

IB Business & Management HL - Jump Start on IA!!

Due: September 10th

You will need to turn in the highlighted items listed below:

- **Company interview** – Select a company to be the subject of your internal assessment; conduct an interview with appropriate personnel to complete the first two sections of your IA. Turn in summary of your interview.
- **Research Proposal & Action Plan** – Using the sample on Blackboard and the directions below complete this section of your IA.
- **Introduction** – Using the sample on Blackboard and the directions below complete this section of your IA.

Company Interview → interview a parent, neighbor, boss or friend to find out about their company and identify:

A decision/change they are thinking of making (or have implemented in the last six months)

MANDATORY questions on page 3, you are not limited to these as you gather information.

Research Proposal & Action Plan

Heading	Notes
Research Question	Same as title. (1) Your research question must be forward looking rather than descriptive. (2) You must be able to research issue thoroughly enough to analyze issue using business tools and theory. (3) Your analysis must directly lead to recommendations for future action by management.
Theoretical Framework Rationale Key Areas of Syllabus	Rationale: list reasons you have chosen to do this proposed study, should be beneficial to the company (not because you have easy access to primary source.) Key Areas: please <u>thoroughly review</u> the syllabus for applicable areas.
Methodology Primary Research Secondary Research Business Tools and Theory	Primary Research: Briefly describe primary research to be undertaken. Secondary Research: Your paper <u>must</u> include secondary research; briefly describe what information you will need. Business Tools and Theory: Please list at least 3 different tools/theoretical frameworks you will use to analyze the primary and secondary data. How will these tools help you analyze the question. <i>Note: final version may include HL tools/theory</i>
Anticipated Difficulties	What problems might you encounter while conducting research? How will you attempt to solve?
Action Plan	Table format including date, activity & revisions.

Introduction

- Provide a **brief** background of the company and the products/services they offer.
- Summary of the issue you're examining and the reasons why it is important.

End this section with: This has led me to the following research question: Repeat your title.

Heading	Notes	Points/Comments
Rubric		
Research Question	Same as title. <u>(1)</u> Your research question must be forward looking rather than descriptive. <u>(2)</u> You must be able to research issue thoroughly enough to analyze issue using business tools and theory. <u>(3)</u> Your analysis must directly lead to recommendations for future action by management.	5
Theoretical Framework Rationale Key Areas of Syllabus	Rationale: list reasons you have chosen to do this proposed study, should be beneficial to the company (not because you have easy access to primary source.) Key Areas: please <u>thoroughly review</u> the syllabus for applicable areas.	10
Methodology Primary Research Secondary Research Business Tools and Theory	Please list at least 3 different tools/theoretical frameworks you will use to analyze the primary and secondary data. <i>Note: final version will include HL tools/theory</i>	15
Anticipated Difficulties	What problems might you encounter while conducting research? How will you attempt to solve?	5
Assignment Details	Formatting matches samples on Bb Word count on research proposal & action plan no more than 500 words	5
Introduction	Includes applicable information from the assignment directions & is no more than 350 words	20

MANDATORY interview questions

Be sure to take careful notes as you will be transcribing the interview to turn in with assignment!!

1. What does your company do - what are the major products and services provided?
2. Who is your primary target market/customer?
3. What are the main objectives of your company (i.e. vision, mission, long-term objectives)?
4. Who are the major competitors and how does the company differentiate itself?
5. Can you share some recent changes made in the company within the last six months and the reasons for the changes?

Consider sharing with the interviewee the purpose of the assignment so you can work together to determine a decision/change significant enough to allow you to complete the 2,000 word internal assessment.

6. In what ways will this decision/change improve the company?
7. If this decision/change stemmed from a problem the company was facing did they try to find any other solutions prior to implementing this one?
8. What are the potential risks in implementing this decision/change?
9. How do employees feel about this decision/change and how much power do they have in the decision-making process?
10. If there is a financial implication to this decision/change, do you have access to that information? Would it be something the company would be willing to share for my research paper?
11. Can you provide the names of 2 to 3 other people either in or connected to the company who can act as a resource in writing this paper?

(note: three primary sources are a requirement of the IA)

Sample of IA Topics from Past Papers

Business Organization and Environment

- Examine potential for opening a new location
- Examine potential for relocating a company factory or office
- Examine potential of converting from a sole trader or partnership to an LLC

Human Resources

- Outsourcing payroll management
- Improve company training program
- Methods to improve employee morale
- Introduce a telecommuting strategy
- Examine "flex-time" work possibilities

Marketing

- Introduce social networking into marketing mix
- Marketing strategy for new product or new company
- Examine potential new advertising platforms
- Examine products and recommend strategies to reinforce brand image & loyalty

Accounting and Finance

- Sources of finance decision – refinance an existing loan? Identify new idea for investing cash?
- Evaluate potential of new payment method (credit cards, online)

Additional Information:

Access to materials: As soon as Blackboard opens again in July, I will make the IB materials available from the IB Business Management SL course. In addition, you still have access to the subscription website: www.businessmanagementib.com.

Please make sure you carefully review the samples on Blackboard for formatting; the research proposal and action plan should be no more than 500 words and the introduction no more than 350 words.

Estimated time to complete: This assignment may take up to 5 hours to complete.

Grading: this will account as no more than 5% of your overall 1st quarter grade; late papers will be assessed according to South Lakes policy.

For questions over the summer: I can be reached via email at skbrownsword@fcps.edu. Please allow up to 72 hours for response as there will be days when I am traveling and have limited access to e-mail.

Additional teacher access... I will be holding a couple of drop in writing days at the end of the summer, if you want to get this done while in a room with me to answer questions, look for an e-mail once class lists become available.