

SWOT Analysis Focus

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY SERVICES

The subject of any SWOT analysis is a system or organization. It is most often used in business. In this case, the system being assessed is Josephine County fire protection and emergency services. It is represented in the diagram below. Each item included in the SWOT must logically tie back to one or more of the SWOT categories. To be included, each SWOT item should either fortify, weaken, threaten or improve fire protection and emergency services in Josephine County.



Examples

Look at tax deductibility of a fire district tax (versus a bill paid to a for-profit company). That is a benefit of a fire district conferred to individuals. That deduction does nothing to fortify, weaken, threaten or improve fire protection and emergency services. Choice of participating in a fire district or not is another example that is a benefit of the status quo – leaving things as they are. However, having a choice does nothing to fortify, weaken, threaten or improve fire protection and emergency services in Josephine County.

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an organization or system. It is an efficient way to take an initial look at an organization or system. It helps assess current performance of a system at a macro level. The end product identifies strengths to be capitalized or fortified. Weaknesses

must be eliminated or minimized. Threats must be planned for and avoided and opportunities capitalized upon.

PURPOSE

A SWOT analysis lends itself to:

1. Informing and educating all stakeholders with facts and describe the current environment; **knowledge informs more thoughtful decisions;**
2. Allowing a task force to communicate and prioritize most dangerous weaknesses and threats as well as high-value strengths and opportunities to be exploited. These in turn become the basis for strategic planning and goal setting.
3. Become the basis for requirements for a feasibility study. Often, weaknesses and threats are symptoms – not the root cause problem. One of the easiest and most effective ways to get to the heart of resolving weaknesses and threats is to identify the root cause/s. Asking the question “Why?” for each item can easily identify root causes in order to address them.
4. Be part of a press kit for the media and others.

STRENGTHS

Strengths are positive factors that help take advantage of opportunities in the external environment. Strengths are attributes and resources that support a successful outcome. They are qualities that enable us to accomplish the organization’s mission. These are the basis on which continued success can be made and continued/sustained. Strengths are the beneficial aspects of the organization or the capabilities of an organization.

WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are conditions that negatively impact current structural fire protection and emergency services system. Missing skills, equipment, training, financing and reporting are examples of weaknesses. Weaknesses are the qualities that prevent us from accomplishing our mission and achieving our full potential.

OPPORTUNITIES

These arise when an organization can take benefit of conditions in its environment to plan and execute strategies that enable it to become better. Opportunities are conditions that have the potential to have a positive impact on the current state of structural fire protection and emergency services.

THREATS

Threats are elements that range from problematic to catastrophic to fire protection in the short- and long-term. Threats jeopardize the reliability of the system. Threats are uncontrollable. When a threat comes, system stability and survival can be at stake.