
Using Short-Form Potential Opportunity Analysis

Sometimes people become too focused on what can go wrong, rather than what can go better than expected. Opportunities to think about what could go better than expected and how you can capitalize on this abound, especially in everyday thinking. If you do not have the time to conduct a full Potential Opportunity Analysis, using a short-form will help you to develop a mindset that seeks opportunities and capitalizes on them.

Ask questions like:

- What could go better than expected?
- Why would that happen?
- What can I do to encourage it?
- How will I take advantage of it if it does happen?

For example, your supervisor calls you into a meeting to discuss planning the new prestigious task force. What positive things might happen? Perhaps you'll be given the opportunity to chair the task force. What would cause this to happen? Your supervisor is under the impression that your current project is organized and can easily be handled by someone in your department. What can you do to promote that impression? Take your latest project status report with you to his/her office. What will you do to capitalize on the offer if it comes? Ask to have the authority to select other task force members.

The purpose of Potential Opportunity Analysis is to identify the changes that will better the odds that opportunity will knock, and the actions that you'll be ready to implement if it does.

When you've considered the potential opportunities and identified actions to address them, consider documenting the key points from the Potential Opportunity Analysis in Excel worksheet.