

BEA Advisors

<u>Team Member Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Major</u>
Rachel Scott	Senior	Finance
Brinn McDowell	Junior	Chemistry
Tong Zhou	Senior	Accounting
Jack Allen	Sophomore	Finance and Information Systems

Advisor(s): Aimee Barbeau, Elizabeth Luckman

Topic: Coerced Cobalt; Diving into Apple's Labor Practices

Audience: Apple Board of Directors

Sustainable Development Goal

SDG Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Executive Summary

Apple Inc. has recently shifted the way it acquires cobalt used to create lithium-ion batteries. Instead of working with independent contractors to ensure a sufficient supply of this chemical element, Apple has started working directly with suppliers in early 2019 to ensure it has a sufficient supply of this high-demand metal used in most electronic products such as smartphones, laptops, and electric car batteries. Given this increased involvement by Apple in the cobalt mining process, there is an ethical responsibility by Apple to ensure that those employed in cobalt mines are by no means coerced into labor, fully informed of the potential harms, and sufficiently protected as much as possible from this radioactive element.

We believe Apple can effectively solve unsafe and unfair working conditions in cobalt mines by partnering with a non-profit organization that focuses on promoting fair labor practices. We strongly recommend Apple creating and funding a "task force" within the company to work closely alongside a non-profit organization to travel to mining sites, audit working conditions, and ensure employees are informed and protected. Given Apple's large cash holdings, we believe an investment in the well-being of all supply chain employees will boost Apple's overall public image and ensure miners are not suffering at the hands of big business.