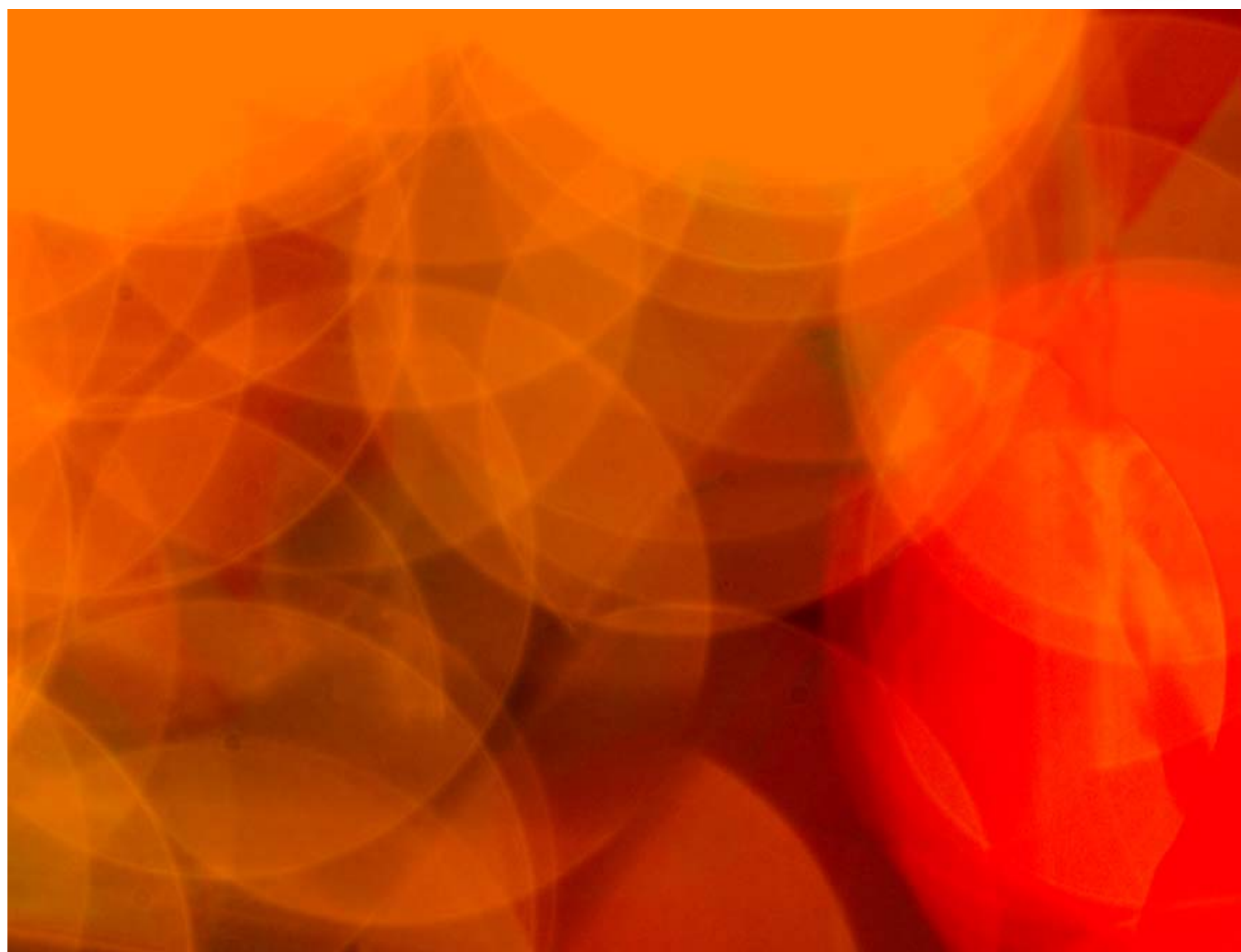


WCS

Developing Responsive Provision



Improving employer responsiveness across the college

ShIPLEY College used QIA whole-organisation consultancy support and the QIA Framework to Measure and Improve Employer Responsiveness to identify key areas for development.

Introduction

ShIPLEY College delivers high-quality education and training to meet the needs of individual students, communities and businesses in the Bradford area. It was judged outstanding by Ofsted in 2006 for its links with employers and is the sub-regional Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for Care of the Elder Person.

Margaret Robson is the Assistant Principal responsible for Employer and Community Responsiveness. The role includes delivering ShIPLEY's employer engagement plan and overseeing ShIPLEY's Marketing and Employer Services. Within this service, the Workforce Development Manager oversees ShIPLEY's Train to Gain contract and manages the cross college Workforce Development Unit.



Figure 1: ShIPLEY College staff involved in a development workshop for employer engagement

The organisation and the Programme

With QIA's whole-organisation consultancy support, in December 2007 ShIPLEY completed the QIA Framework to Measure and Improve Employer Responsiveness covering the main employer-facing sectors of the college:

- Care and Early Years
- Horticulture and Land-Based Industries
- Creative and Digital Industries and
- Business.

It also covered work with employers through Train to Gain, and work-based learning, where ShIPLEY has a strong track record of delivery.

Context

At the time of writing, the college is working towards accreditation to the Training Quality Standard (TQS) (formerly known as the New Standard). The review and self-assessment process enabled them to produce a development plan identifying key priorities for action; barriers to development and how to overcome them; development and training needs; action and evidence of success.

Following the review, they have used consultancy support for work on updating service standards and contributing to a March staff development event on preparing for the TQS. Eighty academic and support staff, including the senior management team, attended that event, which included workshops on blended learning delivery, e-portfolio development and promoting Skills for Life to employers, following a keynote address from senior management.

Challenges and solutions

The initial self-assessment identified the following key areas for development:

- research and development of a bespoke employer survey on business impact to meet the TQS requirements
- developing staff awareness of how new performance measures for employer engagement and responsiveness will affect the whole college, including change processes and input into enhancing the customer experience
- review and development of strategic marketing planning processes
- updating of service standards linked to the Customer Charter.

The staff development event went very well and really raised the profile for all staff of the new challenges for employer responsiveness...

I think the initial audit was particularly useful, because it did focus our attention on the main priority areas. It was out of that that we identified the need for new tools for measuring employer satisfaction. Interestingly, this was also flagged up from a different direction through a Train to Gain audit that was carried out with our consortium.

Margaret Robson, Assistant Principal,
Employer and Community
Responsiveness, Shipley College

Key messages / learning points / outcomes

The self-assessment tool provided methods of identifying improvement activities and prioritising actions.

The development plan provided clear objectives and a clear form of communication to others involved in the development process.

It is well worth tapping into sources of existing good practice in areas such as service standards and benchmarked employer surveys. These provide excellent starting points for the development of bespoke documentation.

Links

Margaret Robson, Assistant Principal, Employer and Community Responsiveness, Shipley College. Tel 01274 327296 Email m.robson@shipleys.ac.uk

Impact and potential impact

The staff training was intended to ensure that staff could contribute as individuals to team and organisational goals, employer engagement and responsiveness targets and the change process. Initial feedback has been positive.

The staff development event took place towards the end of the consultancy engagement, so further information on impact will be gathered later.

The new employer survey will enable the college to assess the impact of the training on the business. The feedback can then be used to improve customer service and delivery and turned into case studies as a marketing tool.

The updated service standards will offer staff guidance on how they can provide the 'Shipleigh College' brand of service and will identify the level of service customers can expect.

A review of current marketing processes will enable the college to further develop its Marketing Plan to ensure that it fully supports the Employer Plan, including targeting advertising resources effectively.

Top tips

- Use the self-assessment tool to identify the current position regarding employer responsiveness.
- Create a development plan that will prioritise actions and include measurements of success. Ensure that this is developed with the stakeholders who will be involved with implementation.
- Use current 'good practice' to aid the development process, but not as the blueprint for it.
- Ensure that staff at all levels are aware of the future environment – both threats and opportunities – so that they can buy in to the development process.

Useful information

Shipleigh College used a range of resources including:

- PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors) (PPT slide attached)
- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) (PPT slide attached)
- Boston Matrix (focusing on relative market share and market growth) (PPT slide attached)

Next steps

- Continue developing and implementing the college strategic Marketing Plan in relation to employer-facing work.
- Review current position following the consultancy and re-prioritise the development plan involving key stakeholders.
- Continue to involve key staff with developing employer responsiveness activities following the awareness event.
- Finalise the updated service standards with key stakeholders.
- Finalise the employer impact survey and trial with selected employers.

What are the Market Driving Forces?

P.E.S.T.L.E Framework

Political	Economic	Social
Technological	Legal	Environmental

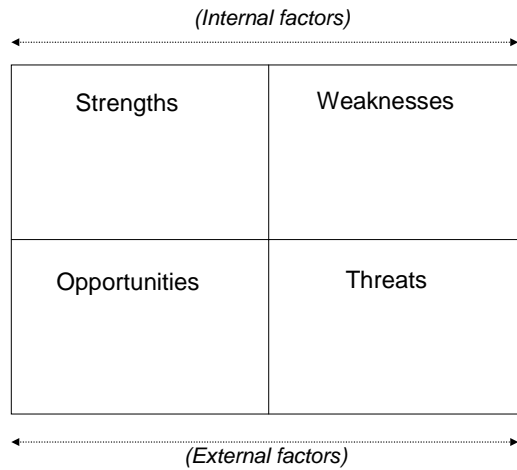
A classic analytical framework, contemporarily extended from 'PEST' to 'PESTLE'
Valuable check that your thinking has not been too narrow

Which is your main market driver?

Which else could be?

Which has the longest (time) effect?

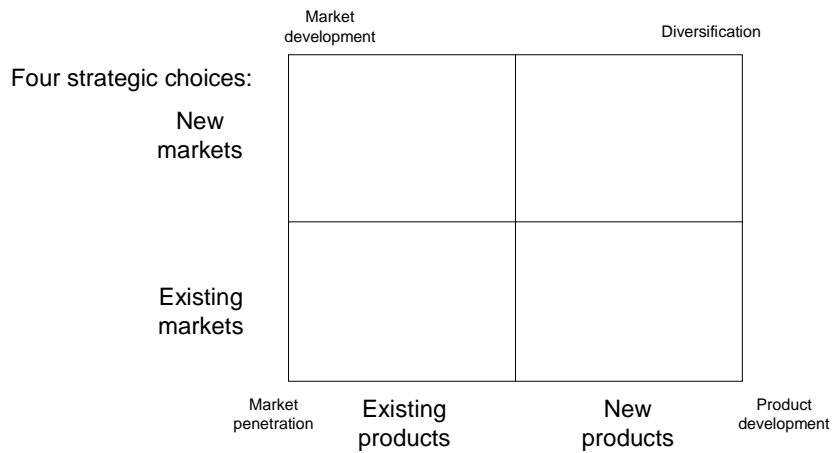
SWOT: Where are you now (and where is the competition)



Questions:

Can you recognise some of your activities in this diagram?

Where are you operating now, in this financial year (%£ by box)?



First published in the *Harvard Business Review* (1957) in an article called 'Strategies for diversification'.

Questions:

Can you recognise some of your activities in this diagram?

Where are you operating now, in this financial year (%£ by box)?

Where will the growth come from – Ansoff’s product / market matrix

Four strategic choices:

New markets

Market development

Diversification

Existing markets

Market penetration

Product development

Existing products

New products

First published in the *Harvard Business Review* (1957) in an article called 'Strategies for diversification'.

Questions:

Can you recognise some of your activities in this diagram?

Where are you operating now, in this financial year (%£ by box)?

Ansoff's four choices to achieve growth

Market penetration

Here we market our existing products to our existing customers. This means increasing our revenue by, for example, promoting the product, repositioning the brand, and so on. However, the product is not altered and we do not seek any new customers.

Market development

Here we market our existing product range in a new market. This means that the product remains the same, but it is marketed to a new audience. Exporting the product, or marketing it in a new region, are examples of market development.

Product development

This is a new product to be marketed to our existing customers. Here we develop and innovate new product offerings to replace existing ones. Such products are then marketed to our existing customers. This often happens with the auto markets where existing models are updated or replaced and then marketed to existing customers.

Diversification

This is where we market completely new products to new customers. There are two types of diversification, namely related and unrelated diversification. Related diversification means that we remain in a market or industry with which we are familiar. For example, a soup manufacturer diversifies into cake manufacture (ie the food industry). Unrelated diversification is where we have no previous industry nor market experience. For example a soup manufacturer invests in the rail business.

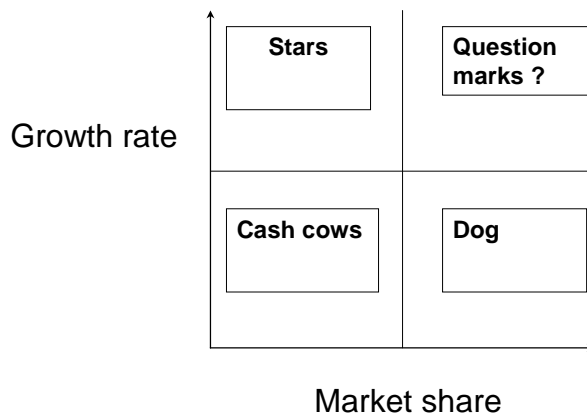
What opportunities for growth can you see in each of these?

- **Market penetration**
- **Market development**
- **Product development**
- **Diversification**

Pick your first choice area for growth:

- How could you do that?
- Does it feel right for the organisation?
- What new capabilities would the organisation need?
- Is it on mission?

The Boston Consulting Growth share matrix



Identify:

CASH COWS: clients that provide steady income but little growth

STARS: high potential growth areas, may become **CASH COWS**

?: require consideration as to future investment or to cut losses

DOG: do not provide profit but we've always done it therefore should we continue or move the resources into Stars or ?