

**Technology Discontinuity as Motivation for Corporate Alliances**      4

*Given the frequently short life cycles of today's technology, organizations face major decisions when a technology they own or need is superceded. To remain competitive, they must deal with such "discontinuities" in a way that is cost-efficient but also compatible with their overall business strategies. Alliances, as opposed to acquisitions or mergers, can be an option with many advantages. Understanding the four phases of the technology cycle (developed by Utterback) can help organizations analyze the problem and find the best solution. The phases are: fluid, transitional, mature, and discontinuities. If resources are available, an organization would do well to train managers for alliance teamwork before the alliance is needed.*

**Olutunde O. Barbarinsa**

**Corporate Governance in Emerging Markets: Barriers to Effective Reform**      24

*Building on a recent study by Okpara and Kabongo, this study investigated impediments to effective corporate governance in emerging markets using Nigeria as the example. Data were collected from 194 firms listed on the Nigerian Stock Market in the fields of banking, insurance, and manufacturing. Questions focused on protection of minority shareholder rights, the extent to which directors fulfilled their functions, the adequacy of existing regulation, and the degree of enforcement and monitoring of existing rules and regulations. Results suggest that Nigeria has adequate rules and regulations but weak or nonexistent enforcement; many directors are not competent or committed to good governance; minority shareholder rights are often ignored; and there is a general lack of transparency and disclosure.*

**John O. Okpara and Pamela Wynn**

**Tattoos and Piercings: Issues of Body Modification and the Workplace**      13

*The huge increase in tattoos and body piercings has caused workplace conflicts that, not surprisingly, have landed in the courts. In general, discrimination in employment decisions based on tattoos or piercings is not illegal unless the person with the "modification" is a member of a protected class, particularly a class based on religion. In litigation involving private employers — the focus of this article — employers have been largely successful so far. However, as trends and views change, employers should keep a close eye on decisions involving Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The authors offer nine suggestions for employers as they navigate the tricky waters of this particular societal trend.*

**Brian Elzweig and Donna K. Peebles**

**China's Textile and Apparel Industry and the Global Market: Five Competitive Forces**      33

*China's textile and apparel industry, the world's largest exporter in 2009, is a formidable competitor. Nevertheless, as production costs rise in China, some low-cost developing countries are making inroads in this export market. By analyzing this sector using Porter's five factors framework — threat of entrants and the determinants of rivalry, buyer power, supplier power, and substitution threats — the article assesses its outlook. The industry's "partnership" with the Chinese Government is key to maintaining this industry sector's competitive position.*

**Jack McCann**

**Humor, Gender, and Perceived Leader Effectiveness in China** 43

*Few things can make or break workplace relationships faster than appropriate or inappropriate use of humor. Using the multidimensional sense of humor scale (Thorson and Powell), a study was conducted of business students in Chinese university and seminar settings. Results compared with similar studies of humor in U.S. workplaces showed that positive humor had similar effects in China as in the U.S. for both genders, but revealed differences with negative humor. The latter is generally less appreciated by both genders in China. The influence of humor use by supervisors was also examined for both cultures and genders. Failure to understand the nuances of humor is no laughing matter for today's managers.*

**Wayne H. Decker, Hong Yao, and Thomas J. Calo**

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