**Connecting Courses to the Canadian World of Work**

An introduction for students preparing to enter the work sector.

**Introduction**

The topics explored in your courses are related to many different sectors, industries and/or organizations (SIOs) in Canada. Learning more about the factors that impact them can increase your awareness of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in these areas.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Throughout this activity you will:

Identify connections between your interests, goals and opportunities in related SIOs.

* Research Canadian SIOs related to this course.
* Explore factors influencing SIOs of interest to you.
* Conduct a [**SWOT**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hm_OXKMvomg) (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for an SIO that interests you.

**Step 1: Research**

Identify the industry or sector that intersects most closely with your interests and this course. To help familiarize yourself with Canadian industries, you can refer to sites like [**IBISWorld Industry Research**](https://www.ibisworld.com/canada/list-of-industries/) that collects data and conducts analyses on industries around the world. Alternatively, you can conduct this search independently using the [Scott Library Research Guides](https://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/).

Use the space provided below to compile a list of credible resources (aim for 5 to 6 resources) on the industry or sector you would like to learn more about.

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**Step 2: Explore**

You should gather enough research to do a preliminary analysis of the SIO that most interests you. This means you should have a sense of where it is thriving, struggling, changing – or about to change. This doesn’t need to be in-depth research, but you should know something about each of these areas so you can do the next step - conduct a formal SWOT analysis in the next step of this exercise. For now, simply read and take notes about the resources you’ve gathered and answer these questions.

What sector have you chosen and why?
***Note:*** *The* [*Tips for Conducting General Interest Research*](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/envisionyu/chapter/tips-for-conducting-general-interest-research/) *activity can help you do this.*

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**Introduction to SWOT Analysis**

A SWOT analysis is a simple and transferrable method to help develop a greater understanding of an industry or sector. In the business industry, a SWOT analysis can be used to identify competitive advantages, but in this exercise, you will be using a SWOT to understand factors in the workplace that could be relevant for your professional planning and future decision-making. A SWOT analysis can help you:

* organize your research and the resources you've gathered.
* help clarify decision and choices about an SIO.
* adjust and refine your personal and professional goals.
* identify opportunities for you to contribute and succeed in this SIO.
* determine where change is possible in this SIO and how you might take initiative towards change.

You can read more about the SWOT Analysis by checking out [Chapter 3. Assessing Community Needs and Resources from the University](https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main) of Kansas’ Community Toolbox.

**Step 3: Conduct a SWOT Analysis**

When conducting your SWOT analysis, consider what aspects you are prioritizing and why, e.g., the social impact, the effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), financial stability, etc. Try to limit your SWOT to one or two of these to keep it manageable.

Use the space provided below (or the [SWOT Analysis Template](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/app/uploads/sites/2971/2023/03/AF-SWOT-Analysis-Connecting-Coursework-to-the-Canadian-World-of-Work-D01-1.docx)) to conduct a SWOT analysis on your sector of interest. Make at least four points in each of the four sections of the SWOT table. You may want to consider assets, resources, prospects, restrictions, limitations, and challenges in this sector.

**Strengths**

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**Weaknesses**

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**Opportunities**

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**Threats**

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Use your SWOT analysis to identify strategies that maximize opportunities and minimize threats.

**Opportunity-Strength (OS) Strategies**

***Which of the sector’s strengths can I use to take advantage of opportunities.***

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**Opportunity-Weakness (OW) Strategies**

***How can I minimize the sector’s weaknesses by taking advantage of the opportunities identified?***

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**Threat-Strength (TS) Strategies**

***How can I use the sector’s strengths to minimize or avoid threats?***

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**Threat-Weakness (TW) Strategies**

***How might I minimize the sector’s weaknesses to avoid threats?***

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**Step 4: Summarize the Findings**

Write a summary of your analysis identifying:

* The strengths and opportunities that characterize the SIO you see as most related to your interests and goals.
* What weaknesses and threats do you see as being areas where you could make a positive contribution? Why?
* What will be important areas of growth in this SIO are most exciting to you and why?
* What roles/careers do think you would be interested in exploring in this SIO? Why?

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**References**

IBIS World. (n.d.). List of industries. IBISWorld. Retrieved May 28, 2022, from [www.ibisworld.com/canada/list-of-industries/](http://www.ibisworld.com/canada/list-of-industries/)

University of Kansas. (n.d.). SWOT analysis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Chapter 3. Assessing Community Needs and Resources | Section 14. SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats | Main Section | Community Tool Box. Retrieved May 28, 2022, from [ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main)