

## **IB Command Terms – Categorized by Skill Level**

(For an explanation of this document visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g88IA57xu8>)

Command Term	Skill Level	Typical Marks per Question	IB Level Attained Upon Mastery	Definition	Business Management Example
<b>Define</b>	1	2	4	Give a clear and precise meaning of a given word, term or concept	<b>Define</b> the term “stakeholder”
<b>Describe</b>	1	2	4	Present the characteristics of a particular topic	<b>Describe</b> Company X’s corporate culture
<b>Identify</b>	1	2	4	Recognize and state briefly a distinguishing fact or feature.	<b>Identify</b> two reasons why the owner has chosen a particular method of investment appraisal.
<b>Classify*</b>	1	2	4	Arrange or order by class or categories.	<b>Classify</b> the range of products sold by line range and mix.
<b>Complete*</b>	1	2	4	Add missing information/data.	<b>Complete</b> the critical path diagram by calculating the earliest starting time and latest finishing time for each activity.
<b>Outline*</b>	1	2	4	Give a brief explanation and/or summary of the issues, principles, or arguments stated in the question.	<b>Outline</b> two advantages and disadvantages of working from home.

<b>Compare</b>	2	4	5	Describe two (or more) situations and present the similarities between them.	<b>Compare</b> the benefits of adopting LIFO with those of FIFO.
<b>Contrast</b>	2	4	5	Describe two (or more) situations and present the differences between them.	With reference to the impact on profit, <b>contrast</b> the FIFO method of stock valuation with the LIFO method of stock valuation.
<b>Distinguish</b>	2	4	5	Make clear the differences between two or more concepts/terms.	<b>Distinguish</b> between variable costs and fixed costs.
<b>Explain</b>	2	4	5	Describe, giving reasons.	<b>Explain</b> why company X has changed its pricing strategy.
<b>Calculate*</b>	2	4	5	Give a precise numerical answer.	<b>Calculate</b> the acid test ratio for company X in 2008.
<b>Comment*</b>	2	4	5	Write an explanation of, or commentary on, the information given in relation to a problem or issue.	<b>Comment</b> on the profitability, liquidity and efficiency of the firm.
<b>Construct*</b>	2	4	5	Present a variety of information in a diagrammatic or tabular form.	Based on the information given, <b>construct</b> a break-even chart for company X.
<b>Prepare*</b>	2	4	5	Put given data or information into a suitable business format.	<b>Prepare</b> a cash-flow forecast for company X for January, February and March 2010.

<b>Analyse</b>	3	6	6	Break down in order to bring out the essential elements, structure, any underlying assumptions and any interrelationships involved.	<b>Analyse</b> the impact of external opportunities and threats on the business strategy of company A.
<b>Examine</b>	3	6	6	Consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue.	<b>Examine</b> company X's present marketing approach in the light of changes in the external environment.
<b>Apply*</b>	3	6	6	Use an idea, principle or theory in relation to a problem or issue.	<b>Applying</b> Maslow's motivation theory, suggest a new rewards package for employees of company X.
<b>Formulate*</b>	3	6	6	Express precisely, clearly and in a systematic manner the relevant concept(s) or argument(s).	<b>Formulate</b> an appropriate promotional mix for company X.
<b>Interpret*</b>	3	6	6	Use knowledge and understanding to explain and, where appropriate, draw inferences from a given situation, problem or issue.	(Calculate and) <b>interpret</b> the value of the sales variance for XYZ Ltd.

<b>Discuss</b>	4	8	7	Offer a considered and balanced review of a particular topic. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by empirical evidence and sound argument.	<b>Discuss</b> how the introduction of an employee share-ownership scheme could affect motivation for employees of company X.
<b>Evaluate</b>	4	8	7	Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations of different evidence and arguments.	<b>Evaluate</b> the option of accelerating company X's overseas development through the use of franchising or joint ventures.
<b>Justify</b>	4	8	7	Provide evidence to support or defend a choice, decision, strategy or course of action.	<b>Justify</b> your reasons for introducing an extension strategy for product X.
<b>To what extent</b>	4	8	7	Evaluate the success or otherwise of an argument or concept. Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with empirical evidence and sound argument.	<b>To what extent</b> was the marketing strategy of company X successful?
<b>Advise*</b>	4	8	7	Offer suggestions/recommendations for a potential course of action.	<b>Advise</b> the human resources manager on the use of both monetary and non-monetary rewards to improve staff motivation at XYZ Ltd.
<b>Recommend*</b>	4	8	7	Recommend a suitable growth strategy for company X.	<b>Recommend</b> a suitable growth strategy for company X.

\* Command term specific to Business Management course

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**Top band descriptors from 2009 and 2010 mark schemes:**

Explain (Level 2)

- The response exhibits an accurate, specific, well-detailed explanation of the relevant issue(s) and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the topic
- There is an appropriate use of the appropriate terminology throughout the response.
- Relevant examples from the case study are given to support explanations within the response.

Analyse/Examine (Level 3)

- A balanced analysis/examination with accurate, specific, well-detailed knowledge and understanding of relevant issues, concepts, and theories.
- An analysis/examination that uses appropriate terminology throughout the response.
- Explicit references are made to the information in the stimulus material.

Discuss/Evaluate/To What Extent/Recommend (Level 4)\*

- A response with accurate, specific, well-detailed knowledge and understanding of relevant issues, concepts, and theories.
- A response that uses appropriate terminology competently throughout the response.
- A response that includes judgments and/or conclusions that is well supported and underpinned by a balanced analysis.
- Explicit references to the information in the stimulus material are made throughout the response.

**\*For an effective strategy on how to answer an 'evaluate' question please visit Ms. Leena Palekar's post**

**<http://www.tutor2u.net/blog/index.php/ib-diploma/comments/tips-to-write-evaluative-answers-the-inverted-y-model/>**

