

GRADING GUIDE
FALL 2012 FINAL EXAM
DO NOT COPY OR TRANSMIT. FOR YOUR EYES ONLY.

INSTRUCTORS: This key is our summary of the preferred answers to the exam questions. In general, a student should get full credit only when her/his answer tracks with the preferred answer herein. But...we expect you to exercise independent judgment when a student's answer deviates in a spectacular way, arriving at a different conclusion through logical and skillful application of News Literacy concepts. -dr.

PART I: Video Deconstructions (3 videos, 45 points)
 Analyze the TV news clips based on our guidelines and discussions. Be aware that any story can have strong aspects and weak aspects or elements of both, but in the end a news consumer has to make a judgment about the story.

Video #1 “New Cellulite Remedy” (15 points)

<http://www.myfoxny.com/story/18899856/laser-cellulite-procedure>

1. In what way does this reporter “open the freezer” or fail to do so? (2 points)

GRADERS NOTE: THERE ARE SIX CHECKPOINTS ON A SOURCE EVALUATION. FOR EACH SOURCE EVALUATED, STUDENTS EARN UP TO THREE POINTS. YOU CAN PUT MORE WEIGHT ON A CORRECT OVERALL CONCLUSION AT YOUR DISCRETION.

**Opens the freezer by seeing an actual patient and by comparing the before photo to the patient’s actual leg.
 Fails to open the freezer by not seeing the data or even a copy of any study that supports the self-interested doctor’s claim that Cellulaze works.
 Relies on an animation, rather than photos of “zapped” cellulite.**

2. Fill out the following evaluation chart on Dr. Barry DiBernardo (3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales				
Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.				
Source: Dr. Barry Dibernardo, plastic surgeon				
Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Self-Interested
Explain: Doc DiBernardo benefits from doing these \$6,000 procedures, both as a doc and one of the doctors working on the product. He has a double interest in selling this procedure.				
Multiple (Corroborated)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lone/Solitary
Explain: DiBernardo is the lone named source on the medical question.				
Verifies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asserts
Explain: Doc DiBernardo claims patients never came to him for treatment of cellulite, but he gives no numbers or other evidence to support this assertion that something different is happening. If he were asserting about the patients of other				

doctors, we'd give him a negative rating. Because he's talking about his own patients, he can be given a neutral rating on this.			
Authoritative/Informed	X		Unauthoritative/Uninformed
Explain: A plastic surgeon is authoritative on these matters. Plus, this surgeon is informed by virtue of having done the procedure before. This is the classic case of the authoritative and informed, but deeply self-interested, source			
Named	X		Anonymous
Explain: He is named and fully identified by expertise and affiliation.			
Overall, how reliable is information from this source?			
Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating.			Very Unreliable
	X		Somewhat Unreliable
	X		Somewhat Reliable
			Very Reliable
Explain: Although he is the right type of doctor to ask, you have to question his claims because he directly benefits. First, by attracting more patients, Second by being one of the doctors who developed the machine and procedure. He can't be completely trusted, nor completely dismissed.			

3. Fill out the following evaluation chart on the patient, Brittany Rude. (3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales			
Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.			
<i>Source: Brittany Rude</i>			
Independent			Self-Interested
Explain: She is a source who can open the freezer for the reporter, and does, showing her treated thigh. There is no evidence she will gain financially by saying it's a great product. But it's significant that she is sitting in the doctor's office while she raves about it, which she would not do if she were critical or neutral.	X	X	
Multiple (Corroborated)			X Lone/Solitary
Explain: She's the only patient the reporter talks to and there's no data on other patients or any other form of corroboration			
Verifies			X Asserts
Explain: She asserts you can't burn off cellulite by going to the gym, but provides no evidence of any kind.			

Authoritative/Informed				Unauthoritative/Uninformed
Explain: She is somewhat informed about her own case, but she is not a medical authority or even an authority about fitness			X	
Named				Anonymous
Explain: She is named, but we don't know where she is from or even how to spell her name. There's no way to check who she is.	X			
Overall, how reliable is information from this source?				
Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating.				Very Unreliable
	X			Somewhat Unreliable
	X			Somewhat Reliable
				Very Reliable
Explain: She's reliable as to how well it worked for her. But she goes beyond the scope of her knowledge, making medical claims about how cellulite can be treated, etc. The independence questions are unanswered and troubling.				

4. What is missing from this story that would provide greater transparency? Describe at least two examples of missing transparency (2 points)

Did the reporter see the FDA's approval of Cellulaze so that she can confidently say it is approved.

Where did the animation of the Cellulaze process come from?

Was Ms. Rood being paid to speak highly of Cellulaze?

Is Cellulaze or Dr. DiBernardo an advertiser on Fox5?

5. Decide if you think this reporter is demonstrating fairness, balance or bias and then cite the evidence for your conclusion. (3 points)

The reporter calls the procedure "revolutionary" right away, which is a language landmark for opinion and not straight reporting, considering that she does not back it up with reporting. She does not speak to any independent source and does not open the freezer on the claim of FDA approval. Given that there are medical science conclusions imbedded in the story, you would typically want a balanced story

6. Your favorite relative wants to get rid of thigh cellulite. Based on this report would you tell your relative to seek Cellulaze treatment? Using course concepts, explain your answer (2 points)

I would not. The FDA has approved the procedure, which means it has passed some safety testing and analysis. But I do not know if it works and even if it does, for how long will it work. And I'm deeply skeptical of the information in this report, given the lack of balance, lack of transparency, lack of context. Finally, while Doc DiBernardo is one of the doctors who invented Cellulaze, and that makes him an expert, financial self-interest also has the potential to cloud his judgment.

Video #2 (15 points) Uganda Malaria cases linked to global warming

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwH8uX2HTI0>

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/>

7. Fill out the following evaluation of **Fortunate Turvahikayo**, Widow of malaria victim.(3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales				
Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.				
Source: The Widow, Fortunate <u>Turyahikayo</u>				
Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-Interested
Explain: Fortunate has no financial or emotional stake in blaming global warming for her husband's malaria. She's just wondering why there is now a lot of malaria in Uganda's mountains?				
Multiple (Corroborated)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lone/Solitary
Explain: Her observation that there's more malaria is corroborated by "medics at the local hospital" .				
Verifies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Asserts
Explain: She doesn't provide a death certificate or other proof it was malaria, or even that he's dead. She asserts there was no malaria in Kabale when she was young, but provides nothing to back that up				
Authoritative/Informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unauthoritative/Uninformed
Explain: She is an informed source as to her husband's death, but not as to the increase in malaria cases in her town.				
Named	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anonymous
Explain: She is fully identified				
Overall, how reliable is information from this source?				
Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Unreliable
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Unreliable
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Reliable
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Reliable
Explain: She has no financial or other self-interest in saying there is more local malaria than there used to be. In some ways, she is merely a color source, humanizing the situation but not in any way providing facts on which you can conclude.				

8. Fill out the following evaluation of **Dr. Nathan Kenya Mugisha, doctor and malaria specialist.** (3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales				
Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.				
Source: "Dr. Mugisha"				

Independent	X			Self-Interested
Explain: He has no apparent economic, emotional or familial stake in linking global warming to malaria, although students could speculate that funding may be on the line.				
Multiple (Corroborated)		X		Lone/Solitary
Explain: Medics at the hospital also tell the reporter malaria is on the rise. But Mugisha cites no other scientists who blame the rise on global warming.				
Verifies			X	Asserts
Explain: His dispassionate tone is re-assuring, but he provides no data for the rise in cases, the link to global warming or even the hill people's lack of immunity to the parasite.				
Authoritative/Informed		X	X	Unauthoritative/Uninformed
Explain: He's a doc and a malaria expert. So he knows about malaria and about differences in the immune response of hill people vs. coastal dwellers. But he has no credentials when it comes to climate science or bio-effects of global warming.				
Named	X			Anonymous
Explain: named and his affiliation listed				
Overall, how reliable is information from this source?				
Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating.			Very Unreliable	
			Somewhat Unreliable	
	X		Somewhat Reliable	
			Very Reliable	
Explain: Dr. Mugisha is reliable as to the up-tick in malaria cases and even the hill people's un-tested immune response to the parasite. He would know, plus others corroborate his account. But he is not reliable on the question of global climate change and malaria				

9. What is missing from this report and how does that missing material change your ability to make a conclusion or decision based on this report? Your answer should include two things a News Literacy student would look for in a reliable report. (4 points)

There are no direct comments from global warming experts who could talk about the climate and weather changes in Uganda's highlands and whether they'd be sufficient to propagate mosquitoes and the malaria virus. Viewers are not given vital statistics data on deaths by region. Transparency about the reporter's use of a translator (whose t-shirt appears to bear the logo of a Mosquito Control Programme)

10. Can you conclude from this report that global warming created the conditions that led to the death of the late husband of Fortunate Turyahikayo? Explain using information from the story. (5 points)

This report ultimately undercuts itself when the reporter himself says the link between warming and malaria is not well understood. You can conclude there's been a recent increase in malaria, based on the medics' and the doctor's observations. But we don't know if Enoch travelled out of the hills. We're not really sure he died of malaria. We don't know if climate change has in that region brought mosquitoes up into the hills. You cannot conclude anything from this.

Video #3 (15 points) Polar Ice Sheet Melt Accelerating

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032619/ns/NBCNightlyNews/#50018387>

11. Fill out the following evaluation of Thomas Wagner, the younger scientist. (3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales				
Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.				
Source: Thomas Wagner, NASA Scientist				
Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-Interested
Explain: He is another NASA scientist, with no financial stake in saying sea levels are rising.				
Multiple (Corroborated)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lone/Solitary
Explain: His conclusions are backed by the study, plus the reporter provides a statistic to back his statement about coastal cities.				
Verifies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asserts
Explain: His point, that even small changes in sea level rise can displace millions, is supported by his observation that most major cities are at sea level.				
Authoritative/Informed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unauthoritative/Uninformed
Explain: This is the source you want: a top-level scientist				
Named	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anonymous
Explain: Named and with affiliation listed				
Overall, how reliable is information from this source?				
Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Unreliable
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Unreliable
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Reliable
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Reliable
Explain: This is a no-brainer. He's an expert and not talking about his own recently published paper.				

12. Fill out the following evaluation of Erik Ivins, one of the co-authors of the study and a NASA scientist (3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales
--

Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.			
Source: "Erik Ivins, Study Co-Author, NASA Scientist"			
Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-Interested
Explain: He has no apparent financial stake in this bad news. If his study were under fire, he'd have an interest. But here, he's just describing the findings.			
Multiple (Corroborated)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lone/Solitary
Explain: He's part of a team of scientists who published their study of 20 years' data			
Verifies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asserts
Explain: The whole point of his comment is that it is based on measurements of the changes in the ice sheets in cold regions of the world.			
Authoritative/Informed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unauthoritative/Uninformed
Explain: Students may not know this, but the Jet Propulsion Laboratory is a top federal lab. Even if they don't know that, they should know NASA. He's a top scientist (authoritative) and he is directly involved in the newly-published study (informed)			
Named	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anonymous
Explain: Named, affiliation listed. He's solid			
Overall, how reliable is information from this source?			
Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Unreliable	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Unreliable	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Reliable	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Very Reliable	
Explain: He stays within his expertise and direct knowledge of the study, saying that ice melt is accelerating based on the data and that it's not likely to slow down. This is who you want to hear from on the question, though a student can be given credit for noting he may be a little self-interested in defending his study's validity.			

13. Identify an example of context the report provides and describe how it helps you understand the situation. (3 points)

Comparing the ice melt to the weight of more than 1 million Empire State Buildings comparison.

26 Lake Tahoes

Wagner's description of Antarctica and Greenland as the "vastest reservoirs of ice on the planet" helps us put the maps and photos in perspective.

More than half of all Americans live within 50 miles of the coastline

"At a time when so many people are still suffering...from Sandy"...

July hottest month on record

The “Chasing Ice” documentary from 5 years ago, showing retreat of the glaciers.

14. There are political activists who say climate change scientists have over-stated the amount and speed of global warming. Are their doubts fairly addressed in this news report? Using course concepts, explain your answer. (3 points)

Students are given a little latitude on their answer, providing their evidence and arguments are sound.

If, for instance, a student says climate change skeptics don't need to be included in this story, they have to use the News Literacy definition of fairness to the evidence and then cite the extensive evidence provided in the NBC report and the underlying “Science” article that relies on 20 years' data.

If, on the other hand, the student says the report should have balanced doubters and skeptics, the student would need to build an argument around the conclusions that open NBC's report: that Sandy damage was made worse by incremental sea level rises. The only person saying that is Brian Williams and not the scientists. It makes sense, but there's not proof.

15. Can you conclude from this report that damage caused by Hurricane Sandy was made worse by the incremental rise in ocean levels caused by climate change? Using course concepts, explain your answer. (3 points)

Students from the hard sciences ought to note that any increase in the sea level would have changed the height of the flood.

But the bigger question is climate change and this report presents compelling evidence that the polar caps are melting much faster than the U.N. climate panels had said in 2007. Because so much of the world's population is coastal, we have a problem and given the law of conservation of matter, melted ice raises sea levels and flood damage is caused by rising water. A student who argues the combination of a hurricane and a spike tide are far more significant than incremental sea level rises must be respected for noting that distinction, but the conclusions drawn in this NBC piece are for the most part supported by hard evidence from reliable sources.

What if a SAMOS (Atmospheric and Marine sciences) student brings in the warming-increases-odds-of-extreme-weather argument? No one raises that in NBC's report, so it's off-limits.

PART III: Text Deconstructions (questions for 35 points)

Read the accompanying story before answering the following questions. Be aware that any story can have strong aspects and weak aspects or elements of both, but in the end a news consumer has to make a judgment about the story. BE SPECIFIC IN YOUR RESPONSES AND SUPPORT YOUR CONCLUSIONS by referring to the paragraph number where your support is found. Hand the print-out of the story in with your answer sheet, with your name on both.

16. Given the popularity of Apple and its products, what kinds of cognitive dissonance or audience bias might the reader of this article fall prey to? Explain, using course concepts and at least two references to specific paragraphs in the article. (5 points)

Most students have Apple products or know people who do and may want to defend their identification with the Apple brand. Confirmation bias might lead them to focus on paragraphs 6,7, 8, 11, 22, 32, 37 which show Apple in a favorable light and ignore other sections that include evidence of questionable decisions and actions.

17. What News Literacy concept is paragraph 6 an example of? Explain your answer. (5 points)

Context. The reporters are placing the example of Apple in the bigger picture of electronics manufacturing overall and comparing Apple to other companies.

18. Is this story balanced, fair or biased? Cite specific paragraphs and use News Literacy course concepts to explain your answer. (5 points)

Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt, No underline, Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt, No underline, Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt, No underline, Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt, Font color: Black

Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt, Font color: Black

Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt, Font color: Black

The story is not a near-arithmetically balanced “he-said, she said” and that is okay because the negative picture of Apple is fair to the evidence that Apple seems to be profiting by ignoring the problem. reporters have gathered a great deal of evidence that Apple is not upholding the code of conduct it adopted in 2007. That imbalance is mitigated by the obvious efforts the reporters took to show Apple working on the problem.

19. Did the reporters open the freezer? Cite specific paragraphs to support your conclusion and explain, using the concepts of direct and indirect evidence) how their opening or not opening the freezer affects the reliability of the article. (5 points)

No. The reporters do not appear to have visited the factory or in any way witnessed the working conditions that are the point of this article. They did, however, speak to anonymous workers and supported those workers’ remarks with the material from workers’ rights organizations and Apple’s own audits.

20. Looking at who was interviewed for the story, a very reliable source and an unreliable source and use the IMVAIN rubric to explain your ratings of those sources. (10 points)

Acceptable reliable sources include:

Li Mingqi, who despite his self-interest is authoritative and informed and named. He verifies by pointing to Apple’s own reports that suggest a problem.

Former Apple Executive in Paragraph 12 because he is adequately characterized, transparency is adequate and his remarks are corroborated by other sources in Paragraph 14.

Zhao Sheng is named (probably at considerable risk to himself), informed and only talks about what he himself saw, not the bigger issues.

Debbie Chan Sze Wan of Sacom is not intellectually independent, as a safety activist looking for problems, but her group’s warning is on the record, which verifies part of what she says. It’s unclear how she would benefit from mis-stating the truth. And she is named and is at least informed if not authoritative about worker safety.

Acceptable unreliable sources include:

Nicholas Ashford, despite being an authority and named and independent, provides only a comment full of opinion language and not factual material.

FoxConn would be authoritative about its own operations and, by virtue of experience, about safety measures. But no named person takes responsibility for the claim and there is so much evidence that undermines the claim, you cannot argue FoxConn has multiple corroborators.

21. After deconstructing this article, what can you conclude? Cite evidence that supports your conclusion.(5 points)

A reader can conclude Apple has not enforced its own code of conduct and tolerates workplace hazards, as shown in the multiple reports by Apple, showing it continues to do business with manufacturers that are cited for workplace hazards.

reading. Paragraphs are numbered to allow you to answer questions by making reference to specific paragraphs. Underlined words indicate hyperlinks that were built into the Times' online version of the report.

The New York Times

Published: January 25, 2012

In China, Human Costs Are Built Into an iPad

By CHARLES DUHIGG and DAVID BARBOZA

1. In the last decade, Apple has become one of the mightiest, richest and most successful companies in the world, in part by mastering global manufacturing. Apple and its high-technology peers — as well as dozens of other American industries — have achieved a pace of innovation nearly unmatched in modern history.
2. However, the workers assembling iPhones, iPads and other devices often labor in harsh conditions, according to employees inside those plants, worker advocates and documents published by companies themselves. Problems include tough work environments and serious — sometimes deadly — safety problems.
3. Employees work excessive overtime, in some cases seven days a week, and live in crowded dorms. Some say they stand so long that their legs swell until they can hardly walk. Under-age workers have helped build Apple's products, according to company reports and advocacy groups that, within China, are often considered reliable, independent monitors.
4. Within seven months last year, two explosions at iPad factories, including the iPad factory in Chengdu, killed four people and injured 77. Before those blasts, Apple had been alerted to hazardous conditions inside the Chengdu plant, according to a Chinese group that published that warning.
5. "If Apple was warned, and didn't act, that's reprehensible," said Nicholas Ashford, a former chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health, a group that advises the United States Labor Department. "But what's morally repugnant in one country is accepted business practices in another, and companies take advantage of that."
6. Apple is not the only electronics company doing business within a troubling supply system. Bleak working conditions have been documented at factories manufacturing products for Dell, Hewlett-Packard, I.B.M., Lenovo, Motorola, Nokia, Sony, Toshiba and others.
7. Current and former Apple executives, moreover, say the company has made significant strides in improving factories in recent years. Apple has a supplier code of conduct (hyperlink) that details standards on labor issues, safety protections and other topics. The company has mounted a vigorous auditing campaign, and when abuses are discovered, Apple says, corrections are demanded.
8. And Apple's annual supplier responsibility reports, in many cases, are the first to report abuses. More than half of the suppliers audited by Apple have violated at least one aspect of the code of conduct every year since 2007, according to Apple's reports.

9. “Apple never cared about anything other than increasing product quality and decreasing production cost,” said Li Mingqi, who until April worked in management at Foxconn Technology, one of Apple’s most important manufacturing partners. Mr. Li, who is suing Foxconn over his dismissal, helped manage the Chengdu factory where the explosion occurred. “Workers’ welfare has nothing to do with their interests,” he said.
10. Some former Apple executives say Apple’s leaders want to improve conditions within factories, but that dedication falters when it conflicts with crucial supplier relationships or the fast delivery of new products. Apple recently reported one of the most lucrative quarters of any corporation in history, with \$13.06 billion in profits on \$46.3 billion in sales.
11. Executives at other corporations report similar internal pressures. This system may not be pretty, they argue, but a radical overhaul would slow innovation. Customers want amazing new electronics every year.
12. “We’ve known about labor abuses in some factories for four years, and they’re still going on,” said one former Apple executive who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity because of confidentiality agreements. “Why? Because the system works for us. Suppliers would change everything tomorrow if Apple told them they didn’t have another choice.”
13. “If half of iPhones were malfunctioning, do you think Apple would let it go on for four years?” the executive asked.
14. Apple was provided with extensive summaries of this article, but the company declined to comment. The reporting on working conditions and on Apple policies is based on interviews with more than three dozen current or former employees and contractors, including a half-dozen current or former executives with firsthand knowledge of Apple’s supplier responsibility group, as well as others within the technology industry.

Chengdu

15. Foxconn Technology, China’s largest exporter and one of the nation’s biggest employers, has 1.2 million workers. The company assembles an estimated 40 percent of the world’s consumer electronics, including for Amazon, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Nintendo, Nokia and Samsung.
16. Foxconn is one of the few manufacturers in the world with the scale to build sufficient numbers of iPhones and iPads. So Apple is “not going to leave Foxconn and they’re not going to leave China,” said Heather White, a research fellow at Harvard and a former member of the Monitoring International Labor Standards committee at the National Academy of Sciences.
17. At Foxconn’s factory in Chengdu, workers were building Apple’s latest, potentially greatest product: the iPad.
18. Shifts ran 24 hours a day, and the factory was always bright. At any moment, there were thousands of workers standing on assembly lines or sitting in backless chairs,

crouching next to large machinery, or jogging between loading bays. Some workers' legs swelled so much they waddled. "It's hard to stand all day," said Zhao Sheng, a plant worker.

19. Banners on the walls warned the 120,000 employees: "Work hard on the job today or work hard to find a job tomorrow."
20. "Conditions at Foxconn are anything but harsh," the company wrote. Foxconn also said that it had never been cited by a customer or government for under-age or overworked employees or toxic exposures.
21. "All assembly line employees are given regular breaks, including one-hour lunch breaks," the company wrote, and only 5 percent of assembly line workers are required to stand to carry out their tasks. Work stations have been designed to ergonomic standards, and employees have opportunities for job rotation and promotion, the statement said.

Apple's Code of Conduct

22. In 2005, some of Apple's top executives gathered inside their Cupertino, Calif., headquarters for a special meeting. Other companies had created codes of conduct to police their suppliers. It was time, Apple decided, to follow suit. The code Apple published that year demands "that working conditions in Apple's supply chain are safe, that workers are treated with respect and dignity, and that manufacturing processes are environmentally responsible."
23. But the next year, a British newspaper, The Mail on Sunday, secretly visited a Foxconn factory in Shenzhen, China, where iPods were manufactured, and reported on workers' long hours, push-ups meted out as punishment and crowded dorms. Executives in Cupertino were shocked. "Apple is filled with really good people who had no idea this was going on," a former employee said. "We wanted it changed, immediately."

The Explosion

24. At the Chengdu plant, the iPad case-sanding area was loud and hazy with aluminum dust, workers who were there said. Workers wore masks and earplugs, but no matter how many times they showered, they were recognizable by the slight aluminum sparkle in their hair and at the corners of their eyes.
25. Just two weeks before the explosion, an advocacy group in Hong Kong published a report warning of unsafe conditions at the Chengdu plant, including problems with aluminum dust. The group, Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehavior, or Sacom, had videotaped workers covered with tiny aluminum particles. "Occupational health and safety issues in Chengdu are alarming," [the report read](#). "Workers also highlight the problem of poor ventilation and inadequate personal protective equipment."

26. A copy of that report was sent to Apple. “There was no response,” said Debby Chan Sze Wan of the group.
27. The factory was frantic, employees said. Rows of machines buffed cases as masked employees pushed buttons. Large air ducts hovered over each station, but they could not keep up with the three lines of machines polishing nonstop. Aluminum dust was everywhere.
28. Dust is a known safety hazard. In 2003, an aluminum dust explosion in Indiana destroyed a wheel factory and killed a worker.
29. In December, however, seven months after the Chengdu blast that killed four, another iPad factory exploded, this one in Shanghai. Once again, aluminum dust was the cause, according to interviews and Apple’s most recent supplier responsibility report. That blast injured 59 workers, with 23 hospitalized.
30. “It is gross negligence, after an explosion occurs, not to realize that every factory should be inspected,” said Nicholas Ashford, the occupational safety expert, who is now at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. “If it were terribly difficult to deal with aluminum dust, I would understand. But do you know how easy dust is to control? It’s called ventilation. We solved this problem over a century ago.”
- 31.

Audits and Consequences

32. By last year, Apple had inspected 396 facilities — including the company’s direct suppliers, as well as many of those suppliers’ suppliers — one of the largest such programs within the electronics industry.
33. Those audits have found consistent violations of Apple’s code of conduct, according to summaries published by the company. Between 2007 and 2010, Apple conducted 312 audits, and every year, about half or more showed evidence of large numbers of employees laboring more than six days a week as well as working extended overtime.
34. “If you see the same pattern of problems, year after year, that means the company’s ignoring the issue rather than solving it,” said one former Apple executive with firsthand knowledge of the supplier responsibility group.
35. Apple says that when an audit reveals a violation, the company requires suppliers to address the problem. “If a supplier is unwilling to change, we terminate our relationship,” the company says on its Web site.
36. The seriousness of that threat, however, is unclear. Apple has found violations in hundreds of audits, but fewer than 15 suppliers have been terminated for transgressions since 2007, according to former Apple executives.
37. “Apple is a leader in preventing under-age labor,” said Dionne Harrison of Impactt, a firm paid by Apple to help prevent and respond to child labor among its suppliers. “They’re doing as much as they possibly can.”
38. Other consultants disagree.
39. “We’ve spent years telling Apple there are serious problems and recommending changes,” said a consultant at BSR — also known as Business for Social

Responsibility — which has been twice retained by Apple to provide advice on labor issues. “They don’t want to pre-empt problems, they just want to avoid embarrassments.”

