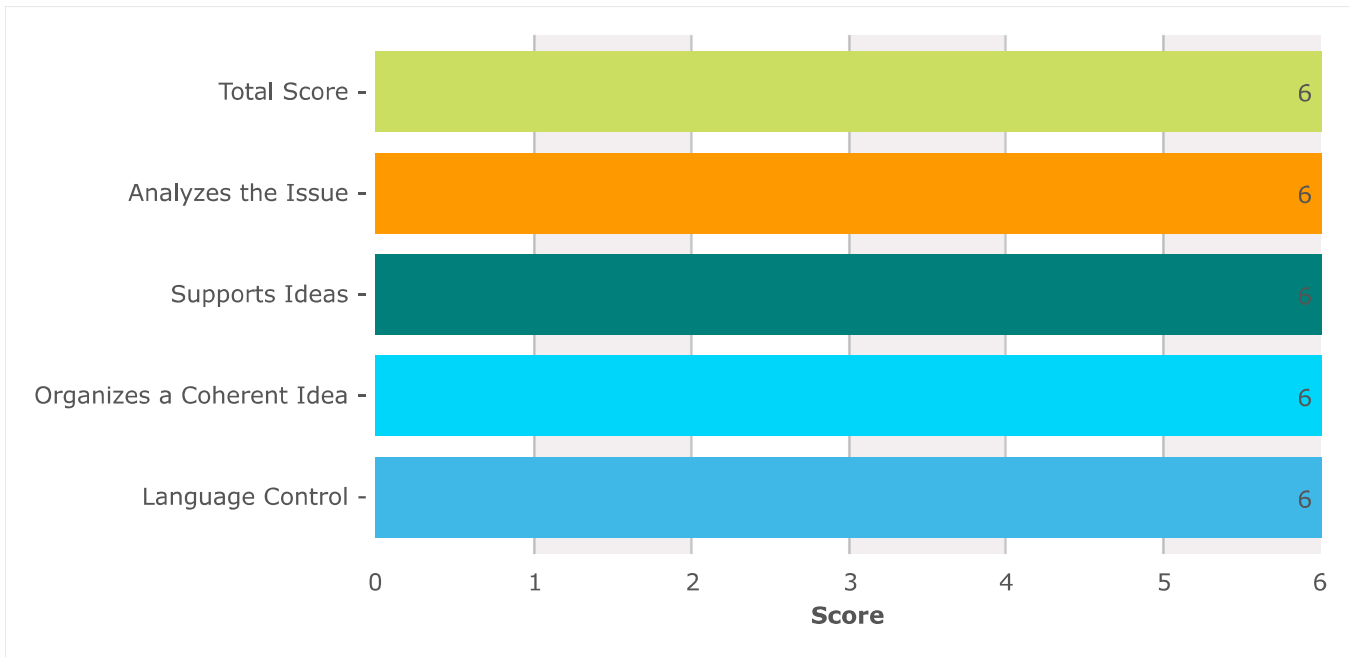


GMAT Official AWA Practice: Prompt #2

Lee Yuan Zhi

February 11, 2023



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GMAT Analytic Scoring Rubric for Analysis of an Argument						
Score	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rating	Fundamentally Deficient -a paper demonstrating fundamental deficiencies in analytical writing skills.	Seriously flawed -a paper demonstrating serious weakness in analytical writing skills.	Limited -a competent but clearly flawed critique of the argument, demonstrating some control of the elements of effective writing.	Adequate -a competent critique of the argument, demonstrating adequate control of the elements of effective writing.	Strong -a well-developed critique of the argument, demonstrating good control of the elements of effective writing.	Outstanding -a cogent, well-articulated critique of the argument, demonstrating mastery of the elements of effective writing.
Identifies and analyzes significant flaws in the argument.	Provides little evidence of the ability to understand and analyze the argument or to analytical writing skills. develop an organized response to it	Fails to show an understanding of and does not identify or analyze the main features of the argument	Does not identify or analyze most of the important features of the argument, although some analysis is present	Identifies and capably analyzes important features of the argument	Clearly identifies important features of the argument and analyzes them in a generally thoughtful way	Clearly identifies and insightfully analyzes important features of the argument

Supports the critique using relevant supporting reasons and/or examples.	Demonstrates no real ability to support ideas.	Provides little, if any, relevant support.	Provides some support for the main points of the critique, but that support is of limited relevance and/or value.	Adequately supports and explains the main points of the critique using relevant supporting reasons and/or examples.	Effectively supports and explains the main points of the critique using relevant supporting reasons and/or examples, and may show some persuasiveness.	Persuasively supports and clearly explains the main points of the critique using relevant supporting reasons and/or examples.
Develops a clearly organized and coherent response.	Provides no evidence of the ability to develop an organized response.	Does not develop ideas or is disorganized	Is limited in the logical development and organization of ideas	Develops and organizes ideas satisfactorily, but may not always connect them with transitions	Develops ideas clearly, organizes them logically, and connects them with appropriate transitions	Develops ideas cogently, organizes them logically, and connects them smoothly with clear transitions
Demonstrates control of language, including diction, syntax, and the conventions of standard written English.	Has severe and persistent errors in language and sentence structurecontains a pervasive pattern of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, thus resulting in incoherence	Has serious, frequent problems in the use of language and sentence structurecontains numerous errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that interfere with meaning	Uses language imprecisely and/or lacks sentence varietycontains occasional major errors or frequent minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics	Demonstrates adequate control of language, including diction and syntactic variety, but may lack syntactic variety-displays control of the conventions of standard written English, but may have some flaws	Demonstrates clear control of language, including diction and syntactic varietydemonstrates facility with the conventions of standard written English, but may have minor flaws	Demonstrates superior control of language, including diction and syntactic variety and the conventions of standard written English. There may be minor flaws

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Prompt

Read the statement and the instructions that follow it, and then make any notes that will help you plan your response. Type your response in the box at the bottom of the screen.

The following appeared in a memorandum from the development director of the Largo Piano Company:

“The Largo Piano Company has long been known for producing carefully handcrafted, expensive pianos used by leading concert pianists. During the past few years, however, our revenues have declined; meanwhile, the Allegro Musical Instrument Company introduced a line of inexpensive digital pianos and then saw its revenues increase. In order to increase Largo’s sales and in fact outsell Allegro, we should introduce a line of digital pianos in a variety of price ranges. Our digital pianos would be likely to find instant acceptance with customers, since they would be associated with the prestigious Largo name.”

Discuss how well reasoned you find this argument. In your discussion be sure to analyze the line of reasoning and the use of evidence in the argument. For example, you may need to consider what questionable assumptions underlie the thinking and what alternative explanations or counterexamples might weaken the conclusion. You can also discuss what sort of evidence would strengthen or refute the argument, what changes in the argument would make it more logically sound, and what, if anything, would help you better evaluate its conclusion.

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Response

The argument claims that incorporating digital pianos into Largo Piano Company’s product line-up will boost the company’s sales , leading to increased profit. Furthermore, it also asserts that customers will immediately take a liking to the digital pianos produced by the company as they will associate the digital piano’s with Largo’s reputation for producing high quality handcrafted pianos. Stated in this way the argument fails to mention several key factors, on the basis of which it

could be evaluated. The conclusion of the argument relies on assumptions for which there is no clear evidence. Hence, the argument is weak/unconvincing and has several flaws.

Firstly, the argument readily assumes that customers will immediately favour the digital pianos manufactured by Largo on the basis of Largo's reputation for making high quality handcrafted pianos. This is again a very weak and unsupported claim as the argument does not demonstrate any correlation between the quality of the digital pianos manufactured by Largo and its reputation for producing high quality digital pianos. Specifically, the argument should provide reasons as to why there is a strong correlation between Largo's ability to produce robust handcrafted pianos, and its capability to produce similarly highly serviceable digital pianos. To illustrate, Google, while adept at manufacturing good software that suits smartphones, is not in fact well known for producing a good operating system for handheld tablets. In fact, Google is primarily the reason why Apple has drastically a much higher market share than Android in the handheld tablet market. Hence, if the argument had provided evidence that there is a correlation between Largo's ability to craft quality digital pianos and its ability to create good handcrafted pianos, then the argument would have been a lot more convincing.

Secondly, the argument claims that Largo will see an increase in revenue simply because its rivaling company, Allegro Musical Instrument Company, saw an increase in total revenue when they began to sell inexpensive digital pianos. This is again a very weak and unsupported claim as the argument does not demonstrate any correlation between Allegro's and Largo's revenue and sales volume. Going deeper, there is a need to clearly know Allegro's modus operandi, particularly with regards to how it designs and manufactures the digital pianos, as well as the materials used in the production of these pianos. If Largo were to use a largely distinct method of producing digital pianos, it might end up selling low quality digital pianos which will not only have the opposite effect on the company's profit margin, it will also serve to stain its reputation. Besides, how Allegro markets its pianos, in addition to whether it has already acquired a significant market share are factors Largo should take into consideration before it begins to trade its own line of digital pianos. If the argument had provided evidence that Largo adopts sound practices in manufacturing digital pianos, then the argument would have been a lot more convincing.

Finally, several questions needed to be posed and examined under close scrutiny. For instance, why is it that Largo's revenue has been declining for the past few years? Could it be that it is adopting outdated methods in producing its line of handcrafted pianos? Or could there be a new player steadily gaining market share? If so, offering a distinct line of digital pianos could indeed boost company profits, but only if Largo adopts sound practices in doing so. Plus, there is also the question as to why Allegro Musical saw profit increases in such a short timeframe. In fact, this could very well be a short lived bubble fuelled by the novelty of the digital pianos. If customers were to lose interest in Allegro Musical's digital pianos, the company would very likely see a decrease in profit margin.

In conclusion, the argument is flawed for the above-mentioned reasons and is therefore unconvincing. It could be considerably strengthened if the author clearly mentioned all the relevant facts. In order to assess the merits of a certain situation/decision, it is essential to have full knowledge of all contributing factors. In this particular case, there is a need to uncover as to how Largo will design its own line of digital pianos , as well as the miscellaneous measures it will undertake to market them. Without these information, the argument remains unsubstantiated and open to debate.

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