

SWOT Analysis: A Practical Template for Medical Affairs & Healthcare Strategy

SWOT is a strategic analysis framework used to evaluate both internal capabilities (**S**trengths and **W**eaknesses) and the external environment (**O**pportunities available and **T**hreats faced) related to a medicine, therapeutic area, or competitor landscape. The SWOT output should directly inform decision-making in:

- The **SMP**, outlining priorities, objectives, and resource allocation.
- The **Evidence Gap Analysis**, identifying areas where data generation is needed.
- The **Publication Plan**, highlighting where evidence communication could be strengthened.
- The **MSL Field Plan**, revealing priorities for HCP engagement and insight collection.
- The **Market Access strategy**, flagging potential HTA and payer risks early.



Facilitation Guide

Before group discussion, share pre-read materials and ask each participant to write their own inputs independently (one idea per sticky note). Divergence is valuable.

Not all SWOT inputs carry equal weight. Identify the top 3–5 most significant items per quadrant.

A completed SWOT is a starting point, not an endpoint. Once all four quadrants are filled, review the analysis and identify the strategic implications. Close by assigning clear owners and next steps.

SMP: Strategic Medical Plan; MSL: Medical Science Liaison; HCP: Healthcare professional; HTA: Health Technology Assessment

Recommendations for a powerful SWOT analysis

- ✓ SWOT should be scoped to a single, clearly defined topic and time point. The more focused the question, the more actionable the output.
- ✓ Keep it concise, and ground every input in evidence and data.
- ✓ Regularly revisit the SWOT. Treat it as a living strategic tool, not a one-off deliverable.
- ✓ Aim for **6 to 10 participants**. This is enough to capture cross-functional perspectives without losing focus.

Use this template provided by ALCARE



INTERNAL CAPABILITIES

STRENGTHS

Characteristics of your business that give it advantages over its competitors.

Questions example

What is our scientific differentiation in this therapeutic area?
What depth of clinical and real-world evidence supports our product?
How strong and credible is our KOL and stakeholder network?
How well aligned are our medical, market access, and commercial strategies?

WEAKNESSES

Characteristics of your business that put it at a disadvantage relative to its competitors.

Questions example

Where are our evidence gaps relative to competitors or HTA requirements?
Are there unmet informational needs among HCPs that we are not addressing?
Where is our scientific messaging inconsistent or insufficiently differentiated?
Do we have the right capabilities and resources to execute our medical plan?

SWOT Analysis

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

OPPORTUNITIES

Elements in a company's external environment that allow it to formulate and implement strategies to improve performance.

Questions example

What unmet medical needs remain unaddressed?
Are there evolving clinical guidelines or diagnostic criteria we can support?
Which patient populations or geographic markets remain underserved?
Are there new RWE or data generation opportunities we could leverage?
What emerging HCP education needs could we address ahead of competitors?

THREATS

Elements in the external environment that could endanger the business, its profitability, or its competitive advantage(s).

Questions example

What changes in HTA or reimbursement frameworks could challenge our value story?
How are prescribing patterns or clinical practice guidelines shifting?
Is there growing scepticism among HCPs or payers about our evidence base?
How are patient advocacy groups influencing the therapeutic area narrative?