

GMAT AWA Practice Paper 6

Sample Essay Prompt 1

The following appeared as part of an annual report sent to stockholders by Olympic Foods, a processor of frozen foods:

“Over time, the costs of processing go down because as organizations learn how to do things better, they become more efficient. In color film processing, for example, the cost of a 3-by-5-inch print fell from 50 cents for five-day service in 1970 to 20 cents for one-day service in 1984. The same principle applies to the processing of food. And since Olympic Foods will soon celebrate its 25th birthday, we can expect that our long experience will enable us to minimize costs and thus maximize profits.”

Sample Essay Prompt 2

The following appeared as part of an article in a trade magazine:

“During a recent trial period in which government inspections at selected meat-processing plants were more frequent, the number of bacteria in samples of processed chicken decreased by 50 percent on average from the previous year’s level. If the government were to institute more frequent inspections, the incidence of stomach and intestinal infections throughout the country could thus be cut in half. In the meantime, consumers of Excel Meats should be safe from infection because Excel’s main processing plant has shown more improvement in eliminating bacterial contamination than any other plant cited in the government report.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 3

The following appeared in a memorandum from the business department of the Apogee Company:

“When the Apogee Company had all its operations in one location, it was more profitable than it is today. Therefore, the Apogee Company should

close down its field offices and conduct all its operations from a single location. Such centralization would improve profitability by cutting costs and helping the company maintain better supervision of all employees.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 4

The following appeared in a memorandum issued by a large city’s council on the arts:

“In a recent citywide poll, 15 percent more residents said that they watch television programs about the visual arts than was the case in a poll conducted five years ago. During these past five years, the number of people visiting our city’s art museums has increased by a similar percentage. Since the corporate funding that supports public television, where most of the visual arts programs appear, is now being threatened with severe cuts, we can expect that attendance at our city’s art museums will also start to decrease. Thus some of the city’s funds for supporting the arts should be reallocated to public television.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 5

The following appeared in an announcement issued by the publisher of *The Mercury*, a weekly newspaper:

“Since a competing lower-priced newspaper, *The Bugle*, was started five years ago, *The Mercury*’s circulation has declined by 10,000 readers. The best way to get more people to read *The Mercury* is to reduce its price below that of *The Bugle*, at least until circulation increases to former levels. The increased circulation of *The Mercury* will attract more businesses to buy advertising space in the paper.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 6

The following appeared in a report presented for discussion at a meeting of the directors of a company that manufactures parts for heavy machinery:

“The falling revenues that the company is experiencing coincide with delays in manufacturing. These delays, in turn, are due in large part to poor planning in purchasing metals. Consider further that the manager of the department that handles purchasing of raw materials has an excellent background in general business, psychology, and sociology, but knows little about the properties of metals. The company should, therefore, move the purchasing manager to the sales department and bring in a scientist from the research division to be manager of the purchasing department.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 7

The following appeared in a research paper written for an introductory economics course:

“For the past century, an increase in the number of residential building permits issued per month in a particular region has been a reliable indicator of coming improvements to that region’s economy. If the monthly number of residential building permits issued rises consistently for a few months, the local unemployment rate almost always falls and economic production increases. This well-established connection reveals an effective method by which a regional government can end a local economic downturn: relax regulations governing all construction so that many more building permits can be issued.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 8

The following appeared in a memorandum to the work-group supervisors of the GBS Company:

“The CoffeeCart beverage and food service located in the lobby of our main office building is not earning enough in sales to cover its costs, and so the cart may discontinue operating at GBS. Given the low staff morale, as evidenced by the increase in the number of employees leaving the company, the loss of this service could present a problem, especially since the staff morale questionnaire showed widespread dissatisfaction with the snack machines.

Therefore, supervisors should remind the employees in their group to patronize the cart—after all, it was leased for their convenience so that they would not have to walk over to the cafeteria on breaks.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 9

The following appeared in a memorandum written by the chair of the music department to the president of Omega University:

“Mental health experts have observed that symptoms of mental illness are less pronounced in many patients after group music-therapy sessions, and job openings in the music-therapy field have increased during the past year. Consequently, graduates from our degree program for music therapists should have no trouble finding good positions. To help improve the financial status of Omega University, we should, therefore, expand our music-therapy degree program by increasing its enrollment targets.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.

Sample Essay Prompt 10

The following appeared in a memorandum from the vice president of Gigantis, a development company that builds and leases retail store facilities:

“Nationwide over the past five years, sales have increased significantly at outlet stores that deal exclusively in reduced-price merchandise. Therefore, we should publicize the new mall that we are building at Pleasantville as a central location for outlet shopping and rent storage space only to outlet companies. By taking advantage of the success of outlet stores, this plan should help ensure full occupancy of the mall and enable us to recover quickly the costs of building the mall.”

Discuss how well reasoned . . . etc.