



STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

“In the world of business, I come across several open-ended problems and projects every day that have no straightforward answer... the extended essay was my first true test of such a project.”

Kavan Shah
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IB Diploma Programme graduate Kavan Shah is currently CEO of Rosewood Furniture Manufacturers Ltd, a family business founded by his father and based in Nairobi, Kenya. As a student he often had conversations with his father about business and strategy. This led Kavan to pursue higher level economics and business studies in the DP before continuing to the University of Oxford to study economics and management.

Why did you originally decide to pursue an IB diploma?

The IB diploma offered me a great balance to pursue multiple interests and subjects. I was the type of student who got bored very fast but loved many things. I didn't have a career plan or degree choice until my final year in school. The IB diploma allowed me to keep my options open and think about careers in business, law or engineering.

What subject offered you the most inspiration as an IB student?

I was most inspired by the difficulty of higher level maths. It is the most challenged I have ever been academically. Talent alone was not enough for me to get a 7. Having underperformed for the first year and a half, I had to fully apply myself to the subject, analyze past papers, get help from my teachers and peers, and dedicate myself to beginning to use these concepts in a dynamic way rather than just memorizing formulae and methods. I continue to use this lesson in the way I approach tough problems today.

Are there skills you developed during the IB that you still use today?

In the world of business, I come across several open-ended problems and projects every day that have no straightforward answer and must be executed over a period of time with a thoughtful approach. The extended essay was my first true test of such a project. It taught me the value of continuous execution, innovative thinking and analysis. Moreover, learning to communicate ideas is a constant part of my life and a mini-thesis definitely helped here too.

What advice do you have for current IB students?

Running a business means that I am involved in all areas, including sales, operations, finance, HR and innovation. I am required to have a broad number of skill sets, including listening, analysis, creative thinking, effective writing, and group work—all similar to the skills you get in the IB. Lastly, I have to be able to take risks—IB is one such risk. It may appear more difficult than the standard A-level programme, but I strongly believe that unless people take such risks, they will never quite achieve their true potential.

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