In information technology, gap analysis is an assessment tool to help identify differences between information systems or applications. A gap is sometimes called "the space between where we are and where we want to be." A gap analysis helps bridge that space by highlighting which requirements are being met and which are not. The tool provides a foundation for measuring the investment of time, money and human resources that's required to achieve a particular outcome.

In software development, for instance, a gap analysis can be used to document which services and/or functions have been accidentally left out, which ones have been deliberately eliminated and which still need to be developed. In compliance, a gap analysis can be used to compare what is required to what is currently being done.

Performing a gap analysis can help IT analyze the current state of affairs against where it wants/needs to be. These assessments can include anything from a software system or skill set to a look at how the department is managing as a whole.

For example, a software gap analysis can be a good way to find the holes in a product -- or how far off the actual outcome is, compared with set expectations. During the hiring process, a skill set gap analysis can help the team determine what to look for in a new hire.

We've pulled together samples and gap analysis templates from a variety of sources. Use the gap analysis templates as a way to better understand the process and even as the basis for your own IT gap analysis.

 **GAP Analysis Consist of Three Important Parts:**

* First, the purpose of the gap analysis is to see how our processes could help people succeed. It is n't to blame people -- blaming people rarely results in process improvements.
* Second, what holes in the process do we need to fill to reduce the opportunity for mistakes?
* Third, how could we simplify the process so everyone could understand and follow it? (Ithe more complex the process, the more likely the mistakes.)

The first question I have is: What are the established requirements you mention? Are they PCI DSS requirements? HIPAA? NERC CIP? Or even ISO 27001/2?

Once you know the requirements you need to meet, then you can usually fall back onto a simple checklist approach for the [gap analysis methodology](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0%2C%2Csid183_gci831294%2C00.html). There are several ways to build or obtain a checklist for your architecture review.

If I haven't listed the standard with which your organization needs to comply, search the Internet for checklists, or you can build your own based on the standards of concern (more detail on that below).

Using the checklists, I then suggest a group approach: Bring together the internal experts on the subject –- in your case, network architecture personnel –- to go over the standards and try to determine the following:

1. Does the current architecture comply with the requirements?
2. Can you document this compliance?
3. If not, what actions need to be taken to become compliant?

The best approach for this initial checklist/standard review would be to use a collaboration tool like SharePoint. As the group reviews each requirement, you can track compliance assessments, collect and post documentation that proves compliance, as well as post action items, including responsibilities and due dates.

Lastly, one question that may linger is: "What if I don't have any checklists available?" In this case you need to do the hard work of creating your own by reading the standards and dissecting the expectations to satisfy each requirement. I've had to do this in the past and, essentially, I've taken the auditor's approach: I use a requirement mandated by a particular standard to build a list of questions to ask both myself and the internal team that helps me to determine whether I am compliant. It can be a bit slow initially, but the outcome is that you totally understand the details of the standard.

In information technology, **gap analysis** is the study of the differences between two distinct information systems or applications. A gap is often said to be "the space between where you are and where you want to be." Gap analysis may be defined simply as the difference between what is needed and what is available. Gap analysis is a comparison process of two systems, and is undertaken as a means of bridging the space between them. Gap analysis provides a foundation for measuring investment of time, money and human resources required to achieve a particular outcome (for example, to turn the payroll process from paper based to paperless with the use of automation).

In business and economics, gap analysis is the assessment of business resources by comparing actual performance with its potential performance. The goal of the gap analysis is to identify gaps in optimized performance. This provides a company with insight into potential improvement. Such analysis can be performed at the strategic or operational level of an organization. Gap analysis is the study of what a business is doing currently and where it wants to go in the future. Note that "GAP analysis" has also been used as a means for classification of how well a product or solution meets a targeted need or set of requirements. In this case, "GAP" can be used as a ranking of "Good," "'Average" or "Poor."

# Looking for Gaps: Walking Through a Sample Analysis

You will be taken through a sample gap analysis to help you understand how it is undertaken.

What Are We Missing?

Undertaking a gap analysis to help improve your company doesn't have to be a daunting task. Using the four steps in gap analysis methodology, (understanding the surrounding environment, taking a wholistic approach to understanding the environment, determining a framework for analysis, compiling supportive data), you can obtain important information about key areas to focus on in your process or quality improvement project.

It can be difficult, however, to understand exactly what it is that is meant by "gap analysis." Viewing a sample gap analysis may help your understanding. The sample I will use here is actually a sample from an educational standards improvement project, but gap analyses are applicable in any field.

STEP 1: Identify Strategic Objectives

While many methods for undertaking a gap analysis start with looking at your own company's performance, I think that it's helpful to first have a goal, or end in mind before undertaking the analysis process. Some companies look to benchmarking and best practices of other companies to perform their gap analysis. Here, I'm going to use a couple of standards from California's Model Content Standards. Let's say that my school wants to incorporate a better music program, based upon music content standards set by California educators. Here are a couple sample content standards:

 \* "1.1 Read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves and explain how the elements of music are used."

 \* "1.5 Identify and explain a variety of compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity, variety, tension, and release in aural examples."

 \* "2.5 Perform on an instrument in small ensembles, with one performer for each part."

 \* "3.1 Identify the sources of musical genres of the United States, trace the evolution of these genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them."

picture.jpgNow, as I go through the process of creating my gap analysis between what the school currently offers, what students are demonstrating as far as knowledge goes, and what needs to be offered to be considered proficient in musical education by the State of California, I will want to make note of each of these standards. You can use our gap analysis template for MS Word, or the gap analysis template for MS Excel, if you wish to follow along with this example.

Once I have identified my content standards, I can place them into the strategic objectives boxes in my file, as you can see in the picture to the left. (Click any image for a larger view.)

\*California State Board of Education, Visual and Performing Arts Content STandards for California Public Schools: Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve." (Sacramento, CA: CDE Press, 2001) 70-71.

STEP 2: Identify Current Standings

Once you have clarified your strategic objectives, you will need to observe and collect data on your current standings with regards to each of the strategic objectives. To return to our sample gap analysis scenario, let's imagine that the following four items are observed:

 \* Students are regularly able to read and process instrumental scores, but no program is available for vocal music.

 \* pictureStudents can identify and explain select compositional devices, but not all. Their textbooks currently do not provide this information, and for advanced classes, no textbooks are available.

 \* Students regularly play instruments in ensembles in front of audiences around the city.

 \* Students were unable to identify, consistently, musical genres in the United States or give the history or well-known musicians associated with the genres.

Now, enter your findings into your chart. You will see that in the template, I have allowed space to describe current conditions and to make note of deficiencies. Take a few minutes to fill in your chart appropriately. When you are done, it should look something like the chart to the right.

STEP 3: Create a Plan of Action

At this point, it should start becoming clear as far as what your next step should be. Look at areas of deficiency and create a plan for improvement based upon these areas given the resources available. Let's say your action plan looks like this:

 \* There is no money to hire a vocal music teacher at the moment. This standard is put on hold until funds are raised by the music pictureclub and PTA for next year's program.

 \* Research textbooks dealing with music theory for the students. Plan to implement a textbook for the advanced classes.

 \* Develop a music history unit for each section of music education. Where applicable, implement textbooks for these purposes.

Come up with your own recommendations, and place them in the "Action Plan" section of your gap analysis chart. You can compare your results with the picture to the left.

STEP 4: Back Up Your Plan of Action with Data and Analysis

Finally, after your investigation and planning are complete, you will want to report your findings with the appropriate data and analysis presented. To do this, you may wish to use our gap analysis report template. In your report, you will include things like the background of the company and analysis, problems that have occurred, and even reasons for undertaking the analysis. Then, you will present your findings, showing the strategic objectives, current standing, deficiencies, and whether or not the current situation is acceptable. If the situation is unacceptable, you will present a course of action for improvement. Finally, all of your analysis will be backed up with the data gathered during the analysis.

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/76008.aspx#ixzz1ROPJwazr](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/76008.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROPJwazr)

<http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/76008.aspx>

# Performing a Gap Analysis: Where Do You Begin?

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/74370.aspx#ixzz1ROQvdRZU](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/74370.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROQvdRZU)

If you run a company, you might want to analyze how your company is currently performing against how you would like your company to perform. In this case, you will want to perform a gap analysis. Learn how to here.

Are You Where You Need to Be?All companies have objectives for where they would like to be, for projects, and for their long-term strategy. Individuals might use objectives and goals to become more productive and to see their dreams come true. One effective way of determining where you are whether you are a company or an individual against where you would like to be is to perform a gap analysis. A gap analysis compares actual performance (or status) with the desired performance (or status). A gap analysis takes into account where the company is and where ti wants to be. Any review of a company and its goals should include a thorough gap analysis - especially when wanting to improve productivity, processes and products.

Image Credit: Courtesy of Sxc.hu/kearneysp

How Do You Perform a Gap Analysis?

The first step to performing a gap analysis is formulating clear objectives and goals. These objectives may cover any of the following areas when concerning a company:

 \* The organization of the company

 \* The direction of the company

 \* The products of the company

 \* The processes of the company

 \* The IT associated with the company

 \* The bottom line of the company

At this point, it may be helpful to suggest that you keep separate documents for each of your company's objectives. The reason you will want to do this is that you will need to keep the next steps straight.

After formulating clear goals, and choosing a goal to focus upon, the next step in performing a gap analysis is listing all the features of the present situation that relate to the goal you are analyzing. This will cover the "Where are you?" part of the gap analysis.To do this, you may need to gather extensive data about your situation. Complete this step for each goal or objective you would like to analyze.

Next, you will need to list anything associated with the goal or objective you or your company would like to achieve. In other words, you will need to break down this goal into the component parts that will need to be completed in order to achieve the goal. Repeat this step for each goal or objective.

Now, look at where you are compared with where you need to be. Are there any attributes in common between the two lists? Great, those don't need to be filled. Where are your biggest gaps? How can you fill these gaps? What steps need to be taken? Look at each attribute and carefully and honestly analyze what needs to be done in order to ensure that attributes and factors are completed. Sometimes, this will require multiple steps. Keep track of each step involved.

What Do You Do After Performing a Gap Analysis?

Once you have performed a gap analysis, you should have a good idea of where your company stands, where it wants to be, and what needs to be done in order to get there. The next step, after performing a gap analysis will be to create a project plan for how those gaps will be filled. Once your plan is ready to go, you just need to execute it. Performing a gap analysis is a great way to make strides forward when you're not certain of what direction your company should take for its next move, but you do have to set clear goals.

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/74370.aspx#ixzz1ROQN3Sp5](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/74370.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROQN3Sp5)

<http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/74370.aspx>

**Different Ways to Approach a Gap Analysis**

Learn about different gap analysis methods and how they can help you in your project management efforts. This can be a great tool for discovering what elements your company should focus on for process improvement or future projects.

Performing a gap analysis is a great way to determine what the next course of action for a project or process improvement undertaking should be. Gap analysis is a tool that project managers, process improvement teams, and even individuals use to see where a person or company is when compared with where that person or company would like to be. There are various gap analysis methods that can be undertaken when utilizing this tool in your projects. Read on to learn about different gap analysis methods.

Traditional Gap Analysis

By noting where you are against where you're going, it's easier to Gap analysis relies upon taking a critical look at what the current standing or situation is for a person to a company. In order to make any improvements in a company, the first step is to understand where you are and where you want to be. You can understand where you want to be by looking at the company's mission statement, strategic objectives, and improvement goals. The first step, then, in performing a gap analysis is to define where you want to go in as specific terms as possible.

Once you know where you're headed, you can collect data on where you are currently. For example, if you own your own business, and you would like to make $100,000 a year, it's important to understand what your current standing is financially. So, the second step in performing a traditional gap analysis is to look at things as they are in your company.

After putting together the "where we want to be" against the "where we are," you can start to see the different steps that will need to be taken in order to bring about the desired effects. If you see areas where your company is particularly strong, ask yourself how processes there can be implemented in the areas that need improvement. This is the simplist gap analysis method.

Image Credit: Courtesy of sxc.hu/SteveTaint

SWOT Analysis

An SWOT analysis is another gap analysis method that can help you to balance where you are against where you want to be. SWOT actually stands for "Strengths," "Weaknesses," "Opportunities," and "Threats." When undertaking an SWOT analysis, the first step is to list all of the project's or department's strenghts. What makes the department so great? What is working for the project or the project team?

Next, you will list all the project's, department's, or company's weaknesses. Take a look at the ways in which things are not going so well. What could be done better?

Third, list opportunities that exist. What areas are there that the company, project, or department could take hold of? Are these opportunities realistic?

Fourth, list any threats that are presented that may derail your company, department, or project. Is there anything that can be done to prevent these threats?

Finally, your aim will be to maximize strengths and take advantage of opportunities that present themselves while minimizing company weaknesses and avoiding threats.

Four Key Steps in Performing a Gap Analysis

Another method of undertaking a gap analysis is through seeing the analysis process as four key steps:

 1. Seek an understanding of the environment surrounding the problem or project.

 2. Take a wholistic view of the environment to gain a complete understanding.

 3. Determine what framework your team will use for assessment of the problem or project

 4. Make sure to provide data supporting the analysis you have undertaken.

By keeping these four steps in mind while undergoing a gap analysis, you can ensure that the results of your analysis are accurate and useful.

Gap Analysis and Benchmarking for Project Success

Finally, benchmarking is the process a company uses to evaluate their own performance against other companies' best practices performance standards. It's a very specialized form of gap analysis where instead of looking at a company's own goals, the company looks at target goals formed by other companies. By following the above gap analysis methods, benchmarking is an easier undertaking than it otherwise would be.

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75624.aspx#ixzz1RORX9sX2](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75624.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1RORX9sX2)

<http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75624.aspx>

# Easy (and Free) Templates for Performing a Gap Analysis

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75910.aspx#ixzz1ROSDXhMF](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75910.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROSDXhMF)

If you've been looking for free gap analysis templates, you've come to the right place. Learn about where to find gap analysis templates and what you should look for in a template in this helpful Bright Hub article.

Different Strokes for Different Folks

When searching for a gap analysis template, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, you need to be clear about what you are looking for - are you looking for an Excel worksheet, or are you looking for a gap analysis flow chart? Are you doing an SWOT analysis or a general gap anlaysis - be sure to take your gap analysis method into account. Because there are many different types of templates out there, it is important to be clear about your template needs. Below you will find a list of gap analysis templates that will meet just about every need.

Full Gap Analysis Report Templates

If you're looking for the whole she-bang, that is, a template for the gap analysis report, there are a few good resoucres. Here's a list of some of the templates I found online:

 \* "Disaster Recovery and Continuity GAP Assessment" by Business Planning BCP (.doc download) - this isn't so much a template as an example of what a Gap Analysis might look like in completed form. You can substitute your information in for the information provided - just make sure you change the content of the document.

 \* "Analysis" at NW Link by Allison Rossett - again, this is more of an outline for your Gap Analysis than it is a template, but if you're having trouble getting started, it can be a great resource.

 \* Institute for Sustainable Futures - This is a PDF document that shows how your Gap analysis can be used in a longer report, once again, this is more of an example than it is a true template.

Finally, I have uploaded a template for your gap analysis report in our media gallery. This is a bare-bones template that will allow you to enter your information into the pre-determined format.

Gap Analysis Templates

Gap Analysis templates can be in Word, Excel, or even MS Project formats. There are several places online where you can find gap analysis templates when you don't need the background information (or when you're organizing your findings). Here are a few resources:

 \* Northwest Road Map's Gap Analysis Template - this template allows you to compare what the strategic objectives are against where the gap exists and why the objective is important. It is a Word .doc downolad.

 \* Irving Independent School District also provides a gap analysis worksheet in Word .doc format that you can fill in with your information.

There is also a Word gap analysis template and an Excel gap analysis template available in the media gallery as free downloads.

SWOT Analysis Templates

Finally, other free gap analysis templates that are available include those for SWOT Analyses. An SWOT analysis takes into account your strenghts, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The goal of an SWOT analysis is to maximize your strenghts and opportunities while minimizing your weaknesses and threats. You can find a great SWOT gap analysis template at Business Balls.

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75910.aspx#ixzz1ROS7uBF6](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75910.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROS7uBF6)

<http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75910.aspx>

# Gap Analysis Flow Chart - Creating a Visual Representation of Your Data

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75993.aspx#ixzz1ROpEcLlq](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75993.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROpEcLlq)

Sometimes it's not enough to perform a gap analysis - you also have to create a gap analysis flow chart to help easily visualize your findings or communicate information to an audience. Learn how to create this sort of visual in this helpful Bright Hub article.

The Gap Analysis - A Way to Look Into Your Company and Evaluate It

When you perform a gap analysis for your company, what you are really doing is looking under the hood to evaluate the health of your processes, services, and products. Undertaking a gap analysis means that you are investigating to see whether or not a series of strategic objectives are being met adequately, barely met, or not met at all. You will also come up with a plan of action to undertake to correct deficient areas. While there are a variety of gap analysis methods, one great tool is the gap analysis flow chart. The gap analysis flow chart allows you to see a graphical representation of the items it contains.

The First Step in Creating Your Gap Analysis Flow Chart- Gathering Data

Before you can put together your gap analysis flow chart, you will first need to collect the data necessary to put together a visually stimulating flow chart. Flow charts are best at tracking processes, so in assembling your data, you will want to observe the various processes invloved in your gap analysis. Make notes on each process - when you make notes, if you wish, you can record each step as a flow chart.

Become Familiar with Flow Chart Symbols

Flow Chart Symbols 1-16When you're working with flowcharts, there is a predefined set of symbols to use. It is important to understand what the symbols mean. If you're using Microsoft Word to create your flowchart, when you mouse over each symbol, it will let you know what it's for. For your convenience, here is a key to the various symbols you might use in creating your gap analysis flow chart. Refer to the images for each number. (Click the image for a larger view.)

 1. Process - Symbolizes a work operation or action step.

 2. Alternate process - Symbolizes a possible option to the normal process step (in performing a gap analysis, this could be a benchmark).

 3. Decision - Symbolizes either a question or a branch in the process.

 4. Delay - Symbolizes waiting time in a process.

 5. Pre-defined process - Symbolizes a sub-process that has been formally defined.

 6. Data - This indicates inputs and outputs (data) that go to and come from a process.

 7. Document - Symbolizes the production of a document or report.

 8. Multi-Documents - Symbolizes the production of multiple documents.

 9. Terminator - A point where the process starts or stops.

 10. Preparation - A point where preparation or set-up occurs for a process.

 11. Manual Input - This is a point in the process where manual imput is required for a system.

 12. Manual Operation - This is a point in the process that is not automated.

 13. Connector - This is where the process hops from one step to a different step.

 14. Off-Page Connector - This shows that the flow chart continues onto another page.

 15. Card - symbolizes an old computer punch card

 16. Punched Tape - Symbolizes an old computer punched tape input method

 17. Flow Chart Symbols Numbers 17-30Or - Symbolizes the logical function "or."

 18. Summing Junction - Symbolizes the logical function "and."

 19. Collate - Symbolizes the organization of data into a standard formatting.

 20. Sort - Symbolizes data being sorted into a pre-determined order.

 21. Merge - Multiple processes merge into one - or - raw materials are stored.

 22. Extract - Splits processes from one into multiple - or- measures finished goods.

 23. Stored Data - Symbolizes the data storage for a process.

 24. Sequential Access Storage - Symbolizes old time tape reels.

 25. Magnetic Disk - Symbolizes a database.

 26. Direct Access Storage - Symbolizes hard drive storage.

 27. Display - Symbolizes the display on a machine.

 28. Call out - Used to input comments on a flow chart.

 29. Internal Storage - Used for storing data in memory.

 30. Flow line - Used to indicate the direction materials and information flows.

Putting it All Together

Finally, now that you have a basic understanding of the different symbols involved with creating a flow chart, you can put together your gap analysis flow chart with the data you have collected. Consider creating a chart for how things are and a chart for how things should be. Alternatively, using the alternate process symbol, you could group both of these sets of data in one place.

Don't be afraid to use color in your gap analysis flow chart to make the presentation more appealing. By taking the time to create a graphical representation of your gap analysis, you can help others to understand exaclty where your company stands in relationship to where you would like your company to be.

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75993.aspx#ixzz1ROpEcLlq](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75993.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROpEcLlq)

<http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/75993.aspx>



# How is a Gap Analysis Used in the Six Sigma Process?

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/47750.aspx#ixzz1ROqADAm1](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/47750.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROqADAm1)

Six sigma projects feature performance metrics and a statistical analysis approach to solving problems. The statistical methods involved can intimidate some, but when you look further into six sigma projects you actually find a very common sense approach to problem solving.

Understanding a Six Sigma Gap Analysis

This common sense approach is invaluable to success and is where six sigma and traditional project management techniques come together. At some point, after all of the metrics are analyzed, a plan must be developed and implemented. When a six sigma project is moved from the define and measure stages into the planning and execution phases, we are moving closer and closer to project management.

For traditional project managers to successfully lead and implement six sigma projects or their recommendations, they need to understand the techniques used in six sigma projects. One of these techniques is gap analysis. A gap analysis is completed to understand the performance of a process when compared to what is expected or standard. It can also be used to compare the output of a process versus the competition. Often, in six sigma projects a gap analysis is performed to understand the performance of a process against the customer requirements.

Often people involved in the process will want to jump in and make improvements immediately. However, if the performance of the process is not understood first in its current state, it will be difficult to know if the changes actually made improvements. Gap analysis can be completed in a variety of ways. For example, it can be used just to compare averages or histograms, or it can be used in complex regression analysis. Once the gap analysis is complete, strategies to close the gap can be developed.

Gap analysis can be used in a few different ways throughout a six sigma project. The technique can be used for monitoring. For example, market conditions, competitor actions, and internal organization's performance can all be monitored to check for changes in the performance or, for internal organizations, to make sure that the performance does not vary too far from the target. Gap analysis, based on statistical process control, can be used to determine when action should be taken.

Benchmarking is another area where gap analysis can be useful. For example, cycle times of varies processes can be compared to best in class standards. The results of the analysis can then be used to rank the areas needing the most improvement and provide project managers with areas that they should focus their efforts on first.

Gap analysis can also be used to help organizations make decisions and to predict future results. For example, in large companies, often different business units have conflicting objectives. Even though this situation should not occur for optimum performance, the reality is that it often does. If directors from two different areas are promoting different strategies, for example, a gap analysis can be used to compare the strategies against past performance allowing project managers to have better insight into which direction the overall company should take.

A discussion about gap analysis in six sigma projects would not be complete if the quality of the data was not mentioned. The end result of the analysis and the recommendations for project managers that come out of it will only be as good as the data that is used in the underlying study. Therefore, it is important that organizations have robust methods to measure and collect data that will be used in gap analysis in six sigma projects.

Gap Analysis

(untitled)

Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/47750.aspx#ixzz1ROq1uTVJ](http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/47750.aspx%22%20%5Cl%20%22ixzz1ROq1uTVJ)

<http://www.brighthub.com/office/project-management/articles/47750.aspx>

# How to Write a Gap Analysis Report

By John Galt, eHow Contributor

A gap analysis report seeks to benchmark the performance of an organization against target standards or goals. Any type of organization or business can be effectively analyzed using gap analysis methodology. According to Adams Sixth Sigma, all successful organizations have a process of gathering data and subjecting it to thorough gap analysis. Gap analysis is appropriately utilized when reviewing performance within all facets of an organization. These can include, but are not limited to, information technology, business development, human resources and regulatory compliance.

Difficulty:

Moderately Challenging

## Instructions

#### Things You'll Need

* Set of goals or standards for each phase of the organization
* Detailed statistics relating to performance within each arena
* Analytical software capable of massaging large amounts of data

[Suggest Edits](http://www.ehow.com/print/how_5535754_write-gap-analysis-report.html)

## Instructions

* + 1

Analyze how performance-related data compares to benchmarks set within each constituent group comprising your organization. Utilize objective numbers whenever possible, and avoid input of subjective assessments into your gap analysis model.

* + 2

Identify deficiencies in each phase of the business against the promulgated targets. Quantify in tangible terms the extent of each shortcoming.

* + 3

Determine if sufficient resources exist within the organization in order to attain the target goals. Study individual performance data in order to ascertain if resource deficiencies relate to either quality or quantity.

* + 4

Calculate the requisite additional resources needed in order to bring performance up to the organization's stated goals. Outline quality issues within the organization's current resources where applicable.

* + 5

Seek input from the organization's personnel relating to the conclusions of the gap analysis report. Extrapolate from the data which areas within the organization need focus, and devise a plan of action to close the gap between expected and actual performance.

## Tips & Warnings

* According to Business Consulting Buzz, the gap analysis methodology can be used effectively by both large and small businesses alike. Using a gap analysis report template can simplify the creation process.
* Be fastidious when collecting data, and remember to heed the old adage of "Garbage in, garbage out."

[Suggest item](http://www.ehow.com/print/how_5535754_write-gap-analysis-report.html)

## Resources

* [Gap Analysis Template from the Workforce Strategy Center](http://www.workforcestrategy.org/toolkit/bysection/26/)
* <http://www.ehow.com/print/how_5535754_write-gap-analysis-report.html>

# [5 Simple Steps On How To Do A Gap Analysis](http://robdkelly.com/blog/getting-things-done/gap-analysis/)

Gap Analysis is a strategic planning tool to help you understand where you are, where you want to be and how you’re going to get there.

Here’s a simple Gap analysis chart:



Here's an example of a GAP analysis for profit

Here’s the Gap Analysis process:

Step 1: Decide the topic you’re going to do the Gap Analysis on? This is the challenge you’re trying to tackle.

Gap Analysis sample topics include:

* Revenue
* Profit
* Market Share
* Product Functionality/Features

Step 2: Identify where you are right now based on metrics or attributes.

Examples:

* Revenue — We’re at $10 million in annual sales right now
* Profit — We’re at $1.5 million in annual profit right now
* Market Share — We have 7% of the market share right now
* Product Functionality/Features — Our product has was just launched so it has limited features

Step 3: Identify where you’d like to be over a specific time frame?

Examples:

* Revenue — We’d like revenue to grow to $35 million in annual sales by 2012
* Profit — We’d like profits to grow to $12 million per year by 2012
* Market Share — We’d like to own 15% of a particular market by 2012
* Product Functionality/Features — We’d like our product to have industry leading features by 2012

Step 4: Identify the gap between where you are and where you want to be.

* Revenue — They gap is $15 million per year in annual sales by 2012
* Profit — The gap is $5.5 million in annual profit by 2012
* Market share — The gap is 8% market share by 2012
* Product Functionality/Features (let’s use Web site as an example) — The gap is that you’d like to have the following features by 2012: a blog, a sign-up form to let visitors follow your business on Facebook and Twitter and a way for customers to buy products directly.

Step 5: Determine how the Gap should be filled.

* I recommend using the “6 M’s” from my [Fishbone Analysis Article](http://robdkelly.com/blog/getting-things-done/fishbone-analysis):
	+ Manpower — The people resources you need.
	+ Methods — The processes you need.
	+ Metrics — The measurements you need.
	+ Machines — The automation or technology you need.
	+ Materials — The material items (such as physical goods or marketing collateral) you need.
	+ Minutes— The time you need.
* Or you could use a [SWOT Analysis](http://robdkelly.com/blog/getting-things-done/swot-analysis) and simply list out your:
	+ **S**trengths, **W**eakness, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats related to filling your Gap.

Some other related Gap Analysis definitions:

* Usage Gap = Market Potential minus Existing Usage
* Product Gap = The part of the market that your missing because of your product features.

Fore more on the Gap Analysis model, check out [Gap Analysis Wiki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gap_analysis).

Note: There’s a separate “GAP” used in business related to how to run meetings. Read [*The 3 Simple Steps To An Effective Meeting: The GAP Approach*](http://robdkelly.com/blog/communication/gap-meetings) for more.

<http://robdkelly.com/blog/getting-things-done/gap-analysis/>

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| How to Write a Gap AnalysisGlad you asked...In order to write a gap analysis, you will need to know the amount of time you are going to observe the gap. You will then write your objectives by asking two very simple questions. Where am I now and where do I want to be in a given amount of time. The Gap is the difference between now and the future time. The Gap is where you determine how to get to the future goals. You can find more information here: [http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/...](http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_gap_analysis.htm) |
| Then again, this answer might help you...If you would like to write a gap analysis, start by researching the current state of the organization, business direction, processes, and information technology. Then you can figure out the optimum performance and complete your gap analysis. You can find out more information here: [http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=we...](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=10&ved=0CCgQFjAJ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fmarketingteacher.com%2FLessons%2Flesson_gap_analysis.htm&ei=mG6lS6HsL5S0tgf4vbicCg&usg=AFQjCNHxJVHStkBHETlqpMtTWgYg5t1QCg&sig2=EmI2AsauW8pUxvQXiQ_Clw) |

jsmith, Ask Editorial Team