

**The View Changes at the Top: Resolving Differences in Managerial Perspectives on Strategy**      4

*Formulating a winning strategy for an organization is a complex process, and managers at different levels bring different viewpoints and priorities to the process. In particular, their perspectives may reflect whether they view management as an art or science, whether they emphasize consistency or flexibility, or whether they believe the process should be top down or bottom up. Ideally, all levels of management should share some common ground on strategy formulation, but a survey highlights where differences arise, especially from attitudes on these three philosophical areas. Understanding how differences arise can help top managers construct a more harmonious process.*

**John A. Parnell and Michael L. Menefee**

**Corporate Compliance with FASB and EITF: The Continuing Effects of Trade Promotion Allowance Income**      15

*Allowances from the manufacturer to the retailer to promote its goods have been around for a very long time. They can take various forms and may total more than 20% of the cost of goods sold. Retailers naturally have sought these allowances, especially after a 1984 IRS ruling let them be recorded as income. Bookkeeping became increasingly creative in the late 1990s leading to new accounting regulations in the wake of Sarbanes-Oxley, 2002. Have these regulations diminished trade promotion allowances? Apparently not. A study of the three years post-“Sarbox” finds such allowances have only changed in nature.*

**James E. Skibo**

**Determinants of Small Business Growth Constraints in a Sub-Saharan African Economy**      24

*In almost all economies, small businesses are vital for sustained growth. A high failure rate is a huge negative for an economy, especially a developing economy with limited capital. This is the situation in Nigeria despite government programs established — on paper — to help entrepreneurs. Structured interviews and a survey gathered data from almost 400 small businesses in Nigeria to find the principal constraints to success, including poor management, lack of capital, corruption, weak infrastructure, poor recordkeeping and so on. Unfortunately, many of the solutions are hostage to the political climate as well as educational progress.*

**John O. Okpara and Pamela Wynn**

**Cultural Barriers to Improved Organizational Performance in Saudi Arabia**      36

*Despite tremendous wealth from oil production, Saudi Arabia is considered a developing economy based on per capita GDP. As a member of the World Trade Organization since 2005, the long-protected Saudi economy is now facing international competition. Cultural and religious traditions have made the economy dependent on foreign labor, especially in vital, skilled technical and professional positions. Most Saudis want to be managers, not computer programmers or members of other professions. A survey of managers and others in the five leading Saudi companies illuminates often conflicting attitudes toward Western business methods that, most agree, would improve organizational performance.*

**Abdallah M. Idris**