# CONTENTS

## Chapter 1 - Why Does Business Analysis Matter?
- Defining Sustainable Competitive Advantage ......................................................... 7
- Using Analysis to Develop Sustainable Competitive Advantage ............................. 8

## Chapter 2 - Gathering and Using Information for Business Analysis ................. 9
- Competitive Intelligence vs. Market Research .......................................................... 10
- Information quality and quantity ................................................................................ 11
- Possible Sources of Information .................................................................................. 12
- The Next Step: Assessing Information Quality .......................................................... 15
- Representational and accessibility characteristics .................................................... 18
- Using Information to Support Decisions ..................................................................... 19
- Just do it... ..................................................................................................................... 20

## Chapter 3 - A Broad Understanding of the Business in its Environment ................. 21
- SWOT Analysis .............................................................................................................. 22
  - How to do SWOT Analysis ....................................................................................... 22
  - When to use SWOT analysis .................................................................................... 26
  - Why use SWOT analysis? ......................................................................................... 27

## Chapter 4 - Understanding the Business ............................................................... 28
- The McKinsey 7 S Model of Organisational Alignment ............................................ 29
  - The 7 S Model ........................................................................................................... 29
  - Seven Elements of Organisations .......................................................................... 30
  - A rounded picture ...................................................................................................... 33
- Identifying Potential Competitive Advantages .......................................................... 34
- USP analysis ................................................................................................................ 35
- Core competence analysis .......................................................................................... 37
- Value Chain Analysis ................................................................................................ 38
  - Porter’s Value Chain ................................................................................................. 38
  - Using the Value Chain to Analyse Activity .............................................................. 39
  - Prioritising Change ................................................................................................... 42
Chapter 5 - Understanding the Business’s External Environment

Porter’s Five Forces

Relying on Porter’s Five Forces

PESTLE Analysis

Making PESTLE Work for You

Scenario Analysis

A Five-Step Process

Challenge your assumptions

Using a variety of tools

Chapter 6 - Analytical Tools to Support Effective Marketing

The Boston and Ansoff Matrices

The Boston Matrix

The Ansoff Matrix

Customer Segmentation Tools

The Seven Ps of Marketing

The Right Tools for the Job

Chapter 7 - More Advanced Analysis: Behavioural Analysis

History and Definition of Game Theory

The Game Theory Matrix

Game Theory and Cooperation

Using Game Theory

Conclusion: From Analysis to Action

Avoiding Analysis–Paralysis
Much has been written and said about business strategy over the years, not least by the great Michael Porter. Why, then, would another book on business strategy be necessary? The *Skills You Need Guide to Business Strategy and Analysis* is not, however, *just another* strategy book. It is designed as a practical guide to give you the skills to understand your business, your market, and your competitors. It will therefore help you to position your business effectively in the market.

This book may be usefully read alongside the Skills You Need *Guide to Leadership*. As a leadership text, however, it is perhaps rather different from our other eBooks. New and established leaders may use it to learn useful new skills and techniques. Those at lower levels in organisations should also find it a helpful how-to guide to various business analytical techniques, as well as an important aid to understanding why business analysis matters for strategy.
Businesses around the world have long tried to develop something called sustainable competitive advantage.

This means having something that gives you an edge over your competitors, and that continues to do so. The concept can apply to both people and businesses but, in this eBook, it is largely only applied to businesses.

In this case, sustainable competitive advantage means something that your customers see as a long-term reason to buy from you rather than your competitors.

A crucial part of developing a sustainable competitive advantage is being able to identify areas where you have an advantage, however small. You can then build on that and develop it further.

An advantage may come from something that you do better than your competitors, or it may come from identifying a gap in the market that nobody has yet worked out how to fill. The key is to find those advantages and then exploit them to build yourself a unique place in the market, and in the hearts and minds of your customers.

To identify areas where you have an advantage over your competitors, you need to understand your business, your competitors and your market.

This is where business analysis comes in.
The full eBook is available at

www.skillsyouneed.com