

To: Teresa Cook  
From: Evan Trimbur  
Date: February 9, 2025  
Subject: VLO SWOT Analysis

## Introduction

This memo provides a rhetorical analysis of Cara Nicolas' SWOT analysis for Village Life Outreach. Nicolas' sent the analysis via memo to Lora Anderson and Teresa Cook on February 13, 2022. This memo also satisfies the requirements for Assignment 1: Document Analysis for Introduction to Professional Writing (ENGL 2159).

## Rhetorical Analysis

The intended audience of the SWOT analysis was Lora Anderson and Teresa Cook; the memo could have been forwarded to other individuals within Village Life Outreach (VLO) or their partners in order to provide situational awareness. The SWOT analysis addresses strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within VLO at the time (February 2022) in order to help the organization make decisions.

**Ethos:** Nicolas established ethos throughout the piece with specific information regarding VLO and numerous references to support those facts. The information is clear and concise, which demonstrates Nicolas' professionalism throughout the memo. The only change that could improve ethos is specifically state Nicolas' credentials. A document from one of the eleven board members or a highly qualified consultant would have more ethos than an undergraduate writing the memo for a class assignment. However, Nicolas could have omitted her credentials for two reasons. First, Nicolas' credentials could harm her ethos rather than improve it. Second, if she has a close working relationship with Anderson and Cook, there would be no reason to provide credentials.

**Logos:** The memo heavily relies on logos. Nicolas attempted to, and mostly succeeded in, remaining objective during her analysis. When she made a subjective assessment (e.g., the effectiveness of VLO's website), Nicolas provided the reasoning for said assessment (e.g., the "clearly outlined mission, vision, and values"). Throughout the memo, Nicolas also references articles that provide expert perspectives in order to assert her assessments. These articles are hyperlinked in the memo, giving the reader easy access to the reference.

**Pathos:** Nicolas' uses of pathos are more subtle. A large portion of the pathos exemplified in the memo comes from the purpose: to help the company. The majority of the memo focuses on areas of improvement for VLO, which shows that Nicolas has a stake in the organization's success. This will resonate with the audience, who also want VLO to succeed.

## Conclusion

Nicolas' SWOT analysis is thorough and effective. She provides the reader with clear information that is actionable. By studying this memo, a professional writer can see ways to

appropriately apply rhetorical decisions without sacrificing clarity or professionalism. The memo is also a great example of memo formatting.