



## SFFMA Leadership Development Program

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Getting from Good to Great . . .  
*Using SWOT to establish priorities*





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## Instructor information





- **31 years fire service experience**
  - Central Regional Manager / Consultant, ESCI
  - Fire Marshal & interim EMC for Harris County (retired)
  - Asst. Chief, Cy-Fair VFD (retired)
  - Guest Instructor, TEEX Municipal School
  - TX-TF1 Logistics Manager
  - TEEX Annual School Advisory Board
  - Lone Star College Advisory Council
  - TX Rural Fire Advisory Council
- **24 years private sector experience**





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## Getting from Good to Great



- How to define community risk . . .
- How to create a compelling story . . .
- How to identify strategic priorities . . .
- How to develop SMART goals and objectives . . .





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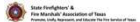

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## As a Chief ...

**You need to be able to identify “strategic priorities”**


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## Types of Strategic Plans

- Issue-Based Plan
- Organization-Based Plan
- Community-Centered Plan







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## Catalysts for change

- Crisis management
- Significant change
- External requirement
- Planned process


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## What is SWOT ?



- **Strengths**
- **Weaknesses**
- **Opportunities**
- **Threats**



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## Strengths



- **Things the organization and members do well**
  - When aligned with customer expectations
    - identify capability to meet or exceed customer needs / expectations
  - When not aligned
    - waste energy and resources
    - should be reviewed to evaluate the rate of return
- **Make sure strengths are consistent with expectations**

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## Weaknesses



- **Areas that need improvement**
  - When they affect customer expectations
    - May slow or inhibit progress
    - Are usually at the heart of an organization's problems
  - Before they affect customer expectations
    - Are important to identify and understand
- **Identify issues that create barriers to success**

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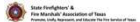

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## Opportunities



- **Reasons or conditions favorable to future success**
  - When aligned with expectations
    - Increase the potential for gain or favorable outcome
  - When not aligned
    - Increase the potential for waste or unproductive outcomes
- **Recognize and prepare to improve future outcomes**


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## Threats or Challenges



- **Factors not favorable to future success**
  - When aligned with customer expectations
    - Identify areas that may fall short of needs or expectations
    - Could damage or cripple long-term sustainability
  - When not aligned
    - May result in "churning" and loss of focus
- **Recognize and prepare to reduce negative outcomes**


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## Alternatives



- **PEST**
  - Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological
- **PESTLE**
  - Adds Legal and Environmental
- **SOSTAC**
  - Situation, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Action, Control





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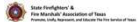

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## More Alternatives



- **SOAR**
  - Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results
- **SCOPE**
  - Situation, Competencies, Obstacles, Prospects, Expectations
- **A-I or 4-D**
  - Appreciate Inquiry: Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver


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## SWOT

| Pros                      | Cons                     |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| • No cost                 | • Simple                 |
| • Simple                  | • Subjective             |
| • Flexible                | • Unfocused              |
| • Informative             | • Can be limiting        |
| • Great for brainstorming | • Requires more research |

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## The SWOT Matrix



|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Volunteer recruiting</li> <li>• Fundraising / Donations</li> </ul>                          | <b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing station location</li> <li>• Industrial / hazmat experience</li> <li>• Volunteer retention past 3 years</li> </ul> |
| <b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build community support</li> <li>• Relationship with ESD</li> <li>• Land available for new station</li> </ul> | <b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited existing tax base</li> <li>• Changing population</li> <li>• New highway bypass</li> </ul>                             |


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## TOWS – Developing Strategies

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|--|--|
| <b>S-O strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage strengths to maximize opportunities</li> </ul> | <b>W-O strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counter weaknesses by exploiting opportunities</li> </ul> |
| <b>S-T strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage strengths to minimize threats</li> </ul>       | <b>W-T strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counter weaknesses to offset threats</li> </ul>           |

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## S-O Strategies

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Volunteer recruiting</li> <li>Fundraising / Donations</li> </ul>                          | <b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing station location</li> <li>Industrial / hazmat experience</li> <li>Volunteer retention past 3 years</li> </ul> |
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## W-O Strategies

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Volunteer recruiting</li> <li>Fundraising / Donations</li> </ul>                          | <b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing station location</li> <li>Industrial / hazmat experience</li> <li>Volunteer retention past 3 years</li> </ul> |
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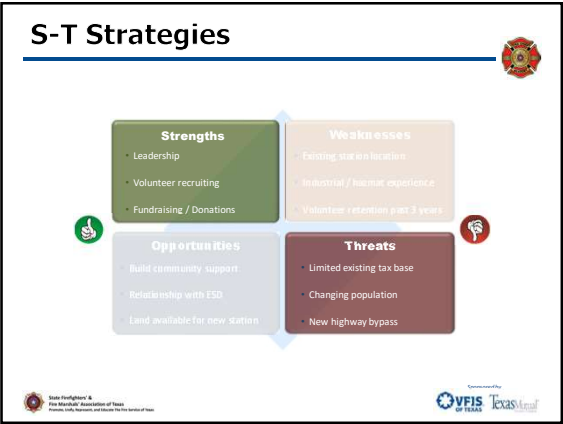
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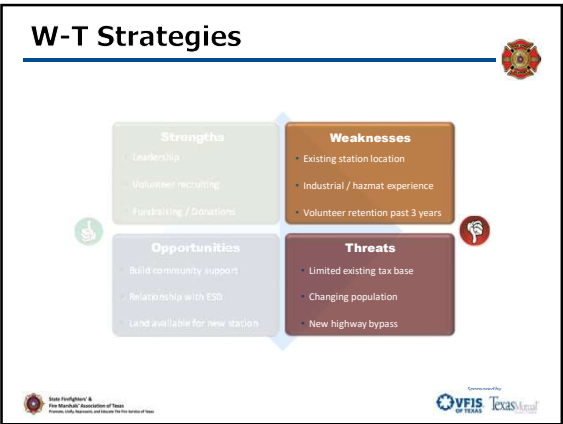
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**SWOT + TOWS →  
Goal Statements**

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### Scoring and Ranking

DOT voting



Stoplight Voting



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### SMART Objectives

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ction-Oriented
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-sensitive



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### How to write SMART Objectives

Specific ♦ Measureable ♦ Action-oriented ♦ Realistic ♦ Time-Sensitive

“ do what by amount by when .”

- Require all certified fire protection personnel to complete a “Courage to Be Safe” training program by Dec. 1, 2015.
- Reduce structural fire response time to 12 minutes or less, 80% of the time, by Jan 1, 2017.
- Require Fire Officer I certification for all officers beginning Jan 1, 2017.

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Compelling  
**Priorities + Story →**  
**Community Support**

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As a Chief ...



**It starts  
at the top**

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Are we missing the intent ?



**“It sure would have helped  
if we knew  
what the Fire Chief wanted  
us to do in the first place.”**

— overheard in Rehab, 2009

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## What Kind of Leader Are You?




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**As a Chief ...**

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**You need to  
be able to get from  
“Good” to “Great”**

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**5 Steps from Good to Great**

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- **Truly understand your customer base**
  - Understand what drives your customers, segment by segment
  - Understand what drives them crazy

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**5 Steps from Good to Great**

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- **Truly understand your customer base**
- **Ask some tough questions**
  - Are we focused on the right things?
  - Do our vision and core values align with our customers' concepts?

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## 5 Steps from Good to Great



- Truly understand your customer base
- Ask some tough questions
- Find out about the experience you deliver.
  - Get good information directly from your customer – ASK and LISTEN
  - Resist doing what you have always done in the past

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## 5 Steps from Good to Great



- Truly understand your customer base
- Ask some tough questions
- Find out about the experience you deliver.
- Focus on what matters.
  - Identify changes you can, and need, to make.
  - Ensure consistent and repetitive delivery -- Eliminate Random Acts of Excellence & Chaos

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## 5 Steps from Good to Great



- Truly understand your customer base
- Ask some tough questions
- Find out about the experience you deliver.
- Focus on what matters.
- Communicate and measure the results.
  - Build your "brand promise" around the changes you are delivering.
  - Integrate this into everything you say
  - Do it over and over and over again and again.

Source: Adapted from "Building Brand Loyalty", Blaine Millett, Customer Service Magazine, © 2010

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## Getting from Good to Great



- Get the **RIGHT PEOPLE** on the Bus
- Get Everyone in the **RIGHT SEAT**
- **DRIVE** 
- From time to time, **CHECK THE MAP** 

Source: Adapted from "Good to Great", Jim Collins, © 2005


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## Conclusions: Plan to Be Successful



- Start with a compelling story
- Define realistic expectations
- Use SWOT to gain insight and understanding
- Use TOWS to identify potential strategies
- Use the past as a foundation, not a boat anchor


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Every morning in Africa a gazelle wakes up.  
It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion, or it will be killed.

Every morning in Africa a lion wakes up.  
It knows it must run faster than the slowest gazelle, or it will starve and die.

Bottom line ... It doesn't matter if you're a lion or a gazelle,  
When the sun comes up, you better be running!

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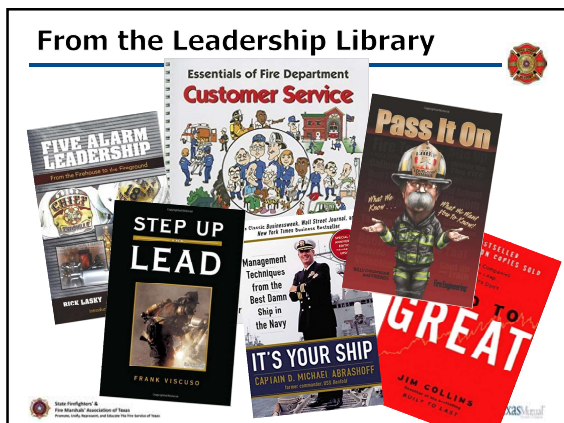
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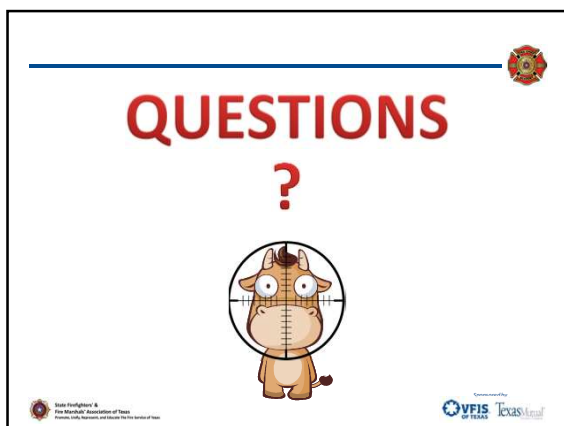
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For more information:



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**ESCI** Emergency Services Consulting International  
Promoting Excellence and Excellence that Enhances Community Safety

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