



BUS 2240.30

International Business

Discussion Groups and IQ Exercises

The IQ Discussion Group

Please use the D2L discussion group forums to help clarify any question you have about the assigned articles, textbook information, or the specific IQ question.

Intent for Online Discussions

Online discussion groups are intended to mimic in-class discussions where I call upon a student to present an answer to an IQ question along with his or her rationale. After listening to the presenter, in-class peers may ply the speaker with additional questions or give their own opinion.

Each IQ exercise will have a related D2L discussion group. Each online student will be expected to post a recommended answer with accompanying rationale to several specific exercise questions (as assigned by your instructor). Remaining students are expected to post a reply to the recommendations (for a specified minimum of questions.)

The recommendations and resulting replies (along with comments from your instructor) should form the basis for the choices you make about the final answers to the IQ exercise. Hopefully the discussion will either clarify any misconceptions about the IQ questions or solidify the rationale for a specific response choice.

A good recommendation or reply includes adequate rationale. Sometimes the rationale includes information for a source other than the article or the textbook. Including a hyperlink or pasting in the information from an outside source is very appropriate.

Example of a good posting with appropriate rationale...

I am also going to say C) it depends. If a western company knowingly contributes to the corruption, then they are part of the problem and just as guilty as the corrupt officials. The book says that companies should introduce new products, policies, etc....during times of stability, so that would mean staying out of these very corrupt countries.....but it also says "think globally, act locally". If a company can make an investment using culturally sensitive practices, and they do not contribute to the problem of corruption, they can actually help influence the outcome in a positive way, so it depends.

An example of a good posting that is a reply to another student's question...

Blake, I will see what I can do to explain this to you. I choose F and here is my reason. I am from a developing country where some areas do not have electricity or cell phone coverage, so if people in this area purchase TV sets and cell phones, they will not be able to use them because of the reasons I mentioned in an earlier post. This situation is not the fault of the person selling the TV or cell phone - it's because there is no electricity or cellular service in the consumer's home area, This is an uncontrollable factor affecting the consumer's use of the television and the cell phone.

An example of a good reply that refers to an outside source of information...

It appears that you folks still don't understand the difference between absolute and comparative advantage. Take a look at the numbers for world diamond production – I think it shows that no one country has a monopoly on diamonds. There are two major classes: gemstones and commercial and I'll tell you this much, there's healthy competition – check out the production statistics at this link...

[http://www.indexmundi.com/en/commodities/minerals/diamond_\(industrial\)/diamond_\(industrial\)_t5.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/en/commodities/minerals/diamond_(industrial)/diamond_(industrial)_t5.html)

A posting that includes the message, "I think its answer C" or "I agree with Ben" is valueless unless rationale or additional information is included.

About Instructor's Feedback in Discussion Postings

The learning in this class will stem from the creation and analysis of rationale, not simply identifying the correct response alternative choice. Anyone can guess the right answer in a multiple choice exercise. The IQ exercises aren't quizzes; they're a tool for virtual discussion, analysis, lecture and learning. Notice that I don't "test" in this class. I don't care if people can memorize the textbook terminology. I care about people applying business terminology and practices to the correct context.

If someone posts the right analysis...

Sometimes people are spot-on in their discussion postings. They identify the correct response alternative e.g. "A" and then they provide an excellent rationale. In the beginning of the semester, I may post a comment such early in the semester, such as "this is an excellent analysis, thank you."

I noticed in my online discussions that not all people are good at reading between the lines. Of course, with the comment given above, I am saying – "you've correctly answered the question."

Before midterm, I will remain silent with someone's correct analysis and let the discussion group members "do the talking." When someone is absolutely wrong and if no one else has corrected them, I will comment.

I may group a reply that is intended for several posters...

For the sake of efficiency, I may write a reply that is intended for several people. I'll indicate this in the subject line. E.g. "Response to Marquez, Smith and Kronholm."

I may also write a reply to those who chose a particular answer. E.g. "To those who chose response C"

If someone posts a mixed-message analysis...

Some people identify the wrong alternative "B" and then provide a rationale that doesn't support "B" but in reality, supports "A." When this happens, I usually reply to those people and tell them that their rationale doesn't match their choice for their given response alternative. If their rationale is good, I leave it alone. If their rationale is bad, I usually ask a question that should act as a guide to the right choice.

If someone posts the right answer but provides a flawed rationale...

Some people select the correct answer, "A," but provide flawed rationale as their support. If other students don't challenge the fuzzy logic, I will usually respond with a comment. If students do challenge the logic with a good response, then I leave it alone. Part of becoming educated is to be able to discriminate between good opinions and bad opinions. It's a learned skill.

Students need to ask me the right question if they want a response...

Here's a good question... e.g. "Widdel, is the rationale in Peterson's Q10 comment, good (or logical, or bad, or flawed)? I suspect it is because...."

I would respond with a direct answer. If after a thread of comments, someone asked me online, "Mark, are we on the right track with this series of comments?" I would respond with a direct answer.

Questions I won't answer directly include a) "Is my answer correct?" b) "What is the answer to this question?" or c) "Exactly where can I find the information in the article (or the textbook)?"

My comments attempt to lead a reader to the correct response, not tell the reader what answer is correct.

For example in a discussion group last semester I tried to lead the group to the best answer by commenting "Remember to factor in population size" after a string of comments that reflected fuzzy logic.

Some ignored my reply with this suggestion and continued to rationalize their answer without considering population size.

I countered with a new message that provided relevant population sizes and ended with the suggestion to "consider GDP along with these statistics." (Again trying to guide the readers to the right answer.)

Some responded, focusing only on population and ignored my reply with the GDP recommendation.

The good news is that one student took my cue and replied, giving the GDP statistics (Hooray!) Unfortunately, she drew the wrong conclusion.

Another student replied with an excellent analysis, factoring in both population and GDP into her conclusion. The rationale was spot-on!

About IQ Questions

IQ questions are written so that you must apply the chapter terms/principles to the given situation. You must select the best answer from several possibilities. Most questions are written with a goal of generating discussion and having you make a choice that is often not the most obvious answer.

The point value of the IQ exercises will increase during the semester as you become more comfortable with the discussion and answer process.

The Correct Answers to IQ Questions

The correct answers to IQ questions are released after the exercise has been graded. To see the questions, you need to review each question of the quiz.

More Details About the IQ Discussion Group

The discussion site will remain open so that class members can refer to postings before and after the completion of an IQ exercise.

Each week, points will be allocated for posting your questions and comments on the IQ discussion site.

The value of the IQ exercises will increase during the semester as you become more comfortable with the process and so does the corresponding point value for participating in the on-line discussion.