Enables you to understand external forces in the areas of technology, culture, legislation, economics and the environment that impact your enterprise now and in the future.

Helps you take better middle- and long-term decisions. You can anticipate changes and long-term trends and develop a timely and adequate response.
Follow these steps to identify external forces, risks and opportunities and create actions in response.

**STEP 1: ASSESS EXTERNAL FORCES**

For each of the categories below, describe how your business is affected (use the 'Factors' section of the worksheet). Make clusters of similar factors.

**Technology and Infrastructure:**
- Technology (e.g. new technologies may become available that can help you (or your competitors) to deliver value to the customer
- Physical infrastructure (e.g. roads, ports, trains, electricity, telecommunications)
- Knowledge infrastructure (e.g. universities, R&D departments, activities of NGOs etc.)
- Financial infrastructure (e.g. collateral registries, credit reporting, mobile payments etc.)

**Institutions (rules of the game):**
- Laws and regulations
- Customs and traditions
- Politics

**Market and Economics:**
- Competitors (existing and new)
- Actors in the supply chain (upstream and downstream)
- Overall (macro-) economy (e.g. exchange rates, inflation/deflation etc.)

**Environment:**
- Environmental factors (e.g. climate change, pollution of resources etc.)
- Laws, rules, tax exempts, finance schemes related to environmental practice
- Environmental awareness of your customers (e.g., influence on buying behavior)
STEP 2: ASSESS RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES
For each factor, assess whether it is a risk, an opportunity or both. Write down how it affects your business.

STEP 3: ACTIONS
Write down the actions your business can take to mitigate the risk, or take advantage of the opportunity. Make a list of up to ten most desirable actions.
You are ready to start taking decisions about the mid- to long term to ensure that your business adapts on time to changes and continues to thrive in new circumstances.
Frequently, because technology, legislation, politics and other external factors are continually changing and impacting businesses. Can also be used when deciding how to respond to new developments that will impact a business. Results should be periodically reviewed.
To ensure actionable results, keep these guidelines in mind:

1. **PREPARE EXAMPLES IN ADVANCE**
   Each category of the worksheet should be pre-loaded with a detailed example. Otherwise, participants will find it very difficult to get started.

2. **THE EXAMPLES SHOULD ILLUSTRATE THE SCOPE**
   There is a balance to be struck between 'mapping everything' and 'mapping the obvious'. The examples should illustrate the degree to which general and specific factors should be mapped.

3. **CLARIFY USE OF TERMS**
   'Institutions' is often interpreted to mean only formally existing organizations. Explain (with examples) what a ‘soft institution' is (cultural norms, rules of the game).
TIME
2 hours to go through step 1; up to 2 hours for the other two steps
In a day workshop, for each of the sections of the worksheet used in step 1, you can take between 30 and 90 minutes, with a break to consolidate and discuss results.

MATERIALS
Large print, drawing or slide of the worksheet; pin board or whiteboard; workshop materials (markers, cards, lots of Post-its, etc.)
Keep a set of facilitator cards with the examples for each section of the worksheet and use these to help participants understand what to fill in during step 1.

TEAM
You will need one facilitator and one or more people representing the main parts of the client enterprise.
For larger groups: have people in smaller groups fill in each section and present the outcomes.

DOCUMENTATION
Work with Post-its so you can add and remove elements easily.
## CONTEXTUAL FORCES

Enables you to understand external forces that impact your enterprise now and in the future.

### Name of Enterprise:

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<th>Technology and Infrastructure</th>
<th>Factors</th>
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<th>Actions</th>
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