



**Share4Rare**

**Tools & Templates**

**Identify & Plan Opportunities**

## Purpose

To be a successful advocate, you need to be continually innovating, and looking for opportunities to grow your network. Identifying and creating new opportunities to carry out your strategy is essential for achieving your organisation's goals.

This tool provides a framework for how to increase the efficiency of your organisation. Use this tool in combination with the SWOT analysis tool to uncover opportunities and validate your target audience.

## Identify opportunities

### Listen

The best way to learn is to listen, especially when it comes to map opportunities. What are their experiences on this? Their needs, wants, challenges and frustrations? What have they tried doing, but failed? What did they like or not? You can either do this via a formal interview, or an open conversation. Use the insights to further define your target audience persona's pains & gains.

### Benchmark

Make an inventory of your competitors and fellow advocates, and analyse their strategy. What are they doing (or not), and how do they do that? Analysing competitors will help you identify and develop opportunities to expand your reach.

### Trends & insights

Subscribe to industry publications, join patient groups, keep a sharp eye on politics and governmental changes and set Google alerts for terms in your field of interest, and follow other experts on social media. Immerse yourself and keep yourself up to date on the latest news and developments.

## Plan opportunities

### Enable resources

Map all available resources and implement them in your opportunity plan. This can be both financial or human resources, or social capital in the form of trust and communications. Keep in mind that a little can go a long way, especially when it comes to resources. Actively participating on social media platforms, live streaming, events and conferences, mails to newspapers and participating in radio and television programmes are all relatively cost-effective techniques to enhance exposure. The same goes for inviting decision-makers or other influencers for a discussion or conference.

## Lobbying & Negotiating

When you have chosen your issue, it's time to influence decision-makers and advance the topic by presenting a standpoint and debate with the opposition. Knowing who to address and how to do this is crucial. Lobbying can be done both formal (arranging a meeting) or informal (meeting them in the hallways or during events). Both require a high level of effort and expertise. Although an effective one, lobbying and negotiating opportunities can only be chosen if you acquired a deep knowledge of your target audience's motivation and needs.

## Campaigning

By running a series of actions or events, you create momentum and word-of-mouth to a certain topic. The scale of this campaign can be anywhere between local and global, as long as you can leverage the right resources. Find fellow advocates and set up a campaign together, joining efforts. For more information about campaigning, please see the chapter 'Campaigning ideas'

## Engage with the media

To help deliver your advocacy messages to a broader audience, the media can be used. Using and engaging in social media is only one of the methods. Activities such as writing a press release, holding press conferences and engaging journalists are effective ways to spread your message and create more awareness.

## Checklist

- Interview stakeholders
- Build up a network
- Competitors research
- Analyse different strategies
- Subscribe to newsletters & Google Alerts
- Scan through social media
- Map existing, identify missing resources
- Spread your message!

## References & Resources

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK195418/>

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/strategic-planning/identify-action-steps/main>

