

MEA

# HR & LEARNING

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**UAE Provides Coherent Social Security Policy providing a sustainable future for Emiratis and Resident Employees**

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MEA Business  
WEB: [www.meabiz.com](http://www.meabiz.com)  
[www.meahr.com](http://www.meahr.com)  
EMAIL: [info@cme-media.com](mailto:info@cme-media.com)

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PUBLISHER : Kenneth Mitchen  
Email: [ken.mitchen@mea-finance.com](mailto:ken.mitchen@mea-finance.com)

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# Imad Kazzaz

UAE Provides Coherent Social Security Policy providing a sustainable future for Emiratis and Resident Employees

**Tell us about you, your experience, and your time in the Middle East.**

I come from Lebanon, a small Mediterranean country, home to Gebran Khalil Gebran, the cedars and Byblos, one of the oldest cities in the world. I obtained my Master of Science in software engineering from France. Subsequently, I moved back to Lebanon where I worked over two decades in the field of business development in the enterprise software industry. I decided to move to the UAE in 2015 to start an exciting new journey that has been a rewarding learning experience and a great networking opportunity with like-minded professionals in the field of technology. It is no secret that the UAE is a vibrant and dynamic business environment, providing access to international markets and empowering innovative start-ups and ideas. Also, and from a social and personal standpoint, my stay in the UAE has been a really great opportunity to learn about different cultures and broadening my personal experience, especially since the UAE is home to around 200 nationalities.

**You describe your company as an “agency recruitment marketplace”. In simple terms, what does your company do? And what distinguishes it from recruitment agencies?**

Let me start by clarifying a misconception about the role of Ubidy; we are not a recruitment agency, and we are not a job board platform.

Ubidy is an online platform, in other words a ‘digital B2B global marketplace’, where we instantly connect employers to hundreds of



Imad Kazzaz, Regional Director Mena, Ubidy



the world's best niche and specialist agencies in all corners of the globe. We help employers by providing them with on-demand, at-will access to work with a global panel of pre-qualified and expert recruiting agencies, and we are providing them with connections that they typically wouldn't have.

**What innovative ways are you adopting in helping employers deal with contemporary challenges in their talent acquisition & recruitment processes?**

Many employers today are still working with a limited number of agencies in traditional ways, which are time consuming and manual labour intensive. We have taken this process to a whole new level by introducing a platform providing advanced automation capabilities as well as centralised communication with all stakeholders, allowing for real-time visibility into the process.

Employers uniquely can instantly access hundreds of qualified and specialised agencies, tapping into a vast pool of both active and passive candidates that might not have been available otherwise. By the way, around 70% of talents are passive candidates

who are not actively seeking new opportunities.

Another important point I want to mention here, is that in today's fast-paced business environment, timely recruitment is essential for organisations to meet tight deadlines and budgets while ensuring that the right talent is in place to drive success. The talent acquisition team needs a system, such as Ubidy, to help our customer partners stay agile and competitive in this fast-paced world of business.

**Why did Ubidy decide to expand its scope to cover the Middle East region?**

The Middle East is heading towards unprecedented growth in terms of projects and expansions related to many sectors such as renewable energy, smart cities, transportation, etc. Such large-scale projects would require top talents. Our significance lies in facilitating the connection between industries and their corresponding recruitment agencies worldwide. Operating internationally enables us to promptly provide access to talents from all domains sought after by the industry. ♦



**Employers uniquely can instantly access hundreds of qualified and specialised agencies, tapping into a vast pool of both active and passive candidates that might not have been available otherwise.**

# Michael Watkins.

## Building Aurem - Pioneering the UAE's Workplace Benefits

Michael Watkins, founder and CEO of Aurem, shares his experience launching a workplace benefits solution in the UAE and being a driving force in empowering the MENA talent pool.

**M**ichael, the international workforce of the UAE has challenges with savings, and 90% of expats are left to fend for their own when it comes to their finances. The government is actively looking to change this to retain talent in the region and you're one of the key people driving this change.

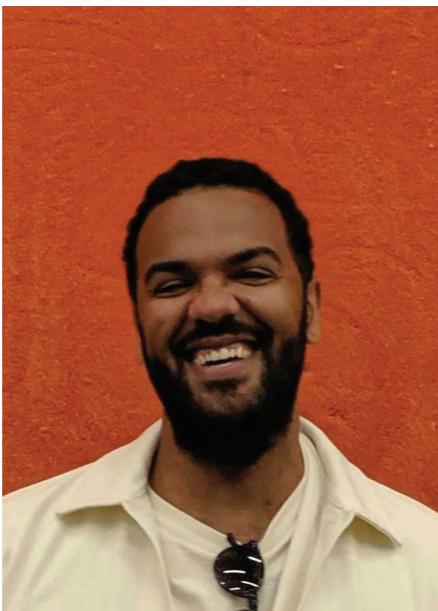
### Tell us about you, your journey to the UAE and what you're building?

I come from the UK, and never thought that one day I'd be working in financial technology, let alone building products and services that have and will change millions of people's lives. I have a broad set of experiences across financial services, working for an asset manager, employee benefits consultancies and startups. I came to the UAE to create solutions for the lack of retirement provisions and then quickly realised that a lot of people, just like me, have a wide range of financial considerations, being an expat and global citizen - and that's how Aurem came to be.

### What does Aurem do?

The lack of a means for support has left UAE employees with a huge (3.6M AED) savings gap and ultimately results in companies losing talent and higher turnover costs.

So, it became clear that a financial benefits platform with our mission to connect businesses and people to financial services that make life



**Sohail Michael Pedari** – Pedari Coaching FZE Dubai

easier and help build for their future, was required. We enable businesses to manage their End of Service Benefits (EoSBs), as well as offer savings plans and incentive plans to their employees, and that's just the beginning.

### How are you helping to solve this?

We believe that the best way to save is "at source", meaning that you save directly from your salary, rather than from your bank account. That way you have less to think about and fewer barriers between you and good financial outcomes.

Companies & specifically HR teams spend countless hours finding, attracting and retaining talent.

Our platform is free to employers, meaning that they can offer a range of savings and investment products to their employees, chosen by professionals and with enough variety to help people build up their savings, without taking on any additional cost - unless they want to save with their employees as an incentive. It's also entirely customisable, meaning that you can create different benefits for different groups of people.

What we're building is global, meaning that if you're a multinational company you can offer the same benefits across countries and as an individual, you don't have to worry about keeping track of your savings because you can take your Aurem account with you - wherever you end up.

### How will Aurem's benefits through the workplace make their lives easier?

Quite simply, our platform gives you the ability to set your business apart from the rest, with no extra cost and little to no extra effort to sign up and manage your company benefits. Most people that come to the UAE, think of it as a moment in time, often with no idea where they'll end up or when. Our solution removes the anxiety associated with that - turning workplace saving into a lifetime benefit rather than something that you have to cash out when you leave



## Know your Amygdala from your Frontal Cortex for Better Productivity!

Amina Khalifa shares three tips to boost the powers of your organisational brain.

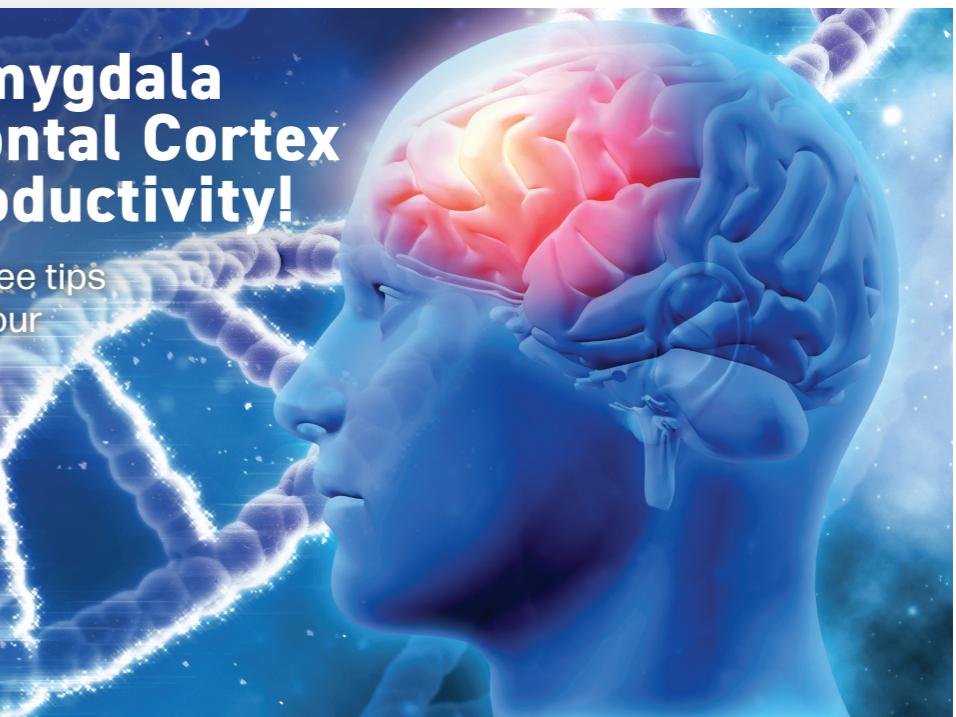


**A**re you interested in boosting your organisation's performance? Do you want to create a more positive and productive work environment for your team? Then you need to master Emotional Intelligence and understand the neuroscience behind it. Specifically, the role of the brain and how it impacts emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership.

At the core of EI is the ability to recognise, understand, and manage emotions. And this all starts with the brain. Certain regions and functions, such as the amygdala for processing emotions and emotional memories, and the prefrontal cortex for decision making, impulse control, and social cognition, are crucial for developing high EI.

But it's not just about individual leaders. The emotional intelligence of an entire organization is like an "organizational brain" - with different areas having different levels of influence on decision making, behaviour, and performance. For example, the leadership team may be the equivalent of the first violin in an orchestra, while the culture and values of the organization can be seen as the equivalent of the percussion section.

To improve organisational performance, you need to tap on the powers of the collective



brain of the organisation and you need to understand how the different parts of the organizational brain interact with each other.

By focussing on hiring employees with high EI, providing opportunities for personal and professional development, and fostering a culture that encourages open communication and emotional intelligence, you can create a stronger, more harmonious team.

As an HR professional, you have the power to revolutionise your organisation's performance by implementing EI strategies. By emphasising the role of the brain and the organisational brain, you can take your team from good to great.

So, if you want to create a more positive and productive work environment, it's time to start thinking about the neuroscience of emotional intelligence.

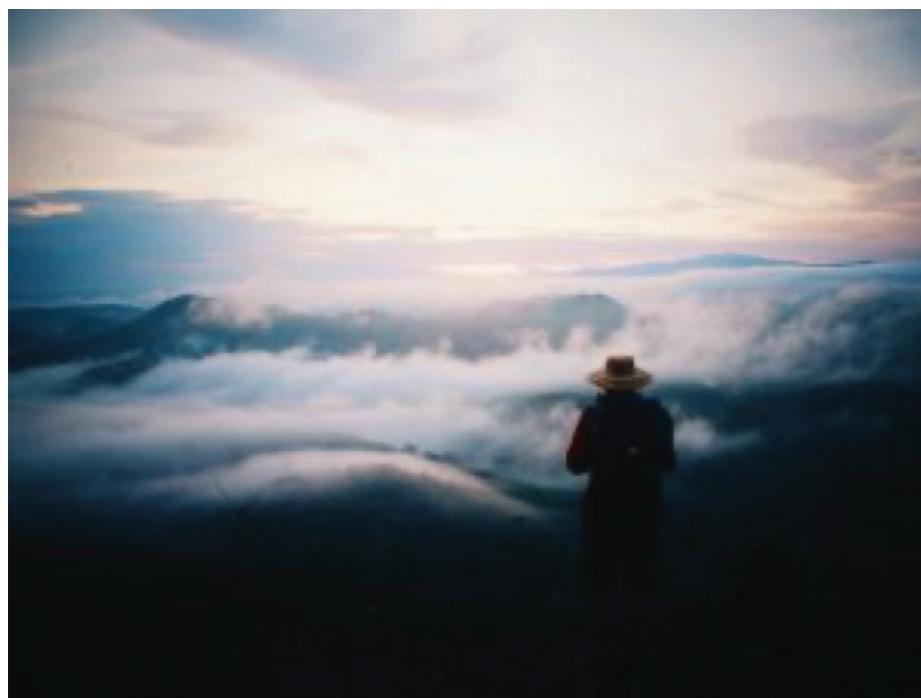
Here are three tips to develop Emotional Intelligence in the workplace and the benefits of implementing them:

**1. Encourage Self-Awareness:** Encouraging self-awareness is a great way to develop Emotional Intelligence in the workplace. Employees can become more aware of their emotions and how they impact their behaviour and interactions with others. This can help them manage their emotions more effectively and respond appropriately to different situations. Self-awareness also promotes reflection and

self-improvement, leading to personal and professional growth.

**2. Practice Empathy:** Empathy is an essential component of Emotional Intelligence, and practicing empathy in the workplace can lead to better collaboration, teamwork, and customer relationships. Encouraging employees to put themselves in others' shoes and understand their perspectives can create a more harmonious work environment. Practicing empathy also leads to more effective communication, as employees are more likely to understand and respond to others' emotions and needs.

**3. Prioritise Employee Development:** Prioritising employee development is another way to develop Emotional Intelligence in the workplace. Offering training and development programs that focus on Emotional Intelligence can help employees improve their skills and behaviours, leading to increased emotional intelligence across the organisation. Developing Emotional Intelligence skills can lead to more effective leadership, increased productivity, and better customer relationships. Prioritising employee development also demonstrates a commitment to employee growth and can lead to increased job satisfaction and retention ◆



# The Ultimate C-Suite Learning & Development Blueprint

Rohit Bassi, ROI Talks, offers a blue print to enhance and encourage a more wholesome L&D strategy to communication at C-Suite in order to harness the power of their voices

In the realm of corporate leadership, the role of wholesome communication in the C-Suite cannot be overstated. To harness the power of their voices, organizations must invest in comprehensive Learning and Development (L&D) plans tailored specifically for their top executives.

Let us unveil the powerful blueprint

for creating an impactful L&D plan that allows C-Suite to sustain growth and success.

## 1. Mastering Leadership Talk - Engaging the Hearts and Minds

To communicate like influential leaders, C-Suite executives need regular training in the art of storytelling, public speaking, media handling, and crisis communication.

Mastering these skills can

captivate audiences, inspire action, and maintain composure even in the face of adversity, shape perceptions, instilling confidence, and overcoming resistance.

## 2. Handling the Media with Finesse - The Power of Persuasion

To navigate the world of media interviews and press events, C-Suite leaders should be prepared to answer hard questions and maintain their composure under pressure. With techniques of persuasive strategy, such as reciprocity, social proof, and authority they can influence public opinion and build trust.

## 3. Turning Numbers into Compelling Stories - The Language of Influence

Financial reports and investor presentations hold immense significance. C-Suite executives require training in financial communication, enabling them to transform complex data into compelling stories, leveraging the power of emotive language, visual storytelling, and logical reasoning to engage investors and stakeholders effectively.

## 4. Crisis Control Training - Navigating the Storms

Preparing for crises is paramount. Through crisis simulations and training, C-Suite executives can develop robust strategies, fine-tune their communication style, and master the art of maintaining transparency while instilling calm amidst the chaos. Leaders can demonstrate empathy, authenticity, and integrity to restore faith in times of uncertainty.

## 5. Perfecting Speeches - Motivating & Inspiring Action



**Let us unveil the powerful blueprint for creating an impactful L&D plan that allows C-Suite to sustain growth and success.**



■ **Rohit Bassi**, CEO, ROI Talks, Dubai

C-Suite leaders should receive coaching in crafting and delivering impactful speeches for important company presentations. By employing storytelling techniques, emotional resonance, and effective body language, they can move audiences, inspire action, and solidify the organisation's vision.

## 6. Leading Change - Influencing Transformation

Certification in change management equips C-Suite executives to guide major transformations successfully. By understanding the principles of persuasion and influence, leaders can inspire buy-in, manage resistance, and foster a culture of adaptability.

## 7. Cross-Cultural Communication Skills - Embracing Diversity

In today's business world, C-Suite executives require training in cross-cultural communication,

enabling them to adapt their style to different audiences. By promoting cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, leaders can bridge gaps, foster collaboration, and tap into the collective strength of diverse perspectives.

## 8. Learning from Feedback and Mentors - Continuous Growth

Regular feedback from peers, board members, and mentors is invaluable, identifying areas for improvement. By embracing a growth mind flow, leaders can stay on the cutting edge of leadership communication trends and drive long-term success.

## 9. A Life of Commitment - Lifelong Learning

Lastly, C-Suite leaders should commit to lifelong learning, continuously updating their skills and knowledge, the latest research and trends in leadership communication. By embracing a

growth mindset and consistently working on improvement, leaders can adapt to evolving challenges and lead their organizations to new heights.

Investing in a tailored Learning and Development plan for the C-Suite is not just an investment in individuals but a strategic move for the organization's future. Through mastering the art of effective communication, C-Suite executives will shape a culture of influence, navigate change with confidence, and position their organizations for sustainable success.

With the power of a comprehensive "The Ultimate C-Suite Learning & Development Blueprint", C-Suite executives can unlock their full potential, drive organisational success, and shape a future where effective communication and influential leadership reign supreme.



## Caught in the Money Spiral: The Vicious Cycle of Overspending and Austerity

Turbulent economies beget austerity while growing economic climate pushes overspending

**A**midst today's turbulent business climate, rife with economic uncertainties, organisations confront challenging decisions, including hiring freezes, widespread layoffs, and cost-cutting measures. However, a confounding paradox emerges when certain organisations defy this pattern and attain remarkable success only to succumb to the allure of excessive hiring and/or extravagant spending, perpetuating a self-destructive cycle.

### The prelude to excess

During a recent Bloomberg podcast interview, Stewart Butterfield, the former CEO of Slack, while highlighting the ongoing wave of tech sector layoffs and the disruptive impact of AI on traditional business models, also pointed out an intriguing chain of events, wherein hiring one person often triggers impulsive recruitment of more staff. He called it the "root cause of all the excesses." This behaviour contributes to the continuous cycle of increased

prestige and power for senior leaders.

### The cost of misguided exuberance

Consider this service organisation in the Middle East, revelling in years of extraordinary success. Celebrations abound, and employees duly rewarded. The allure of a hiring spree unfurls during this exciting ride. The extravagance doesn't stop there - "we have money, so we must spend" drives the narrative.

In IT, relentless pursuit of the holy grail of ERP systems engulfs various

business verticals, reigniting an age-old debate between SAP and Oracle. The ensuing frenzied race for budget allocations to replace one system with the other is followed by an overhaul of the performance management system too! "Don't ask me about the (non-existent) performance management culture, and the frenzy of new hires. Let's just create our own customised performance management system from the ground up!"

### The tempting dance of re-branding and marketing

Meanwhile, in the sleek corridors of a healthcare firm's marketing and communications department, a grand rebranding exercise emerges, with costly brand consultants. The beloved logo and corporate colours are discarded like yesterday's leftovers. The marketing team commissions a new style guide, brings in superstar brand ambassadors, and invests in extravagant event sponsorships, hoping for outstanding results.

### We need the shiniest toys!

Well, can the sales and operations teams with their insatiable desire for the latest gadgets and gizmos be left behind? Forget practicality; it's time to equip the teams with the shiniest toys. While the impact on efficiency remains uncertain, at least everyone will look incredibly cool!

### The winds of change and the consultant's call

Fast forward to three years, and the organisations find themselves in a new reality. The haze of extravagant spending has cleared, prompting them to tighten their financial belts and embark on a transformative journey. Enter the external consultants, examining every aspect of the organisation in the quest for efficiency, financial governance, revenue management, and the art of cost-cutting.

Systems are dismantled. Focus turns



**Gaj Ravichandra**, International Career Path Strategist & Executive Coach

to "people cost" and restructuring, often coming at a steep cost—the loss of invaluable talent and a wealth of experience, while those who should have long bid their farewells somehow manage to linger on.

### The endless encore

With the organisation now savouring its success over its transformative accomplishments, a familiar sense of *déjà vu* ensues – cast aside structures re-emerge, and the same roles reappear in other guises. Centralised strategy yields to decentralisation, consolidation

morphs into diversification, and so the dance repeats.

### Closing thoughts

These instances of excessive hiring and overspending after initial success, followed by ambitious transformation initiatives in subsequent years, only to relapse into the same cycle when business picks up, serve as a cautionary tale. It is imperative that we pause, refrain from falling into this predictable cycle, and adopt a mindful approach to talent management, financial prudence, and organizational growth.◆

# In a Good Mentoring Relationship, Everyone Benefits

Ian Jones Global SVP of F5 shares his thoughts on the many benefits of becoming a mentor.

**W**hen we talk about the benefits of mentoring, a subject close to my heart, the focus is almost always on the mentee. Rightly, we acknowledge how the person being mentored can benefit from an experienced sounding board: a source of advice and positive reinforcement, as well as a role model for what it takes to succeed in a given company or industry.

I think, however, we do mentoring a disservice if we see it solely as an information exchange from senior to junior, and a medium for coaching.

There is huge benefit to being a mentor. Mentoring may be an important obligation of seniority, a way of paying forward the help you once received and of supporting the long-term health of the organisation. It is an experience that rewards the individual, in ways that often go unrecognised.

Not recognising our own route to success, is quite typical of talented people, who often seem to shrug their shoulders when pressed to articulate how they can do something with apparent ease that others may find difficult. They are good at their job because it comes naturally, and they don't always understand their own ability, or the skills that underpin it.

One of the advantages of making these people mentors is that they will be confronted with the question of how to do what they do. They will have to stop and think. They are not just having to do and instruct, but to explain and break down their success and to coach. These are different muscles, and sometimes unfamiliar ones.

Being asked about what you do, how you do it and why you made certain decisions is a useful discipline that



**Ian Jones**, Global SVP - Professional & Education Services, F5

mentoring brings to the fore—one that one might otherwise tend to avoid. It forces the mentor to really scrutinise the process of how, for instance, they contribute to a meeting, manage a client or try to get a new project off the ground. It demands that they be honest about why they chose a particular career path or spurned another. To be a good mentor you have to get out of your comfort zone and provide meaningful answers to what may be challenging questions.

It's a process I have always found both refreshing and rewarding. My work mentoring people has given me a better appreciation of colleagues' experiences in the company, and the challenges of starting a career in a very different working world from mine. It's also made me think harder and in different ways about my own work. At this stage in my career, I am probably learning more from my mentoring role than any other part of my job.

As a mentor you are not simply acting as the often-cited sounding board. You are also holding up a mirror to yourself, your career and your experiences, and with the introspective element making it fascinating as it is worthwhile.

On top of all the good reasons to embrace mentoring, it is this introspective element that makes the experience as fascinating as it is worthwhile.

At F5, we've created a comprehensive mentoring programme to drive continuous engagement and career development, and it hasn't been designed as a box tick exercise imposed from the top – it is all about connecting with, and learning from, the right people at the right time.

Anyone who hasn't been a mentor should seriously consider it. Even as the nominal teacher, you will be surprised by how much you learn ♦

## Anil Lanba of Pyramid Consulting shares his thoughts on how AI can help support Talent retention and recruitment

AI has stamped its critical nature onto virtually every aspect of our lives. Not the least of which is on Talent.

**T**he shortage of skilled employees is one of the biggest concerns of organizations worldwide. A survey by Manpower Group, the talent shortage is at a 17-year high and more than 77% of companies globally reported talent shortages in 2023.

### Reason?

Many factors contribute including a aging workforce, increased wage inflation, etc has led to this unprecedented situation. However, I would like to emphasize one particular reason that has, in my opinion, contributed significantly - employee hiring and retention is now a high-hanging fruit!

The covid-19 pandemic and recent volatile market conditions have made employees extremely mindful of their careers and job preferences, deciding to tune their values with that of organizations.

Hiring the right employees has become a challenging task and retaining them has become even more so.

### The struggle in the Middle East is real.

Economies are struggling with labour shortages, and GCC nations are no exception. A PwC survey reported 75% of respondents from Kuwait, 60% from Qatar, 58% from Saudi Arabia and 46% from UAE experiencing strain on available talent. Adding to this, the PwC Middle East Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey 2022, reports over 30% of the employees were 'extremely or very likely' to look for a new job in 2023.

Recently the Kuwait Times, reported plans to recruit expatriate workers to address its labour shortages in certain fields to meet the market's needs. While expanding horizons by welcoming foreign



**Anil Lanba**, Executive VP  
Pyramid Consulting

workers or availing offshore services are surely a step in the right direction, I believe that the real opportunity lies in using AI-backed technologies like automation to improve hiring and retention.

### Automation for optimizing hiring and improving employee retention

We all saw the potential of automation when businesses went digital in a fortnight during the Covid-19 pandemic. Today, I am confident that automation is not a threat but presents an opportunity for growth. Innovation is the key to survival.

Here are some reasons I would like to mention to support my belief of the benefits of using automation for hiring and retaining employees.

### 1. Enhanced candidate experience

Candidate experience dictates hiring, and automation dictates experience.

With automation, HR departments can speed up and personalize the whole hiring process, which in turn improves the candidate experience. For instance, an automation tool can help you respond to applicants within 12 to 24 hours of receiving their applications.

### 2. Increased transparency

A transparent hiring process goes a long way in improving the bottom line. Automation can make tracking candidates and their applications easy. Customized automation solutions can allow the candidate to track their application status in real-time while helping the hiring managers to keep everyone up to date with the progression of things.

### 3. Improved communication

If an employee feels "out of the loop", he or she will eventually leave the organization in search of better opportunities. Communication binds the organization, and automation improved the bottom line by improving collaboration and communication within the workforce.

### 4. Upskilling opportunities

Automation aids learning opportunities for employees. It helps create more efficient processes, improve safety, shorten training time, and relieve workforce pressures, allowing employees time to upskill themselves and foster a learning culture.

### 5. Enhanced employee satisfaction

Automation does not always supplant human work but in many cases supports it. It's not Machine vs. Humans, but Machine-Human collaboration and has a huge potential to improve employee hiring and retention ♦

# 3 Ways of Turning the UAE's Talent Shortage to Your Advantage

**Mark Ackerman, AREA VP MEA,** Service offers three ways in which businesses can optimize their talent retention & up-skill their talent pool to minimize risk of talent shortages

Let's talk talent. In the UAE and across the world, there is a shortage of it, but demand is greater than ever. The oldest of Generation X will retire within the decade, so catering to younger people, and their digital-native proclivities, is critical to ensure brand longevity. With the right moves, there is a way of turning the talent shortage to your advantage. Here are three ideas to consider.

## 1. Talent-as-a-Service

If you have been an IT decision maker over the past couple of decades, then this scenario must ring true. You read about, or hear about, Company X adopting AI and achieving enviable results. But the project costs millions of dollars that you just don't have and so following in Company X's footsteps seems out of reach. That is, until you hear about this new way of consuming software through subscription. You learn – to your ecstatic delight – that Software-as-a-Service allows you to pay for what you use in a predictable way. You are hooked and never look back.

What if we could do the same thing with talent? Talent-as-a-Service, or more precisely, Expert-as-a-Service, would allow you to shop for specific skills rather than a whole employee. Part of the region's IT skills gap problem is the fact that if you hire an expensive specialist they will take time to add value because they need to learn about your organization before they can effectively identify use cases.

But if you hire, say, three people to fulfil a single data scientist role, while each would have to learn your company history, culture, and objectives, if any of them were to leave, the role would still be served by two others with domain knowledge. You maintain knowledge momentum that cannot be achieved in the classical



Mark Ackerman, AREA VP MEA, ServiceNow



recruitment-and-attrition cycle. What's more, the quality of your innovation is enhanced by the fact that talent in such a fluid market will be more likely to speak up and add value by pointing out opportunities for improvement. This is because they do not need to concern themselves as much with internal politics.

## 2. Automation as standard

Since we now routinely use the word "talent" to refer to our workforce, it is high time we faced up to the wasteful usage of those skills. Every day, across the region, opportunities for potential innovation are squandered by having people doing repetitive, tedious things that would be far better done by machines or software. Not only would human professionals be freed up to focus 100% of their time on the challenging issues they were hired to address, but the mundane tasks would see significant improvements in delivery speed and accuracy.

This practice of automation by default is often one of the first things human-capital

the most common first steps to resignation is an employee asking themselves, "Where is this job going?" Feeling that their routine is stagnant and that there is no chance of change will accelerate the moves revealed by LinkedIn.

Organizations must prevent the perception of a "dead man's shoes" culture, where everyone waits for their line manager to be promoted to get their turn. Unsurprisingly, the answer lies in technology. Each year, greater proportions of the workforce are digital natives who, remember, love self-service. Tech platforms can be used to empower workers to take control of their own careers. Amid a positive digital experience that includes work and admin being easier, why shouldn't professional development follow this pattern?

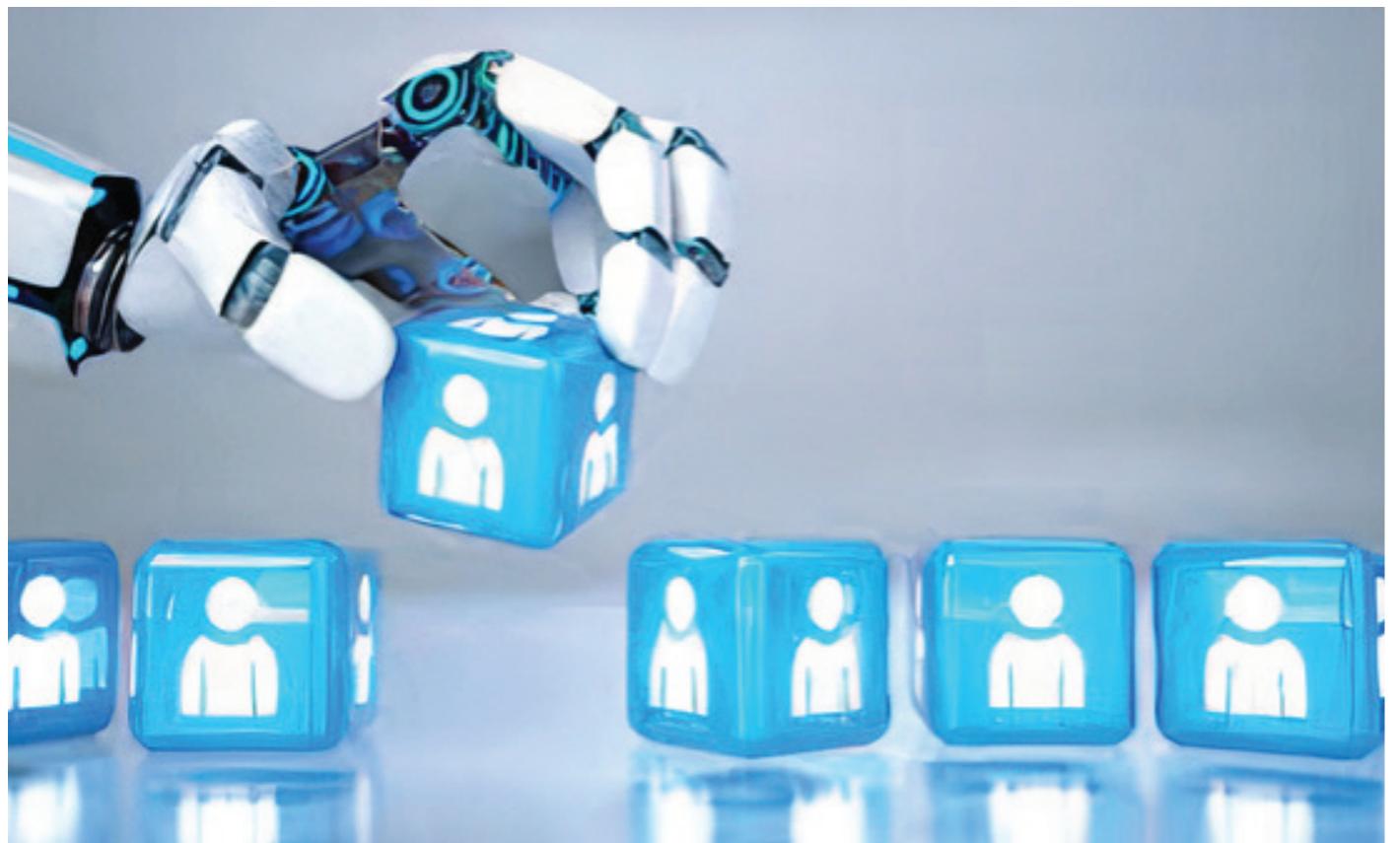
There is one example of technology that provides opportunities for professional development and has the added luxury of adding business value above and beyond talent retention. This is low-code development. Employees can hone their technology skills while businesses accelerate digital transformation. The business also solves the problem of skills gaps by developing line-of-business talent to provide those skills. The self-service nature of LCDPs (low-code development platforms) appeal to millennials and Gen-Z. And we can give them rich careers. LCDPs do not just facilitate development; they include governance and performance-monitoring capabilities that allow even those decision makers that are unfamiliar with the technology to receive actionable insight on which employees are suited to which roles within the digital enterprise.

## Capitalizing on change

If UAE companies are to make the most of global, macroeconomic challenges, they must look to their people, and re-evaluate how they are treated. HR platforms that lubricate the gears of onboarding are important but not enough to lock employees in for the long haul, especially when applying for and transitioning to a new job is becoming easier by the day. Organizations must invest in training for their leaders to ensure they are ready to meet the emotional needs of those under their guidance. Building a sense of trust, more than anything else, can make the difference between being a victim of talent shortage and being a beneficiary of it.

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## Innovative Recruitment Market Place Platform Assists in Saudization

The notion that the recruitment industry could sustain itself on traditional outdated hiring processes, particularly in the face of a growing global skills shortage, swiftly became outdated around 10 years ago, which saw the germination of a concept to alleviate hiring organisations of time consuming, inefficient, and expensive talent sourcing processes -Ubidy.



ACE, founded in 1952, Arab Commercial Enterprises (ACE) is the pioneer of the Saudi Insurance Industry. Being a Saudi based organisation they endeavor to support Saudization (local talent requirements) through regional agency-driven talent acquisition. They

pools of both active as well as passive job seekers.

**Link to read:** <https://ubidy.com/success/acecasestudy/>



were challenged to identify local talent for required roles as well as expat talent which could return to Saudi to fulfil local requirements. The problem was that traditional recruitment processes were becoming less effective, and more expensive and time consuming. ACE needed a solution that would grant swift access to appropriate

# The AI enabled Performance Review App on WhatsApp Launches In Dubai

How experiencing meaningless performance reviews sparked the development of Pulse, a WhatsApp based performance app that literally takes your teams pulse on a weekly basis for an all-inclusive yet minimal cost

Throughout my HR career, I often found traditional performance reviews lacking depth and objectivity. The 1 to 5 rating scale for measuring KPIs and OKRs left employees and managers confused, and I knew there had to be a better way to derive real value from these sessions and generate actionable insights. Inspiration struck when I read an article in Harvard Business Review about the transformation of HR in 2019. Determined to create a more effective system, I decided to experiment with collecting information daily through “pulsing” employees. Initially, some thought I would be measuring their heart rates, but what I meant was engaging them in brief, regular feedback sessions. It took time to see the full benefits, but the approach of gathering first-hand information from employees proved to be groundbreaking.

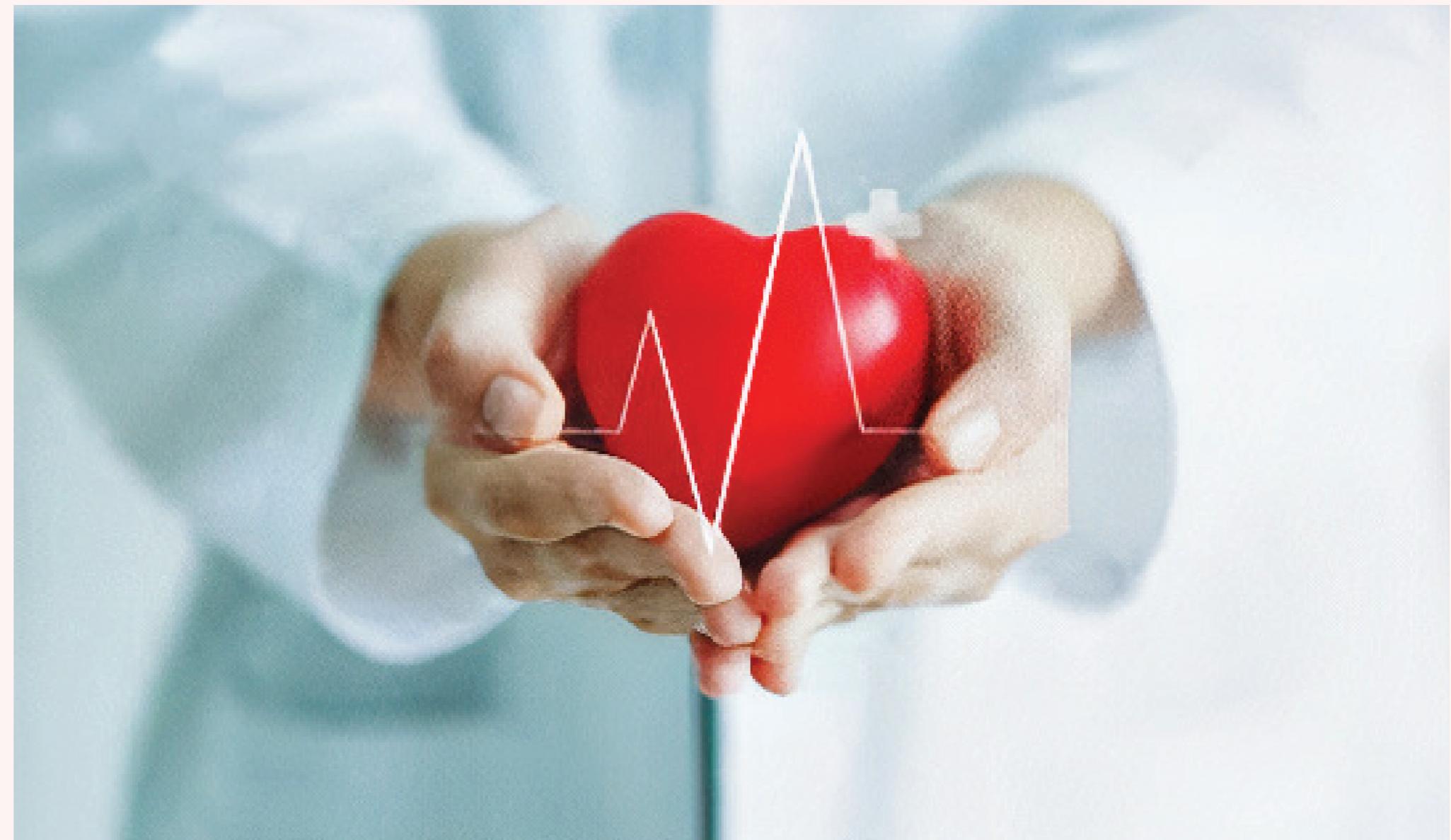
The journey to developing a valuable pulsing system involved several key discoveries:

**Frequency:** Daily pulsing felt like micromanaging, while monthly pulses resulted in missed milestones. We found that weekly pulses struck the right balance, providing timely updates without overwhelming employees.



**By embracing pulsing, companies can cultivate a culture of openness and continuous improvement, empowering employees to take charge of their professional growth one week at a time**

**Questions:** The evolution of the questions was crucial. Initially, we asked about employees’ tasks for the week, but we discovered that asking about their highlights from the past week elicited more meaningful responses. The time component also played a role, as asking in retrospect inspired employees to share inspiring achievements.



**Sentiment Tagging:** Traditional ratings were problematic, so we introduced the concept of sentiment tagging. This involved capturing employees’ feelings about their accomplishments. For example, a highlight could be tagged as “This highlight wasn’t executed as expected” or “It exceeded expectations,” allowing for more nuanced discussions.

**The power of pulsing lies in its bottom-up approach.** Employees are encouraged to share their highlights, which managers can

then discuss and sentiment tag. This shift in conversation empowers employees to craft their own career narratives, fostering a culture of true empowerment.

**Finally, pulsing is not limited to performance reviews.** Over time, the tool can be used for journaling, allowing employees to express their thoughts constructively.

**This channel has proven valuable for HR to be proactive,** leading to the development of work-from-home policies, Employee Assistance Programs, and support for employees

facing financial struggles.

**In conclusion,** pulsing has emerged as the most successful tool in my HR arsenal for unpacking individual performance. Its ability to initiate meaningful conversations and replace outdated rating systems has transformed the way we approach performance reviews. By embracing pulsing, companies can cultivate a culture of openness and continuous improvement, empowering employees to take charge of their professional growth one week at a time

## Unemployment Insurance and Emiratisation Law a Landmark Step to Boost Business in UAE

Unemployment Insurance is a safety net and raising Emiratisation unravels new horizons for national talents and competencies.

**A** new law designed to raise Emiratisation levels and the introduction of Unemployment Insurance is a landmark step in boosting the business environment in the UAE, and aimed at enabling national talents and competencies, strengthening partnership with the private sector, increasing the attractiveness of the UAE labour market and its ability to attract local and international talent by way of incentives and safety nets that support healthy and sustainable economic growth.

The new law on unemployment insurance, and the decision to raise current Emiratisation levels by 2% annually for skilled jobs in private sector establishments with 50 or more employees, and to achieve an increase in the overall rate of Emiratisation of 10% by 2026.

His Excellency Dr. Al Awar also indicated that the priorities of the government focus on economic development and empowerment of human capital to reach the goal of "building the best and most dynamic economy in the world", which mandates integrated solutions aligned with the needs and aspirations of the individuals and society alike, besides enhancing and supporting local resources, ensuring the flexibility of the economy, and consolidating the UAE's reputation as a hub for talent, companies and investments.

### Advantages for companies

His Excellency Dr. Al Awar said that



**His Excellency Dr. Abdulrahman Al Awar, Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation**

the decision to raise the Emiratisation rate annually in the private sector companies offers unprecedented advantages, including reduction of the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation fees by up to about 80% for private companies that make qualitative achievements in hiring and training Emiratis in collaboration with "Nafis".

### Accelerate the integration of national talents

The media briefing also highlighted the opportunities provided by the Cabinet's decision to raise the current Emiratisation rate by 2% annually for skilled jobs in private sector

establishments with 50 employees or more, as part of the amendments to some provisions of the Cabinet Resolution on the initiatives and programs to increase the competitiveness of Emirati human resources "Nafis", which opens new horizons for national qualified and skilled talents in private sector companies and growing a flexible workforce.

His Excellency indicated that the resolution will empower the private sector as well, while achieving the goals of Nafis program. He reiterated that the leadership has allocated around AED24 billion to employ 75,000 citizens in the private sector in the next five years.

### Protection umbrella

The media briefing also highlighted the Cabinet's adoption of a federal law on the unemployment insurance scheme through insurance packages, which aims to ensure the availability of income for the workers during their unemployment until alternative job opportunities are made available.

His Excellency said that the UAE aims to be a leader at all levels, and hence it proudly adopts this innovative scheme of unemployment insurance, which enhances the competitiveness of the UAE labour market and its attractiveness to global talents through solutions that include all private and public sector workers.

### A pivotal role

His Excellency indicated that the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation will play a pivotal role in this scheme, based on its mission to protect labour rights and improve the business environment.

Dr. Al Awar concluded by emphasizing that the new resolutions, whether the unemployment insurance scheme or increasing Emiratisation rates, support the strategic economic security of the UAE in the medium and long term through enhancing the UAE's ability to attract talents and skills from around the world. ♦

## Customers First at Ministry of Human Resources UAE

MoHRE records 18.6 million communication processes with its customers in H1 2023

**T**he Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE) has made around 18.6 million communication processes with its customers in the first half of 2023 via its communication system Tawasul.

The Ministry offers customers and members of the community various channels of communication to submit complaints, inquire about procedures for submitting transactions and requests, receive feedback and suggestions, request technical support, and report violations.

Tawasul channels include MoHRE's call centre 600590000, WhatsApp service, live chat via website, smart app, and email at [ask@mohre.gov.ae](mailto:ask@mohre.gov.ae),

in addition to the Tawasul platform at the MoHRE offices, which allows for video and audio calls with customers.

The Ministry also offers the 'Customers' Voice' system, the 'Customer First' forum, along with its social media accounts @mohre\_uae, interactive voice response system, awareness notifications for employers and employees, and monthly account statement service for establishments.

Hussain Al Alili, Director of the Customer Relations Department at the Ministry, said: "The Tawasul system has proven its efficiency in providing outstanding services to customers, especially in terms of rapid response to inquiries and finding solutions to



**Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation**

the challenges they face, relying on innovative practices that are flexible and proactive."

He added: "The Ministry is committed to providing customers with the highest-quality services, in line with the requirements of the Global Star Rating System for Services, and to pursuing excellence in communicating with customers, fulfilling their needs, and saving their time and effort."

"MoHRE continuously trains its team members to rapidly and seamlessly process the submitted data and carry out their responsibilities accurately and effectively."

According to figures from the Ministry, the call centre handled over 1.337 million calls in the first half of the year. The centre offers services in three primary languages: Arabic, English, and Urdu, as well as 17 additional languages. The system responds to consumer inquiries and requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Its services meet the demands of establishments, employees, domestic workers, employers who hire domestic workers, as well as national cadres.

More than 269,500 communication processes were done via MoHRE's digital channels - including email, social media, and online chat. The Customers' Voice system received 224,000 suggestions and feedback, and the Ministry has sent more than 12 million notifications via email and text messages to raise awareness on relevant legislations, decisions and services it provides, as well as approximately two million monthly account statements.

The Ministry's WhatsApp service recorded over 178,000 chats, while the 'Customer First' forum organised 21 meetings attended by over 3,570 business owners and sent out nearly two million invitations. ♦

# UAE Commits to Shaping a Better Future for Societies

"UAE committed to playing active role in shaping better future for societies," says Al Awar of MoHRE

The UAE is committed to playing an active role in the international efforts to shape a better future for societies and people around the world through creating job opportunities and enhancing human resources' contribution to a sustainable development cycle, His Excellency Dr. Abdulrahman Al Awar, Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation said.

Al Awar delivered this speech at the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' meeting, which was held in India on 20 and 21 July 2023. "The UAE highly values engaging with the member states of the G20, as we want to become a part of the crucial role it plays in setting the global agenda for a better future for our communities," he said.

"As we continue to witness an ever-changing pace of development and technological advancement, regulating employment and improving human resources' skills have become increasingly imperative to our policies. In the UAE, we have ensured gig and platform workers are granted a similar level of coverage as their co-workers in traditional sectors, by obligating employers to offer them social protections as stated in our laws and legislations.

"We have obligated employers to provide insurance that covers workers' entitlements; currently, 97%



**The UAE is committed to playing an active role in the international efforts to shape a better future for societies and people around the world**



■ **His Excellency Dr. Abdulrahman Al Awar, Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation**

of workers in the private sector of the UAE, including those that work in gig and platform economy, are insured under this scheme. More than 70% of workers are also registered in the Unemployment Insurance Scheme, which provides temporary financial income for a period of three months to those who lose their jobs," he added.

"The UAE government recognises the importance of sustainability of systems and the need for them to be adaptive and innovative.

"Our social security schemes reflect a successful public-private partnership. Equally important to the UAE is its commitment to empower women and youth and enable their effective participation and inclusion in the labour market and the sustainable development of the country.◆

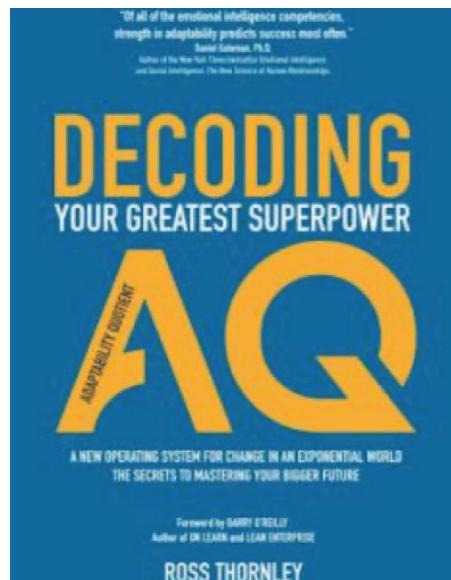
The Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation applauded all G20 member states for "their dedication and commitment to the objectives and vision of the forum," affirming the UAE's "preparedness and support in achieving these objectives to materialise a better future for societies."

The G20 is a major forum for economic cooperation and plays a strategic role in enhancing global economic growth and future prosperity, bringing together leaders of the world's largest economies, with member countries accounting for more than 80% of global GDP and 75% of international trade. G20 member countries are home to nearly 60% of the world's population.◆

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# Decoding AQ Your Greatest Superpower: Ross Thornley

Ross Thornley outlines how this (AQ) is the answer



**Ross Thornley**, Co-Founder and CEO of Aqai – The World's Largest Community of Adaptability Certified Coaches.

The book begins with a startling statement: "As a species, we are currently navigating the most intense period of change that has ever existed in human history." For many of us living through the last three years, it certainly feels so. Ross Thornley asserts that, at no point in our 300,000 years on the planet Earth have we ever had to cope with more rapid change. Let That Sink in!

The good news is, Adaptability is a learned competency!

Yes, you can learn to be adaptable.

Adaptability has been called "the new competitive advantage" by Harvard Business School, and was among the top five skills sought by employers according to the 2019 LinkedIn Global Trends Study, and was the number one soft skill sought by Employers according to the 2019 LinkedIn's Workforce Learning Report.

Decoding AQ Your Greatest Superpower, explains how you can unlock your highest potential through measurement of the abilities, characteristics, and environmental factors which impact the successful behaviours and actions of people & organisations to effectively respond to uncertainty.

It's also a book about fear. How fear can control us, how it can shape and damage our lives. It is about how we can use fear constructively, with Ross citing personal examples of how he coped through life threatening diagnoses of two loved ones, and a

past business decision which could have been detrimental to his future.

Ross defines adaptability as "the capacity to adjust one's thoughts and behaviours in order to effectively respond to uncertainty, new information, or changed circumstances." It is exactly this that enabled Ross to navigate through a very difficult time in his life.

Signs that you may not be exercising your Adaptability Intelligence are:

1. Only Listening to one News Channel
2. Shallow breathing
3. Limiting your goals, based on your past
4. Not challenging others, for fear of conflict

Does this resonate with you? Then Decoding AQ will empower you to not only be able to adapt and survive in the future world, but to thrive and realise your best Self – every day feeling more confident in who you are and what you can achieve.

Decoding AQ Includes:

- Up-to-the-minute data and research on adaptability
- An overview of Aqai's new scientifically validated model of AQ, the A.C.E model
- Practical exercises for raising AQ based on thousands of data-points
- In-depth strategies for integrating AQ with current practices in the workplace and overcoming the corporate immune system response
- And much more

## About the Author

Ross Thornley is an exponential leader, futurist, and adaptability pioneer. He balances the rapid technological world with a peaceful life in the New Forest with his family, growing vegetables and fruit. ♦

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## Dis-Course, HR Conversation Events Coming Soon @ Mea-hr.com

MEA HR & Learning is delighted to announce a new series of events called Dis-Course.

Our first Dis-Course event is coming soon so watch this space.

### What is Dis-Course?

Facilitated discussions on a given HR or Learning Topic.

Dis-Course is a series of facilitated conversations for HR & L&D professionals in the Middle East held in a unique venue and with a unique concept.

The rules of engagement are as follows.

No Facilitator sessions

No Workshop leaders

No Speakers

No PowerPoint

Everyone has a voice as an equal

Lots of small group discussions on the given topic from the HR & Learning Industry

A final summary where everyone comes together and states what they have learned, and what action they are going to take.

### Q&A

#### How do we get involved?

These are limited seats events (50) so drop us an email to confirm your attendance. only then will the venue be revealed if you are successful. [discourse@mea-hr.com](mailto:discourse@mea-hr.com)

#### When is the next event?

November (TBA)

#### What will I get out of the event?

Quite frankly whatever you put in. You will certainly broaden your network and have the chance to express your ideas and opinions while listening to your peers, colleagues and seniors ideas as



well.

#### Where are these series of events held?

Big Boats, Big Villas, University Campuses, and Hotels.

#### What are the topics?

As we all know the remit and depth and breadth of HR & Learning is huge. Topics around AI, HRTech, Mental Health, Law, Compensation & benefits, eLearning, Recruitment, Onboarding, L&D practices etc. Your suggestions and feedback

would be truly appreciated.

#### Can my company sponsor the event?

Yes, there is a sponsorship opportunity, to attend the event, give a short introduction, and, be involved in all the discourse.

#### Can my company host an event?

Absolutely. We would welcome any suggestions.

To get involved email us [discourse@mea-hr.com](mailto:discourse@mea-hr.com)

## Where to find Jobs in the UAE?

Monster.com is one of the foremost websites for jobs available in the UAE.

For the latest in the job market in the UAE search Monster.com. Search for salary and career advice. Monster.com allows you to download your CVs direct, advises you on covering letters, and cv writing. They offer help on interviewing skills, career development and what to do if you wish to move on.



# MEA- HR & LEARNING AWARDS 2023

## Be Recognised for the HR Industry's Broadest Awards Line-up

MEA HR & Learning is very excited to launch THE broadest range of HR & Learning Awards to celebrate & recognize HR Achievers, HR Talent and contributions of our HR stars. The MEA HR & Learning Achievement Awards will recognize the region's most outstanding HR & Learning achievements for 2022. The winners will be announced before the end of 2022. There is no entry fee for nominations. The selection of winning organizations will be based on comprehensive research, ratings from industry experts, and careful deliberations on their innovations, services, and solutions.

**MEA -HR Awards Entry Submission Deadline: 21 November 2023**

## HR & LEARNING AWARD CATEGORIES

- HR TEAM OF THE YEAR
- L&D TEAM OF THE YEAR
- BEST LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
- BEST TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
- BEST COVID 19 RESPONSE STRATEGY
- BEST HR TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY
- BEST RECRUITMENT STRATEGY
- BEST CSR STRATEGY
- BEST REWARD & RECOGNITION STRATEGY
- BEST CAREER PLANNING & MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
- BEST APPROACHES IN TALENT ACQUISITION
- BEST USE OF DIVERSITY/INCLUSION/EQUITY/EQUALITY
- BEST TALENT SPOTTING APPROACHES
- BEST ADVANCES IN GAMING/GAMIFICATION / SIMULATION TECHNOLOGY
- BEST USES OF MOBILE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY
- BEST APPROACHES TO BEING A FULL-FLEDGED PARTNER TO THE BUSINESSES
- BEST BLENDED LEARNING PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- BEST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & RETENTION STRATEGIES
- BEST ADVANCES IN LEADING A REMOTE WORKFORCE
- BEST APPROACHES IN L&D IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
- BEST APPROACHES IN LEARNING MEASUREMENT
- BEST USE OF SUPPORT STRUCTURES POST TRAINING
- BEST ONBOARDING STRATEGIES
- BEST HIPO STRATEGIES
- BEST APPROACHES TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
- BEST PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
- BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN TRAINING
- BEST INTERNAL AWARDS STRATEGY
- BEST FLEXIBLE WORK STRATEGY
- BEST ON-THE-JOB TRAINING STRUCTURE
- BEST LEARNING MEASUREMENT STRATEGIES
- BEST TNA STRATEGIES
- BEST USE OF AI / VR / AR
- BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERNAL E-LEARNING

Awards - MEA HR & Learning ([mea-hr.com](http://mea-hr.com))



