



Cultivate Rural
Community College Leaders

Situational Analysis Worksheet

Objective: Before you can dream about where your department is going, you must establish your current "GPS Coordinates." Use this worksheet to gather the data, insights, and trends that will form the foundation of your 3–5 year plan.

Activity 1: The Data Audit

The module on Setting Expectations contained the Worksheet "Steps to Implement Lag and Lead Indicators". Refer back to that worksheet and use historical data to complete your department and college's Key Performance Indicators. Feel free to use the Situational Analysis Tables worksheet to gather your information.

Activity 2: The Resource Check

In addition to the data, it is important to analyze the resources you have available currently. Complete the following information as a part of the situational analysis.

Personnel – What does your current organization chart look like? What staff do you currently have on board and what are the main responsibilities everyone has?

Budget – What does your budget look like? Out of your budget, how much of it would you describe as discretionary that you can control for new projects?

Technology – What technology resources are available to you and your team? This can include hardware and software.

Infrastructure – What other resources do you have as a part of your infrastructure? This can include physical space on campuses to other items that you would consider part of your physical infrastructure.

Activity 3: The Team SWOT

Facilitate this with your team using sticky notes or a whiteboard. There is also a SWOT chart on the Situational Analysis Tables Worksheet. Remember: Strengths/Weaknesses are things you control; Opportunities/Threats are things happening TO you.

STRENGTHS (Internal)	WEAKNESSES (Internal)
<i>What are our "superpowers"? What do we do better than anyone else?</i>	<i>Where do we struggle? What processes are "clunky" or outdated?</i>
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
<i>What external trends could we lean into (grants, new local industry, etc.)?</i>	<i>What external factors could hurt us (demographic cliff, funding cuts)?</i>

Activity 4: The PEST Horizon Scan

This can be done at the same time as the SWOT chart as a part of your environmental scan with your team. Look outside your office. What is happening in the world and at the top of the college hierarchy?

- **P - Political/Institutional:** What is my boss's #1 priority? How does my department support the College's Strategic Plan? What is happening at the local, state, and national level in politics that affects the work you do?
 - *Insight:*

- **E - Economic:** Is the local job market booming or slowing down? What industries are impacting on your local market? How does this affect our student enrollment? How is the national economy changing?
 - *Insight:*

- **S - Social:** What are the demographics of our service area? Are student attitudes toward a degree changing? What are the larger social changes happening that impact what your college does and how they do it?
 - *Insight:*

- **T - Technological:** How are technological changes impacting the work you do and your students? What are "best-in-class" colleges doing with AI or automation that we aren't doing yet?
 - *Insight:*

Activity 5: Finding the "Aha!" Moment

Review all the information above. Don't try to be a "visionary"—just look at the data.

1. What is the biggest gap between where the data says we are and where we should be? What numbers does your department want to impact in the next 3-5 years?

2. Based on the SWOT and PEST, what is a trend we can no longer afford to ignore?

3. What are your other takeaways from completing the situational analysis?