

Personal Technology SWOT Analysis, Goals and Plan

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## Introduction

As a student of Instructional Technology, I find it a daunting task to assess my technology strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The following is a combination of my SWOT Analysis, my personal technology goals and my plan to carry out these goals. As an educator and student, I feel that I am more prepared than most to enter into the second decade of the new millennium with a fresh view of the technologies available and renewed enthusiasm for these technologies.

## Strengths

The education field is filled with many people telling teachers what to teach and how to teach it. Educators are encouraged to create 21<sup>st</sup> century scholars in a 20th century classroom. This is where my strengths come in to play. Many of my students have better technology at home than they do at school. When this is the case, teachers must utilize these home technologies to help students become the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner that they can become. My strengths, as a teacher and a technology enthusiast, is finding ways to steal some of my students' computer time at home and have them create projects and complete tasks that they otherwise would not be able to do at school. These "stolen" computer moments can become a very powerful learning experience for the student.

Another strength that I have, when it comes to technology is that I am not afraid to try my hand at technology related things. When a new program is implemented or new software is available for my students, I am one of the first people to try out the program and find exciting things to do with the software. I believe that it is important to make the most of the resources that are available in our schools. Once I have used the program, I try to discover the strengths and

weaknesses of each program so that I am prepared for any questions or issues that may arise when students use the program or software.

### Weaknesses

Discovering my weaknesses when it comes to technology is rather difficult. I believe that my greatest weakness when it comes to technology is that I get frustrated when something that I am doing is not working out. I don't want anyone to help me; I just want to be able to complete the task on my own so that I know I understand how to accomplish the task. I am leery of people wanting to help or instruct me on how to do the task. I find myself wanting to be alone when I work with technology so that I am clear on what I am doing. I feel that this is a weakness that can be easily improved if I allow myself to understand that I can ask for help and that I don't necessarily have to know everything about every piece of technology that I come in contact with.

### Opportunities

In my day-to-day school life, there are many opportunities to use technology. I use PowerPoint to create many of my guiding lessons. I have found that the more interactive the lesson is with technology the more luck I may have with keeping everyone's attention. In teaching younger students, I have seen a greater interest when I put a picture of myself or my dog within the PowerPoint lesson. This breaks up the monotony that math can sometimes produce. The courses throughout my tenure at the University of West Georgia have taught me many different things about PowerPoint and many other software programs that I did not know before. Creating interactive lessons with sounds, animations and video are just as easy as writing lesson plans.

There are also many opportunities to share my knowledge with my coworkers. I find myself sending out images or PowerPoints that I have created so that people can use what they can. I am very proud of my work and use this knowledge to help create different images and documents for my school's website in which I am the webmaster.

### Threats

The main threat to successful technology integration into my classroom and classrooms across the United States would be funding. There is a lack of funding when it comes to technology. How can an educator be judged based on the success of their 21<sup>st</sup> century learner when the learner is not getting access or exposure to the 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies? This is a major fault of the public school system and federal and state spending. Technology is the present and future and the governing bodies need to realize this.

Another threat to technology in the classroom is fear. Many teachers and students fear what they do not know. Technology changes each minute of each day. There are many sites that are safe for students, but because people fear technology, these sites are blocked. This is a major threat to many wonderful resources that go unavailable each day. I believe that if the technology leadership educates the teachers and then the teachers educate the students, then situations such as these will be few and far between.

### Personal Technology Goals

When creating my goals for the upcoming year, I think about many different things. The first thing I think of is that I will be graduating from the University of West Georgia with a specialist degree in Instructional Technology. With the help of

this degree, one goal is to obtain a role in my school where teachers are comfortable coming to me for help when they want to implement something new and technology related into their own classrooms. This would also be part of a long term goal in one day becoming a technology specialist within the county.

Implementing technology related activities into my classroom is an important part of my personal technology plan for the next year. Currently, I have created and am maintaining a wikispace for my students and parents. It is to be used as a conversation about math. I add links and instructional videos as I go and then students can use it to post questions or create a discussion about math. I teach sixth grade and I am trying to get my students comfortable with using the computer with math. My goal for this technology is to continue to keep the discussions and the links up to date with concepts we are currently working on in class. This would allow my students to have a place where they can come and find things that are relevant to the things we will be discussing in class.

Another technology goal that I would like to implement over the next year is to teach my coworkers about one (or all) of the different technology related learning tools that we have learned about over the past three semesters. Software like Comic Life, VoiceThread, and creating a digital story book using Movie Maker would be a few things that I would love to educate my peers on. I would teach them some appropriate ways to incorporate these technologies into their classrooms and then help them create lessons that utilize these technologies as well.

Technology Plan

The goals I would like to achieve over the next twelve months are to become a leader when it comes to technology questions for teachers and students at my school, to improve and maintain a class wikispace and serve as a model for student interaction on the internet, and educate my peers on different interactive software that are available for free or for minimal costs. Each of these goals can be achieved in a timely manner.

In order to achieve my first goal, I will discuss my ideas with the administration team at my school. I will create an open email policy and with permission, offer to help out any teacher with instructional technology issues. I will also create a helpdesk wiki so that we can keep a log of items that are issues and how we worked through those issues. It will be a way of keeping the records of different strategies and ideas that come from the conversations between me and my peers.

My second goal is something that I can share with my fellow math teachers and they could possibly incorporate the wiki or their own wiki into their planning and classroom. I think that the best way to see if this goal is achieved is to check the items each quarter and make sure they are up to date with items the students need.

My final goal can be achieved through planning with my peers and my administrators. There is not a lot of professional learning money and this could be one way that teachers can get professional learning credit and learn some new teaching techniques through technology. Throughout my courses, I have created several learning plans to teach fellow teachers how to use some of these programs. I will utilize these to create PLU opportunities for my school.

### Conclusion

The idea of reflecting on my strengths and weaknesses is difficult for me. I want to be good at everything I do; however I understand that this is not always the case. However, upon reflection, I do have a few strengths that I felt were worth mentioning and a few weaknesses that I can improve upon. With this SWOT analysis, I now have the goals, the plan, and the motivation to successfully increase the technology learning opportunities for the students that I come in contact with and for my peers.