

Directing the IT Department at Tumaini University in Tanzania

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Objective

What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from the point of view of a Finnish ICT Director at the University in a developing country.

I'm looking at these issues from a practical view, mainly from my own experience in Tanzania.

Tumaini University

- Tumaini University - Iringa University College was established in 1994 and it's owned by the Lutheran church. In the year 2007, there were 2000 students. The collaboration with the University of Joensuu started in the year 2000. One fruit of that co-operation is the IT degree program which started in 2007.
- During the years 2005-2007 I worked at Tumaini University as an ICT Director.

The tasks of the ICT Director

- Directing the IT department which consisted of 3 IT teachers, 2 IT technicians and 2 helpdesk persons. To be responsible of the work of the IT department.
- To develop better IT infrastructure and procedures.
- To participate to the creation of the new IT degree program.
- Management and Leadership: directing things and people.

SWOT analysis

In this research, or should I say in an essay at this point, I'm analyzing the work of an ICT director in Tanzania through SWOT analysis.

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats involved in a project or in a business venture.

SWOT analysis

I'm also trying to find answers to these questions:

- How can we use each Strength?
- How can we stop each Weakness?
- How can we exploit each Opportunity?
- How can we defend against each Threat?

Some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats are based on cultural or environmental issues such as the sense of community or weather effects.

Strengths

- Commitment of the Management
- Cultural strengths such as the sense of community
- Christian Values
- Committed IT faculty
- Co-operation between Tumaini University and the University of Joensuu
- Innovative and enthusiastic atmosphere
- Functioning basic IT infrastructure
- New IT Degree Program (started 2007)

Weaknesses

- Insufficient resources (devices, people, financial)
- Slow and expensive Internet connection
- Problems in the procurement processes
- Poor English skills of the subordinates at the IT Department
- Cultural differences between ICT Director and the other staff members
- Lack of sufficient knowledge (some of the ICT Department employees)
- Problems in the procurement processes
- Delivery problems
- Poor internal communications from the management to employees.

Opportunities

- Coming fiber optic cable under the Indian Ocean will bring faster and cheaper Internet connections
- New IT Degree Program started 2007 (increasement of the students, more income, IT innovations and the knowledge)
- More IT staff → better IT services, more innovations
- Public IT Short Courses
- Exploitation of the Science Park building (advantages of the co-operation with companies)
- New co-operative IT suppliers

Threats

- Loss of key staff
- Weather effects as thunder storms and dust can damage IT devices
- Loss of sustainable financing (withdrawing of the donors or less students)
- Lack of resources
- Viruses and other attacks to the network
- Some of the key elements of the IT infrastructure as servers could get broken
- Thefts

- How can we Use each Strength?
- How can we Stop each Weakness?
- How can we Exploit each Opportunity?
- How can we Defend against each Threat?

Strengths

- Commitment of the Management
- Committed IT faculty
- Innovative and enthusiastic atmosphere
- Functioning basic IT infrastructure
- Co-operation with the University of Joensuu
- New IT Degree Program (started 2007)
- Christian Values
- Cultural strengths

How to Use

Develop, innovate

Empower them

Innovate

Protect

Add, analyze

Develop, advertize

Utilize

Utilize

Weaknesses

- Slow and expensive Internet connection
- Insufficient resources
- Poor internal communications
- Poor English skills
- Cultural differences
- Lack of sufficient knowledge
- Problems in the procurement processes
- Delivery problems

How to Stop

Analyze and optimize the traffic

Negotiate, advertize, recruit,

Teach, motivate

Educate, motivate

Study, participate

Educate, recruit

Negotiate, motivate

Analyze, negotiate

Opportunities

- Coming fiber optic cable
- New IT Degree Program
- Public IT Short Courses
- Exploitation of the Science Park
- New co-operative IT suppliers

How to Exploit

Innovate, develop

Innovate, advertise

Develop, advertise

Innovate, negotiate,
develop, advertise

Make research,
analyze, negotiate

Threats

- Loss of key IT staff
- Loss of sustainable financing
- Weather effects
- Lack of resources
- Viruses and other attacks
- Problems with the main IT devices
- Thefts

How to Defend

Motivate, educate

Report, communicate

Analyze, protect

Advertise, motivate

Analyze, protect

Analyze, duplicate,
protect

Analyze, protect

What should we do after we know the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats and some verbs for how to Use, Stop, Exploit and Defend them?

We have to ask questions!

We have to look those verbs we found out (=things we can or should do) together with questions e.g. Why, What, Where, Who, How, When.

For example:

Threat: possible problems with the main IT devices → Analyze, duplicate, protect → some questions:

What are the most critical devices and Why? What could happen if we are not increasing the protection? How to protect or duplicate them? Who is doing that work? Who is responsible for that? What are the costs? What is the timetable? and so on...

Of course we need to answer those questions too.

Thank You!