

Establishing a Personal Strategic Plan

(SWOT: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)

Start by conducting an environmental scan by looking at “things” beyond your control. Thoroughly understand that these issues are out of your control. Once you understand these limitations, you will then move to the SWOT method which is a way of looking at internal situations and conditions in your life that can be controlled.

Strengths: What do you do well

Weaknesses: what you do not do well or what resources are you lacking

Opportunities: what upcoming opportunities currently or will exist for you

Threats: what threats will keep you from succeeding this semester and how can these be turned into opportunities.

Ask yourself these questions:

- 1) What are my capabilities and interests for this semester?
- 2) What are my financial and technological resources?
- 3) What products, programs, events and services are offered this semester?
- 4) What are my talents?
- 5) What are my time restraints?
- 6) What are my workloads and outside work obligations?

Spend time analyzing your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and type a list of your personal SWOT conditions.

After this is done, determine your priorities for this semester for your personal life, and student career. Be specific and type these in bulleted format.

Next, come up with a personal Mission statement. This broad statement explains your purpose ie: for going to school, This statement could also be your vision that serves as a template for the future decisions that you make about your life and career. Type your mission statement.

Now you are ready to make decisions and set goals. Don't limit yourself to the obvious. Write down many ideas and take the best of them. Identify your objectives, strategies and tactics to help you get the job done.

Type your Objectives: Objectives are specific accomplishments you want to achieve within a certain time period. For example, an objective might be to make better grades this semester. Establish at least 3 objectives for this class, 3 for the semester and 3 for your next 5-10 years.

Next you will establish strategies for each objective. A strategy is a statement explaining how you will accomplish each objective. Example: I will use my time more efficiently and dedicate at least 2 hours per night to school. Each objective should have at least 2 strategies.

The final step is to identify your tactic. Tactics are the actual detailed plan for how you will accomplish your strategy. You should have more than one tactic for each strategy.

Example: I will keep an appointment calendar of all assignments, due dates and will order supplies ahead of time. I will have all my work done 2 days before it is actually due. Be realistic in your strategies and make sure you can and will follow them.

This SWOT analysis and Plan is due on February 7, 2011

Review your plan to see if it is working midway thru the semester and ask yourself: Are you ahead of schedule, are you accomplishing your course and semester goals. If not, try to determine why and get back on track.