



Research Newsletter

#7 SUMMER 2009

'Impact Factor' & 'Influence Factor'

Few are they in the academic field who can ignore the importance of 'impact factors'. The 'impact factor' is one measure of the importance of a scientific journal. It is calculated every year by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), published in the Journal Citation report (JCR), and exerts a large influence as it often serves as a criterion for assessment. A closer look at the etymology of the word 'impact' is worthy here. The Larousse 2009 dictionary reminds us that the word 'impact' is relatively new and did not appear in older dictionaries. In Latin, *impactus*, from *impingere*, means **to hurt**. **The impact is the consequence of a shock**, the result of one object hitting another. Over the last few years, the word 'impact' has tended to substitute, notably in the academic field, the old-fashioned word 'influence'. In Medieval Latin *influentia*, in Classical Latin *influere*, means **to flow**. **Influence is usually a continuous action** that something / someone exerts on something / somebody else i.e. the influence of climate on vegetation, the influence of TV on youth.

AGNES NAIRN's book *Consumer Kids. How Big Business Is Grooming Our Children for Profit* and her many articles on youth and consumption are among those contributions which combine both impact and influence. Indeed, numerous awards and worldwide media coverage are testimony to that fact. Let's hope that the publications presented in this Summer 2009 Research Newsletter relative to Key-Account Management (Catherine PARDO), Learning in Communities of Practice (Liliane ESNAULT) and Software Innovation (François SCHEID), will all exert such lasting influence that can not be reduced to a unique impact factor.

Enjoy the reading,

Philippe MONIN
 Professor in Strategic Management
 Associate Dean for Research



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Consumer Kids: how Big Business is Grooming our Children for Profit.
Ed. Constable Londres, 2009.

par **Agnès NAIRN** et
Ed MAYO.



Agnès NAIRN,
Professor in Marketing
at EMLYON Business School

Consumer Kids: how Big Business is Grooming our Children for Profit

Agnes, the London Times printed an extract from your book in a double page spread and it's been covered by all the other main newspapers, TV and radio stations. Why do you think there's so much interest?

Well, I think it's part of a general feeling of unease about childhood in general and marketing to children in particular. For instance, as one among many strong signals, the Children's Society published a report at the beginning of this year which attributes **children's unhappiness to a social value system which is based around greed, selfishness, individualism and materialism**. And the UK government responded by commissioning an independent review of "The Impact of the Commercial World on Children's Wellbeing". (I'm on the panel but I can't comment on our findings yet as it will not be published until end of June). So all in all, there is a concern about what business is doing to children.

And then there are more specific concerns rumbling on such as how advertising food and drink High in Fat, Salt and Sugar (HFSS) is contributing to the global obesity crisis. The French government already responded with the "manger bouger" initiative and in the UK HFSS TV adverts are banned around programmes of particular appeal to the under 16s. There are also concerns related to the sexualisation of children with the sale of pole-dancing sets and g-string knickers to little girls and Bratz dolls which some parents think look more like hookers than the more traditional princesses.

Whether or not we subscribe to this rather depressing view of contemporary childhood it's certainly true that lots of money is spent on and by children. In the UK we spend £100 billion a year on our children and that's very attractive if you happen to be selling toys, games, fashion, technology and even cars and holidays. "Pester Power" and "Nag Factor" are potent forces. So I think parents are keen to read anything that gives tips on coping with commercialism and those who work in the advertising industry wants to know what is being said that might result in more stringent regulation which threatens their businesses.

The Financial Times review of the book in May said "it is full of shocking facts." What were the most shocking things you found in your research for the book?

Two things stand out. First is the use of children as "Brand Ambassadors." This is where corporations (through market research agencies) recruit children to advocate brands to their friends. We found a campaign where Mattel gave 7 year

old girls Barbie MP3 players along with strict instructions to take the MP3 everywhere (school, ballet, brownies, parties) and to photograph their sales efforts. They also had to create blogs for the product and encourage their friends to sign up to the Barbie website. The harder they worked – the more gifts they got. The children's parents had agreed to their children taking part, but most people we talked to found the idea of 7 year olds effectively working on commission for large brands rather distasteful.

The second area for concern is online advertising and marketing. Children are now called the "digital natives" as they have grown up with the internet, whilst their parents - the "digital immigrants" are struggling to keep up. This means that children are exposed to a lot of very poor practice because their parents, teachers and even the regulators can't keep pace with developments. One problem is that many sites which kids love (e.g. games and social networking) are designed with a more general audience in mind, so the adverts served up are often totally unsuitable e.g. gambling and intimate dating. We also found that children had to give rather a lot of information about themselves in order to access part or all of a site. As the behavioural targeting industry grows, guaranteeing the privacy of children on the internet is becoming a real issue.

Another internet issue is the blurring of the line between content and commercialism. On TV it's easy for even very young children to identify an advert - in France the requirement to show the words "PUB", plus the distinctive tune makes it particularly clear. But online it is often impossible to tell what's designed to entertain and what is designed to persuade. In fact only 37% of the online ads we surveyed were labelled and we found that even so-called "savvy" 15 year olds boys were not clear that the point of advergames, product placements (illegal on British TV but seemingly OK on the internet), social networking homepage "skins", seeded blogs or viral messages were designed with the primary purpose of building brand equity and making sales. This raises some fundamental issues about fairness and has quite far reaching implications for future regulation of marketing to children.

Advertising fairness is an issue you raise in your recent article "Who's Messing with My Mind?" in the International Journal of Advertising. It has created rather a lot of controversy too. Can you tell us a bit about this?

Yes. Public policy in both USA and Europe has addressed the question of fair advertising to children by seeking to establish the "magic age" at which children are able to understand the persuasive intent of advertising. It is commonly assumed that older children are less vulnerable



to advertising because their cognitive capacities develop over time to gradually equip them with coping skills or what is often called “cognitive defence.” Most of the research informing current regulations and codes was conducted in the 70s and 80s on TV adverts and it concluded that it is “fair” to advertise to children above the age of 12 or so. However, these underpinnings are being challenged by a rapidly growing body of empirical evidence which is showing quite clearly that in to-day’s media environment older children (presumably with their cognitive defences in place) are just as susceptible to advertising as younger children below the “magic age.”

These new findings from neuroscience have uncomfortable implications for the advertising industry. Firstly it knocks on the head the CSR campaigns from leading children’s brands which claim the moral high ground on the basis that they do not market to the under 12s. This age limit appears to be irrelevant in the digital age. In fact, neuroscience also tells us that during the teen years developments in cognitive control are seriously disrupted (as anyone who lives with a teenager will testify!) So the over 12s may actually be more vulnerable to emotional ads than 10 year olds. Secondly our knowledge of implicit persuasion begs questions about the fairness of certain marketing techniques targeted at adults as well as children. Indeed, the *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing* devoted a special edition to the ethics of “stealth marketing” to adults at the end of last year. This could have a very serious impact on the industry. So it’s no wonder that the article has met with some resistance.

So what needs to be done next?

Well, I think we need a program of empirical research with both children and adults to continue building on our knowledge of how implicit persuasion works, whether it can be overcome, by whom in what circumstances. We also need governments from USA and Europe to tighten up guidelines for marketing to children online and to harmonize these globally. And finally, we need to listen more closely to our children. We talked to 3000 kids in the research for our book and they made the most sensible suggestions of all. They asked companies for 3 things: *respect, honesty and protection*. *Not bad guidelines for contemporary ethical marketing*.

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Sample of Press Coverage (Times Magazine, BBC and Financial Times)

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<http://news.bbc.co.uk>

RESEARCH
NEWSLETTER
Summer 2009

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Liliane ESNAULT,
Professor in Information
Systems Management
at EMLYON Business School

Palette

Liliane ESNAULT, the PALETTE project is just finished after three years of work. What were its main goals and characteristics?

PALETTE - Pedagogically sustained Adaptive Learning through the Exploitation of Tacit and Explicit Knowledge - was a project funded by EU (Information Science and Technology, 6th framework), which gathered 14 institutions from 7 countries and 70 researchers representing over 1000 person-month. It lasted 3 years with the overall budget funding close to 6 M€. About 12 to 14 communities of practice were associated to the project, in different domains: higher education, trainers training, nurses, associations of professionals, consultants, learning communities, etc. and the project had two main goals: building knowledge about communities of practice (how they live, work and learn); and developing interoperated services to sustain the functioning of communities of practice and enhance their learning and development

Why such an interest in communities of practice?

Communities of practice have been the subject of many recent studies and research, since Wenger's book in 1998 started to put the concept in the front page. Though some could think they are no more than networks of professionals as many already existed before, we think that communities of practice embed some distinctive features that promote them as unique places to unearth, sow and cultivate knowledge, competencies and innovative practices. A community of practice will gather professionals who not only share a common practice, but also the strong will to improve, develop, and spread it among an always larger community. Members of a community of practice are animated by the urge of having others benefit from the enhancements that spring out the continuous exchanges and collaboration taking place among themselves. It is in no way a place to conserve knowledge or status or whatever advantages that a professional situation could provide with. It is rather the opposite: it is the place to perpetually question, confront, stir up and put to test ideas, behaviours, know-hows, reputations and beliefs.

Communities of practice are of particular interest when gathering professionals whose job is either emerging as a new one or rapidly evolving under external circumstances (innovation, technology, economic constraints, organisational issues, etc.). In such cases, one cannot expect to learn from formal training, because the knowledge is not settled enough to produce courses or even relevant books. Thus, the learning comes mostly from sharing with peers, reflecting upon each others' experiences, gathering, representing and formalising different situations, the appropriate behaviours, and also the possible mistakes of failure from which to learn. Communities of practice enable people to gather, even if they belong to different companies and/or institutions, on a

basis of trust, confidence, and reciprocity. They are generally strongly encouraged by the hosting structures, as a mean to increase the value created for the company by the professionals engaged in them, by developing their competencies and motivation, but also as a mean to sustain cooperation and collaboration between companies, to develop networks at different levels.

How did you work to handle this multidisciplinary and complex project ?

Well, the successful unrolling of the PALETTE project and the quality of findings and outcomes is mostly due to the conjunction of four factors:

- the choice to work with a dozen of real life communities of practice, scattered among different areas of interest, and displaying a full range of different practices and behaviours;
- the choice to develop a broad fan of software elements that covered some of the key interest of communities of practice members regarding their main activities, and moreover to provide them as interoperating services accessed through widgets within a customisable interface;
- the choice of a participatory design based methodology and organisational process, relying on a rich scenarios approach, permanently improved all along the project and enabling a strong commitment of all the stakeholders throughout the project phases;
- the choice of a longitudinal, formative evaluation process, which supported a permanent reflexive and self-analysis attitude among the project members and enabled to successfully pilot the project through the pitfalls that are inherent to such a complex organisation.

From a research point of view, what are the main lessons learnt from these three years of collaboration?

The first and most prominent point, for me, was the richness and difficulty of implementing a deep collaboration across disciplines and across interests. The project gathered researchers coming from education sciences and computer sciences, and in the computer sciences, several teams coming from very different disciplines, such as multimedia authoring, knowledge management, intelligent document management, semantic web, rich user interfaces, open source architectures, graphic representations, awareness and decision making support, etc. In another dimension, the project was a place for collaboration between the final «users» (the communities of practice), the researchers (both in organisational, learning and technical disciplines) and a new kind of «interface elements», the mediators and the scenarios, who enabled, facilitated and supported the participatory process and without which the project would not have achieved its goals.

A second point is the awareness of the increasing role played by communities of practice in a large number of domains,

and their ability to fulfil the aspirations of professional in enhancing their abilities and skills, in developing their networks and even in nurturing friendly relationship with peers.

In the same time, the development of a new range of handy technologies, based on the Web 2.0 culture and principles, and the use of which is facilitated by the belonging to the Open Source standards, proved that there is a real possibility to help people in communities of practice achieve their daily tasks and activities.

The use of Participatory Design, Actor network Theory and a scenario based approach to implement them was definitely, to my opinion, a key success factor for the project. One of the key word in PALETTE is «interoperability». It was mostly used, at the beginning, to speak about the way the different tools and services developed were «integrated» in the users' portal. But it also describes well the way the different partners, teams and disciplines operated during the project, with a constant flexibility and open-mindedness

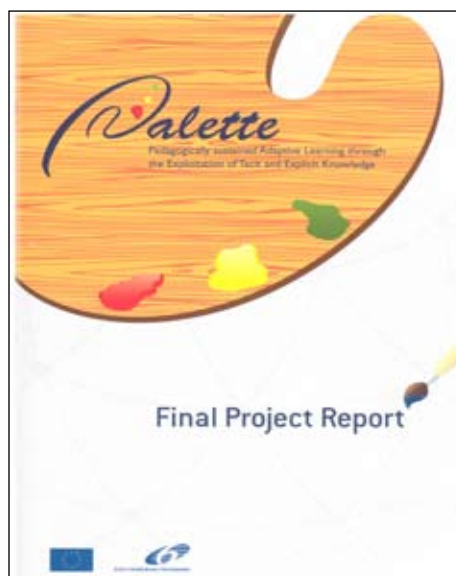
What was the role played by EMLYON in this project?

EMLYON was a full partner of the project. Eventually, the project represented 36,5 person-month for EMLYON for a total grant of EU around 210 K€The Gate-CNRS, also located in Ecully, was another partner. Along with doctoral student Naïma CHERCHEM, who joined for the second half the project, we represented EMLYON. The role of EM LYON was centred around three aspects:

- the possibility to bring into the project communities of practice coming from the company's side. The main community was represented by ADIRA (Association pour le Développement de l' Informatique en Rhône-Alpes),

who gathers more than 800 members, professionals in the IT sector, and some other CoPs derived from Adira (such as a community of consultants in DTalents);

- the interest, both of me and one colleague in Gate-CNRS, Romain Zeiliger, in Participatory Design methods and Actor Network Theory; we were the two «pillars» of the introduction of the methodology in PALETTE, though we were not the only ones implied in the development and implementation of the methodological elements;
- an experience, from a previous European project, in the development of learning resources according to a comprehensive pedagogical framework, that was used in the work package in charge of developing learning resources about the different elements of the project; these learning resources are available from the project website <http://palette.ercim.org>.



Congratulations to...



January 31st 2008, **Saulo DUBARD-BARBOSA** defended his doctoral dissertation, entitled : *La perception du risque dans la décision de création d'entreprise*.

The members of the Committee: Pr. Karim MESSEGHEM (Université d'Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse), President, Prs. Frédéric DELMAR (EMLYON Business School), Thierry VERSTRAETE (Université Montesquieu bordeaux 4) and Jacques MARCOVITCH (Universidade de Sao Paulo) External Examiners, Pr Jean-Claude CASTAGNOS (UPMF), Internal examiner, and Pr. Alain FAYOLLE (EMLYON Business School), thesis supervisor, awarded the highly honorable mention *summa cum laude*. A few months later, June 16th 2009, Saulo DUBARD-BARBOSA received the prize for the best doctoral thesis defended in France in 2008 in the field of entrepreneurship, from the French-Speaking Académie de l'Entrepreneuriat & National Foundation for Studies and Research in Management (FNEGE) : congratulations!

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GUENZI, Paolo, GEORGES, Laurent, & PARDO, Catherine (2008). The impact of strategic account managers' behaviors on relational outcomes: An empirical study. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38 (3), 300-311.

PARDO, Catherine & IVENS, Björn Sven. 2008. Key-account-management in business markets, an empirical test of common assumptions. *The Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 23(5): 301-310.



Catherine PARDO, for years now your research has been dedicated to the detailed analysis of Key Account Management. Where does this kind of passion come from ?

I don't know whether passion is the right word, though... In the early 90s, I had started my career as an assistant at the IRE (Institut de Recherche de l'Entreprise). Its director, Jean-Paul Valla, had identified the topic of KAM as an emerging though widespread issue among several industrial companies, which were partners to the Institute. To be honest, the KAM label or word was not used by our partners. Rather they framed a managerial issue in the following way: some customers were presenting common characteristics (size, geographical dispersion, centralized purchasing, etc.) that called for a new way of thinking their management. In retrospect, I would say that two things appealed to me at that time. First, I would be able to initiate my doctoral studies on a new and emerging topic. One should remember that, at that time, even though the practices related to KAM were well established in the USA (since 1964, an association of practitioners exists in the US, called SAMA Strategic Account Management Association), they remained poorly understood and investigated academically. In Europe, the situation both practically and academically was in embryonic stages. Therefore, there was this spirit of discovery and the two sides of it: a huge constraint due to the paucity of extant academic work, yet that strange feeling of freedom. The second captivating aspect of the KAM was to be found in the project associated with the object. The early insight: approaching the KAM through the function of the key account manager, then through the role of the key-account team, would bring in that part of 'humanity' that was so important to me!

Your work combines quantitative analyses and qualitative investigations, academic articles and more applied books. What is more fun for you (?!)

I like you mentioning fun & pleasure while referring to my research, because it is truly an important driver. Very sincerely, I am by nature and also by competence more of a "qualitivist". My earlier work on KAM was built on a material drawn from hundreds of qualitative interviews run in several industrial corporations. This methodological approach of course fitted nicely with the emerging property of the research topic. However, beyond that obvious methodological fit, it also echoed my own personal preferences that, to make a long story short, were not inclined towards the intense use of SPSS or PLS. Over the last few years however, collaborations with 'quantitivist' colleagues threw a new light on the topic. This has been the case with the two papers related to the relational behaviors of

KA managers and the very nature of the KA relation. To my very own surprise, it is thanks to these collaborations that I discovered the creative potential of quantitative approaches. Notably, several results based on quantitative designs turned to nicely complement earlier results that I obtained with my very qualitative design of the early 90s. And if I add that I especially value collaboration in research as I truly believe research to be a collective venture, then you understand that my answer to your question is far from easy. If I may say so, eventually, two kinds of pleasure, of the same intensity but so different... And as to the balance between fundamental and applied research, I would say that translating is always fun for me. There is nothing new there, but it remains a true source of improvement to talk both to fellow scholars and managers.

Over the last 15 years, what major changes did you notice relatively to KAM and related practices, and what are the most likely trends to expect?

Very clearly, we observe refinements at many levels. Many KAM systems have been implemented to manage 'large accounts' rather than 'key accounts'. In other words, many KAM programs were nothing but slightly more sophisticated portfolio management tools, which – simply said – aimed at adopting a special treatment with large customers. In brief, the motives to implement KAM systems are now more fine-tuned and detailed with a dynamic perspective in mind. Organizations implement KAM systems not for reasons relative to the characteristics of the customers. Rather, they bet that the value created by the supplier-KA relation will be larger than the value created with a more traditional system. A second refinement has to do with the nature of what truly happens during those relations. We have worked a bit on the idea of value configuration, and it seems that those relations 'create possibilities'. Finally, a third refinement has to do with the organizational underpinnings of KAM. KAM as a distinct object of scholarship only exists because it led to the creation of a new function: the key account manager, who him(her)self develops specific practices. The question of the true nature of that function (commercial? marketing? strategic?) remains open (and hotly debated), hence the continuous appeal of that field of research!

And tomorrow ?

Far from being a managerial fad as it was sometimes considered in the 90s, this KAM object retains much of its potential for new research. Directly, as with the three evolutions that I just mentioned. Currently, we – some colleagues and I – have started to discuss another topic: that notion of key relations makes sense to customers, sure, but also to suppliers and possibly alliance partners. The idea of a concept of « keyness » as an attribute to certain relations and its consequences in strategic terms, is one among many interesting research avenues.

Conferences and Workshops

- **The 2nd European Workshop in Business to Business Marketing** took place June 19th-20th 2009. Organised by Andreas EGGERT (University of Paderborn), Björn IVENS (University of Lausanne), Wolfgang ULAGA (HEC Paris) and Catherine PARDO and Robert SALLE (EMLYON Business School), it provides a platform for business marketing researchers and teachers to present their work and exchange ideas on the most recent trends in business to business marketing. The workshop format is designed to maximize interaction among participants and promote the formation of joint research and publication projects. More on <http://www.b2bworkshop.com>

- **The First International Conference on “creative thinking in ethics, justice and organizational behavior”** took place July 20th-21st 2009 at EMLYON Business School. Organized by Russel CROPANZANO, University of Arizona, Thierry NADISIC, EMLYON Business School, and Chris BELL, Schulich School of Business, York University, it aims at encouraging European and Non-European scholars to bring together diverse perspectives on ethics, justice and organizational behavior and providing a unique opportunity to present and discuss new conceptual work.

The theme of the conference was *Fairness for all the stakeholders?* The current crisis has generated widespread interest in ethical and unethical behaviors in organizations and justice from the perspective of many of their stakeholders: not only the employees or the customers but also the state, the suppliers, the shareholders, the financial institutions and the mere citizens as political actors in a democratic society and as belonging to a natural environment. Creative theoretical papers and papers with only preliminary data were given first priority.

Please contact Thierry Nadisic for any information: nadisic@em-lyon.com



Thierry NADISIC,
Professor in Human Resources
Management at EMLYON
Business School

Reference

Thierry NADISIC. 2008. *The Robin Hood effect: Antecedents and consequences of managers using invisible remedies to correct workplace injustice*, p.125-153, in Stephen W. Gilliland, Dirk D. Steiner & Daniel P. Skarlicki. Justice, Morality and Social Responsibility. Information Age Publishing.

Congratulations to...



February 27th 2009 at Ecole Polytechnique, **François SCHEID**, Professor in Marketing at EMLYON Business School, defended his doctoral dissertation entitled «*The role of lead-users in radical innovation: the case of software innovation*» (*Le rôle des premiers clients dans la conception d'innovation radicale : le cas du logiciel*).

The members of the Committee: Vincent NIBART (CEO TEMIS), Pr. Valérie CHANAL (Grenoble II) and Mathieu DETCHESSAHAR (Nantes University), External Examiners, Pr. Florence CHARUE-DUBOC (CNRS), Thesis Supervisor, and Pr. Robert SALLE (EMLYON Business School), President, awarded the highly honorable mention *summa cum laude*.

Recently Published Research

Books

Reference

Pierre-Yves GOMEZ
I.F.G.E. Director
Professor in Strategic
Management at
EMLYON Business School

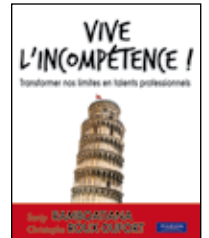


**L'entreprise dans la démocratie :
une théorie politique du gouver-
nement des entreprises.**

par Pierre-Yves GOMEZ and Harry
KORINE
Ed. de boeck, 2009

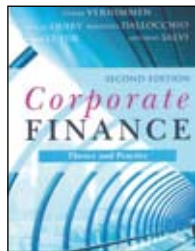
Reference

Christophe ROUX-DUFORT,
Professor in Strategic
Management at
EMLYON Business School



Reference

Antonio SALVI
Professor in Finance at
EMLYON Business School



**Corporate Finance, Theory and
Practice 2nd edition.**

Pierre VERNIMMEN, Pascal QUIRY,
Maurizio DALLOCCHIO, Yann LE FUR
and Antonio SALVI
Ed. Wiley, 2009

Vive l'incompétence !

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Christophe ROUX-DUFORT and Sanjy RAMBOATIANA
Pearson, 2009

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Franck MISSONIER-PIERA
Professor in Accounting at
EMLYON Business School



**Comptabilité financière en IFRS,
2nde édition.**

Wolfgang DICK and Franck MISSO-
NIER-PIERA
Ed. Pearson Education, 2009

Articles

**Intuition Versus Analysis? Testing Differential Models of
Cognitive Style on Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and the
New Venture Creation Process**

Jill KICKUL, Lisa GUNDRY, Saulo DUBARD-BARBOSA, Laney
WHITCANACK
Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 2009

**Demand- and Supply-Side Agglomerations, Distin-
guishing between Fundamentally Different Manifesta-
tions of Geographic Concentration**

Timothy FOLTA, Brian McCANN
Journal of Management Studies, 2009

Learning, Hubris, and Corporate Serial Acquisitions

Nihat AKTAS, E. DE BODT et R. ROLL
Journal of Corporate Finance, Forthcoming 2009

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Fabienne AUTIER
Professeur in HRM at
EMLYON Business School,



**L'anti-bible des Ressources
Humaines.**

Fabienne AUTIER
Pearson Village Mondial, 2009

Credits

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