at my school want more training and teachers want specific training. Finding appropriate training can be difficult when monetary resources are unavailable.

Goals and Plans

I currently serve as a support teacher in a Title I Elementary School Computer Lab. I am currently seeking an Assistant Principal position within Coweta County. In reviewing the Coweta County School System for accreditation in 2010, the AdvanceED accreditation team made recommendations for improvement. The team observed technology use primarily for

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teacher presentation and I observed this in my own evaluation. The AdvancED team found students do not utilize present technology to its full potential creating poor student mastery of technology. Technology is extremely important in Title I schools due to a large number of low-income students. If students are unable to pay for lunch, chances are they are unable to pay for a computer or internet access. Many of our students are classified homeless living in hotels and with friends or family. Our families have limited resources and aside from the possible cell phone, technology is not a necessity. I will strive to continue to integrate new technologies and expose our students to technologies available to them. I will continue to participate in technology education available through my system, the Regional Educational Service Agency, and online. After learning about new technology resources, I will share these resources with colleagues and assist in implementation. My goal is to use my knowledge from the Instructional Technology program to lead Atkinson Elementary into preparing our teachers and students for a technology enhanced society.