

Change, Resistance, and the Organizational Immune System **4**

The human body has built-in immune systems that protect it from foreign objects, such as strange bacteria and viruses. Generally, this is a good thing. But the immune system can also fail, or misjudge the nature of the threat, or attack the body it is supposed to defend. Likewise, individuals and organizations often feel secure with the status quo; they feel they are in control. Change can threaten this and is often strongly resisted, even when resistance may be detrimental, if not fatal, to the organization. To survive in a competitive world, managements can take steps to create a culture that accepts or embraces change.

Ann Gilley, Marisha Godek, and Jerry W. Gilley

The Role of Frontline Employees in Building Sustainable Customer Service **11**

“Can companies . . . create sustainable customer service without the full commitment of their frontline employees?” Definitely not. Perceptions of service are mainly qualitative and vary according to the customer’s personality, previous experiences, and expectations. Nevertheless, a company may never get a chance to reverse an initial, unfavorable interaction between a frontline employee and a customer. Only brand loyalty may mitigate or erase a bad-service experience. A study of 42 customers (new, continuing, and lost) of a full-service vending company suggests how a company can — and must — be seen as “perceptive, responsive, accountable and responsible across the board.”

Ozgur Ekmekci

Predicting Acceptance of Electronic Medical Records: Is the Technology Acceptance Model Enough? **21**

While health care organizations recognize the advantages of electronic medical records, they often do not use them. Why not? Physician acceptance seems to be the heart of the issue, but what explains their willingness or unwillingness to go electronic? Two theories address the problem: Davis’s technology acceptance model and Ajzen’s theory of planned behavior. A survey of physicians based on both theories and analyzed using multiple regression analyses showed that both theories explain attitudes toward adoption of electronic records, but the theory of planned behavior was more important.

Elaine Seeman and Shanan Gibson

Using Social Networking Web Sites in Hiring and Retention Decisions **27**

There’s a whole new world out there in cyberspace, the world of Facebook and MySpace. Millions of individuals post information about themselves and interact with friends through these sites. Not surprisingly, employers have found the sites of interest in hiring and retention decisions, but using them can raise thorny legal issues. Although there have been some court cases, case law is far from settled. Does the site’s “owner” have a right to privacy? Could an employer be found negligent if it did not check out a current or prospective employee’s site postings? Following the constructive suggestions presented here may help employers navigate these largely unexplored waters.

Brian Elzweig and Donna K. Peeples

The Dynamism of Partner Selection Criteria in Franchising 36

With franchise operations, there's more than meets the eye. The criteria franchisors use to select franchisees vary over time and also depend on the franchisor's size at a given time and the type of business it is in. A quantitative study of 124 franchise firms in the United Kingdom shows the dynamic nature of the selection process and how it changes with size, age, and type of business. Overall, franchisors attach least importance to a potential franchisee's technical competence and most importance to trust and security, managerial and financial ability, and flexibility. However, these factors can vary significantly in importance over a franchisor's life cycle, particularly when they are six-to-eight years old and growing rapidly.

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