Community Appeal: Assessing Opportunities and Threats to Providing Problem Gambling Services in Your Community

Problem gambling is often seen as a topic that is less important than other public health concerns. As such, gaining community support for, and awareness of, problem gambling services offered can be a daunting task. By considering the threats and opportunities to organizational successes that may exist in the communities served, problem gambling service providers can better target their efforts and resources. This session will explore the concept of environmental scanning. In addition, an example of a real-life scan will be shared with emphasis on the strategies used to meet the identified community needs.

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Outline

- Environmental Scan Defined
- Scanning versus SWOT
- Environmental Scan Steps
- Real-Life Scan Example

" A process that systematically surveys
and interprets relevant data to identify
external opportunities and threats.
An organization gathers information
about the external world,
its competitors, and itself"

Society for Human Resource Management, 2016

Environmental Scan Defined

*Historically used as a business management technique by which a business
gathered environmental information for a competitive edge.*

✓ Scanning is a process for identifying & assessing factors that shape the environment

✓ Data provides insight into the potential challenges and opportunities an organization may face and into the strategies needed to overcome/succeed

✓ Critical in the planning process

✓ Helps and organization understand how a changing world can impact the ability to realize the organization's vision/mission

Scanning Versus SWOT Analysis

- ✓ Environmental Scan = collecting information and data to gain understanding

- ✓ SWOT analysis = placing this information into categories to take action

- ✓ Information and trends discovered during the Environmental Scan process can provide the foundation for a SWOT Analysis finding.

- ✓ For example, if the Environmental Scan predicts that there will be a shortage of trained counselors, this shortage would likely be identified as a Threat in the SWOT Analysis.

Scanning Versus SWOT Analysis

- ✓ Strengths and weaknesses tend to be associated with the internal environment, or the situation inside the organization (operations, performance quality, infrastructure, governance, etc.).

  - ▪ *These also tend to be in the present.*

- ✓ Opportunities and threats, therefore, relate to the external environment – the situation outside of the organization.

  - ▪ *These tend to be posited in the future (competition, trends, political landscape, etc.).*

Five Future Spheres

Provide a format for organizing information into groupings

Econosphere
Gross national product, inflation/deflation, financial markets, prosperity/decline, unemployment, etc.

Sociosphere
Lifestyles, consumer activism, education, career expectations, demographics, values, role models, mass communications, population growth/decline, family formation, population shifts, family stability, life expectancy, birth rates, literacy, crime/drugs, etc.

Technosphere
Automation, productivity, new products, laboratory to market transfer, federal research and development, direction of technology development, patents, international technology transfer, etc.

Five Future Spheres

Provide a format for organizing information into groupings

Politisphere
Political alignments at the national, state and local levels, the justice system, environmental protection, tax laws, laws on hiring, discrimination, pay, foreign trade regulations, government stability, federal/state balance, international political conditions, etc.

Biosphere
Conditions in the natural environment that place limitations on an organization's freedom of action: pollution; depletion of natural resources, deforestation, global warming; threats to endangered species; erosion of farm land; salinization of rivers, etc.

Basics of the Scan

1. Identify participants and responsibilities

1. Conduct scanning activities
    ✓ *Five spheres*
    ✓ *Competitors*
    ✓ *Organization (now and future)*

2. Identify and analyze important issues and trends

3. Report results or select issues and trends to act on

4. Scan on a continuous basis