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BESPOKE TRAINING GROWS AS RELIANCE ON OIL DROPS

The regional market for executive education is competitive and growing. Local business schools and universities are strengthening their offerings and competing with an increasing number of international providers, who are bringing their master of business administration (MBA), executive MBA (EMBA), master of science (MSc) and other programmes to the GCC. As the low oil price persists, pressure on governments to expand economic growth in sectors beyond hydrocarbons is growing too.

"We are seeing growth in demand for executive education as countries diversify. The attempt to shift away from the oil industry means that diversification in the type of executive education [available] has also been seen," says Roland Hancock, Middle East education director for US-headquartered consultant PwC. "That means more tailored demand by employers who expect more relevant content for their people. The challenge for business schools is in how they ensure their provision is relevant for each of their clients."

Business schools are catering to these needs both by updating their MBA and EMBA courses with new modules and by working with clients on bespoke customised programmes. Cass Business School, part of City University London, has delivered its EMBA, which is part-time over two years, since 2007 and says numbers remain stable at 45-55 students a year. The school has con-

tinued to update its content every year, responding to market demand, and claims to have been the first leading business school to include an Islamic finance specialisation. Specialisations in energy and entrepreneurship followed.

"We see a lot of students that go on to open their own businesses at some point, more than 80 per cent. So we responded to this demand," says Ehsan Razavizadeh, head of the Dubai Centre for Cass Business School. The school has also incorporated opportunities for international travel to a wide range of countries, offers three MSc programmes, and plans to expand its wider course offerings by bringing in some of the specialisms of other parts of City University, such as law, health, social sciences and art.

Soft skills

At the School of Business Administration at the American University of Sharjah, Martin Spraggon, director of executive education, says the market is demanding more training in developing the soft skills of executive teams and key employees. "Recently, we have been delivering to a variety of organisations, operating in a diversity of industries, different workshops and customised training on emotionally intelligent leadership, coaching and motivation. In addition, we have signed and launched a number of long-term new leadership development programmes with com-

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panies from Sharjah and other emirates.” Furthermore, he says, demand is growing for workshops in areas such as corporate governance and compliance, crafting winning strategies, money laundering, and design thinking and innovation.

New thinking is certainly high on the agenda for the UAE, which made 2015 its Year of Innovation. President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahyan declared that an emphasis would be put on supporting the federal government to develop the skills needed to lead the UAE to a future of prosperity and innovation. As part of this, the UAE turned to the Judge Business School, part of the UK's University of Cambridge, to create a bespoke training programme for government executives.

“It is a public sector innovation programme that is aiming to bring up senior executives from more than 45 ministries in the UAE to become innovation champions,” says Cathy Butler, business development director for the Middle East at Judge Business School. Driven by the Prime Minister's Office, with the Mohammed bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation, the modular programme is one year long and is locally accredited by the University of Sharjah.

In the private sector, Butler points to work the business school is doing with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences on their Innovation Challenge programme. This will involve teams from 10 private sector organisations in industries from financial services to oil and gas companies to service providers. “We are going to be running a six-month programme and will deliver a few modules in Kuwait and one module at Cambridge,” says Butler.

Innovation study

The Middle East Centre of Manchester Business School has also recognised the importance of innovation to the region. To coincide with the innovation year it has launched a research project to discover more about creativity and innovation in the GCC. The first findings from the study will be revealed at the end of 2015, with full publication in 2016. The project is one of many initiatives under way at the school, which next year will celebrate 10 years in Dubai.

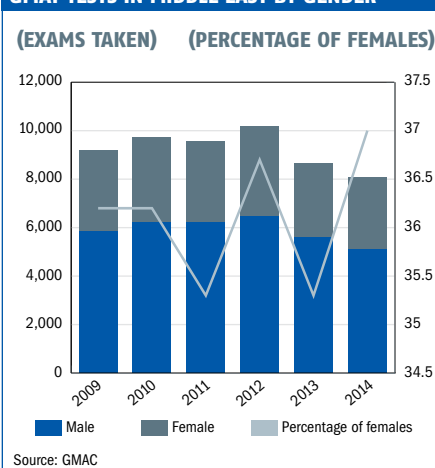
Its courses include a full-time MBA, a part-time global MBA and a new EMBA launched in 2014. These sit alongside bespoke courses that the school creates with a range of companies and organisations described by director of the school Randa Bessiso as “talent management partners”. Bessiso says that, despite healthy competition, the school continues to grow in response to the need to keep up with the demand for skilled professionals. “Companies now find themselves facing competition to recruit and retain high-level, skilled people. That explains

GMAT TESTS IN MIDDLE EAST BY COUNTRY

Country of citizenship	2013	Average score 2013	2014	Average score 2014
Saudi Arabia	2,375	311	2,198	307
Turkey	1,340	550	1,179	552
Lebanon	1,111	492	1,038	492
Kuwait	593	344	702	330
Iran	572	520	471	521
Jordan	237	440	58	448
UAE	121	385	72	416
Palestine	109	389	139	379
Syria	89	470	107	483
Bahrain	84	427	54	389
Iraq	63	360	58	352
Oman	52	405	34	420
Qatar	31	441	40	355
Yemen	30	395	29	388
World average		546		550

GMAT=Graduate Management Admissions Test. Source: GMAC

GMAT TESTS IN MIDDLE EAST BY GENDER



why we have seen a rise in company-sponsored students on our MBA programme,” she says.

Also on the increase are bespoke courses developed for specific businesses. For example, at Abu Dhabi's Insead, the Executive Leadership Programme was started when a group of UAE companies formed a consortium and invited business schools to bid for work. Launched in 2012, the scheme saw its third cohort of students graduate in early October this year and has trained 87 executives from UAE-based companies including Du, Emirates Global Aluminium, First Gulf Bank, Enoc and Ericsson.

Quantifying overall regional demand for executive education is difficult, with a dearth of data on the number of professionals undertaking further business education. However, data from the Graduate Management Admissions Council (GMAC) on citizens from the Middle East sitting the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), which is required by the world's leading

TOWARDS DIVERSITY

The number of females from the Middle East sitting the GMAT has marginally increased over the past five years from a steady 36 per cent to 37 per cent. The global average is 43 per cent. Manchester Business School says it has been actively recruiting more female students, who, according to Bessiso, tend to perform exceptionally well on the MBA programmes.

Businesses have recognised that more can be done to support their female executives and training for women in leadership is growing. “We are about to do more in Saudi Arabia with a partner there who is very interested in the area of women in leadership,” says Butler. “There are a lot of very strong, highly capable women in business in the Middle East so it is a question of making sure that good practice is continuing, especially in places that are more challenging, such as Saudi Arabia, where there are pockets of very positive activity in terms of helping women into more senior positions.”


Diversity in terms of nationality of participants is another key feature of regional programmes. The Cass EMBA has executives from 20 different countries on the course, which started this September with 15 of the 46 students flying in for the four-day modules.

business schools for their MBA programmes, shows a 7 per cent decline in the 2014 testing year, in contrast to a 2 per cent rise worldwide. In 2014, 8,094 Middle East citizens sat the exam, compared with 8,647 in 2013.

At the same time, data from GMAC shows an increase in the number of business schools using the GMAT scores in the Middle East. Today there are 75, up from 60 in 2012 and 40 in 2008, which is a sign of the market maturing.

Opportunities evolving

Although the sector remains one of growth and much activity, issues remain. Programmes have been put on hold by some clients, particularly in the energy sector. And, unlike Manchester, some schools report a drop in corporate financing for MBAs, with fees paid privately instead.

But opportunities in executive education are evolving, with companies becoming more discerning about training. Creating and delivering this requires the support of business schools, universities or professional service firms and will ultimately add to the depth and number of options available, which can only be a good thing for the region's expanding economies. 

Bernadette Ballantyne

COURSES MUST BE GAME CHANGERS

Employers are seeking customised executive training that has a big impact on organisational effectiveness and offers good returns on investment

Of all the current trends in executive education, the biggest is a drive for demonstrable value. Companies and governments are increasingly demanding that expensive courses deliver real returns in the form of improved staff performance.

This is in sharp contrast to the way companies previously regarded education, according to Adam Kingl, executive director for learning solutions, executive education, at London Business School (LBS).

"In the past, executive education was sometimes offered merely as a reward, and maybe either in addition to or instead of a raise or other benefits. 'We'd love to offer you a 10 per cent raise, but we can only offer you 3 per cent, and this course,'" he says. "But that's changing. Now it's companies saying, this individual, this team, this department or office needs to raise its game, or knowledge or skills, in certain areas."

Custom courses

Kingl says this is driving another major trend towards custom-designed courses. "So, rather than looking for precisely the right course to meet that need, they work with a school to create exactly what's required."

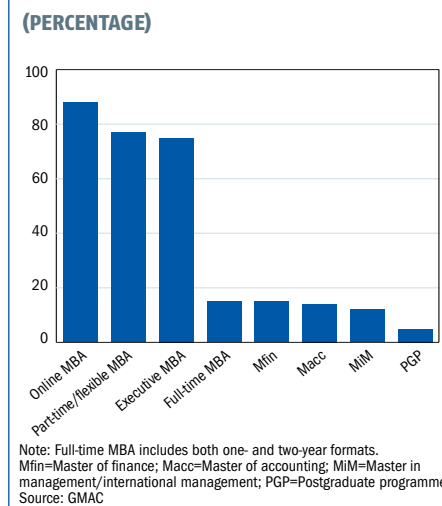
Kingl says LBS has seen the split between open enrolment and custom-designed programmes shift from roughly 50-50 to 55-45 in favour of custom courses. LBS now runs bespoke programmes for clients including Kuwait Petroleum and Oman Oil in the region, and Mars and H E Kearney internationally.

"Particularly what we're finding in the Middle East is that five or 10 years ago most of what we did for companies in the GCC was open enrolment, and open enrolment plus customised elements. Increasingly, we are [now] doing fully customised programmes for those companies, either delivered in the GCC or here in London – or elsewhere in the world," he says.

Many executive education providers agree the GCC is a keen market for customised courses, with one key driver being the major nationalisation programmes most governments in the region are pursuing.

"If you look at these markets with the backdrop of a big localisation agenda, the GCC gov-

GRADUATES PLANNING TO STAY IN CURRENT JOB



ernments are investing a lot in their people, to make sure they can make a big contribution to their own economies and run their organisations, public and private. There's a lot of money being invested in local nationals – and in response to that, they certainly want things to happen quickly, and they also want a return on their investment," says Rory Hendrikz, Middle East director at Ashridge, a UK-based executive education provider.

"They're looking at a big impact in terms of individuals, and how that translates into organisational effectiveness. But they're also looking for executive education that's highly relevant to the regional context, the cultural context. That means we are in a place where customisation of executive education is a priority," he adds.

Laoucine Kerbache, CEO and academic dean of HEC Paris in Qatar, says, "We have more and

"Rather than looking for precisely the right course ... [companies] work with a school to create what's required"

Adam Kingl, London Business School

more enquiries from companies for custom programmes. It's very important for companies that want to have a critical mass of people to develop a common culture within the company, especially here in the Middle East. One of the big challenges is how to manage knowledge management, different nationalities and people with no long-term commitment."

Leadership training

Hendrikz sees leadership training as one of the main priorities for regional clients. "I would imagine that in order to be successful out here, you have to be more sophisticated in how you approach leadership. You've got to be understanding of the realities in this marketplace; you've got to invest in regional research."

He says the arrival into the workforce of Generation Y – generally classed as people born after 1980 – has caused a shift in the style of leadership required, thanks to the new generation's different attitudes towards management and leaders. "How are they going to respond to leadership, how are leaders going to engage them, how are people like us going to develop them, because they learn and are stimulated in different ways?" he asks. "It's really important that executive education providers understand that part of the phenomena."

But Ronald Bradfield, manager of the University of Strathclyde Graduate School of Business in the UAE, believes leadership training is on the wane. He is concerned it, and other subjects, are just fads, unrelated to the core issues executive education courses should tackle.

"Part of my problem is this flavour of the month stuff. Every second week or so, we've got another course on leadership. That's dying down, and now it's 'smart cities' and innovation. To tell you the truth, I think most of it is garbage," he says. "In the UK, innovation is big as well. But is innovation new? It's been around for thousands of years. If you do a three-day course on innovation, that's going to make you an innovator? I don't think so."

He adds: "There are too many people looking at other places, and saying 'they're running all these courses on this and that, and we should do the same' – and I say yes, but let's look at it in

five years' time and see if they're still running those courses, and often they're not. I've seen it on leadership – they used to run courses almost every week on leadership, but in the last year or two I've seen fewer and fewer courses on that."

Bradfield takes a dim view of those seeking to meddle with the basic elements of MBA programmes: "There have been people who have said we should get rid of this course or that course, and have more courses on social media and things like that. Ok, that's good stuff, it's trending stuff – so let's offer an elective on it. But it's not core to the MBA, to the fundamentals of running a business. Yes it can be an elective, and an interesting elective, but you can only do that when you've understood the fundamentals."

Online provision

He also sees the move towards online provision of courses as a negative trend, and this is a view shared by many others. Certain elements of online interaction can add value, says Bradfield, but offering an entire course purely online is not something he sees lasting into the future.

"We run an MBA for Iberdrola, a Spanish company, and students come from eight different continents. They talk a lot on Skype and Google, and we encourage this – it's really valuable. But when it's something that is purely online, with no interaction, I think it's not a particularly bright idea. And I think we'll see the death of it within the next 10 years," he says.

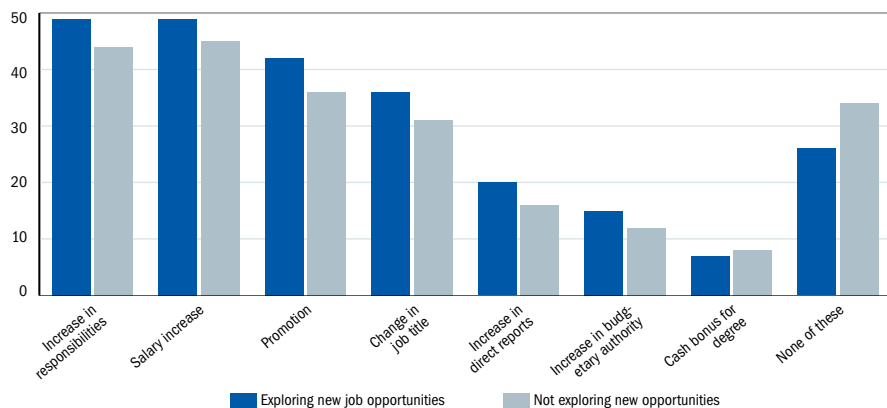
A trend Bradfield sees more value in is the move to offer more coaching as part of executive education courses. "Up until five years ago, you never needed to do any coaching in executive education, but more and more we're getting students saying they need to do this and that, and asking if we can help. So we do run some coaching classes now, and I think that is important, because the world's a pretty complex place right now. I know it's always been complex, but the speed of change has accelerated, and that's part of the problem our students face: what was good five years ago is suddenly no longer there."

Kingl has also seen the proportion of courses on LBS's programme that involve coaching rise from 25-30 per cent a few years ago to at least 50 per cent.

He says companies are still keen to provide their students with exposure to international elements within a course, including delivering parts of it away from the home campus. "As we speak, I have staff in Silicon Valley who are creating a discovery visit week for our Kuwait Petroleum course, where one of five or six modules of the course would be delivered there, to discuss entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship."

EXPECTED POST-DEGREE JOB BENEFITS FOR GRADUATES

(PERCENTAGE)



Source: GMAC

EDUCATION PROVIDERS TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH



Looking to the future, Hendrikz identifies another trend as an increasing focus on the whole person of the executive, including the body itself. "We've spent a lot of time considering the physical aspects of a leader," he says. "If you take into consideration the amount of pressure and stress that leaders deal with, it's not like in a sporting event where you come up

onto the rugby field, and players have to be at peak performance for 80 minutes at a time. Managers have to operate at peak performance for weeks, months and years at a time."

He says education providers are increasingly aware of the effects the physical body has on cognition and emotional intelligence, as well as issues like sleep. "If an executive loses an hour of their normal sleep patterns, it has a major impact on their executive functions, their functions around judgment, decision-making and their creativity. All of these things can be negatively affected. If, as a business school, we were able to skill somebody up to 100 per cent – which will never be the case – and then they go away and have a bad night's sleep and arrive into the office not firing on all cylinders, that has a big impact."

Kerbache takes a slightly different view of this, believing the first priority is to deliver as much of the course as possible locally. "There is a big expectation from companies in the region to have quality providers of executive education do the training locally, and not take people somewhere else," he says.

He says the executive MBA is slightly different, as the smaller numbers of students

involved mean international courses are less problematic. "We give them possibilities to do majors, and give them 14 locations from which they can pick. But we also host here in Doha people who are coming from China, from Paris. They could be Russians, Polish, Taiwanese and so on, and they attend with the local cohort, which is already very international.

"For some companies, such as Ooredoo or King Faisal Hospital, we take them on a business trip. They do the programme, and then we take the Ooredoo team, say, for a trip to London, Paris or Stockholm, so we can visit different institutions, different companies, so they can get to see and confront their own practices – beyond their case studies and the faculty who have flown in to the Middle East," he adds.

"The speed of change has accelerated ... What was good five years ago is suddenly no longer there"

Ronald Bradfield, University of Strathclyde

Eliot Beer

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COURSE

MEED asked academics what prospective executives should consider when selecting a further education programme

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?

Would-be students should be very clear about what they want from a course – and for many, a good place to start is a discussion with their employer, says Adam Kingl, executive director for learning solutions, executive education, at London Business School (LBS). “They have to have a very deep conversation both with their manager and with their human resources (HR) department about what the gaps are in terms of where they are now and where they want to be. Then they should do their research and look at the options.”

For some, the degree itself may be the most critical thing, according to Laoucine Kerbache, CEO and academic dean of HEC Paris in Qatar.

“There’s a cultural component for some people from different regions of the world, where the diploma is very important. I have been going to China for the past 20 years, and for them the degree is hugely important – and I think for this region it’s also the case.”

But for others, says Kerbache, the main issue is matching their skills to their roles: “People realise they’re lacking the fundamentals – the drivers, the framework – that will elevate them and the performances of their companies. Somebody who is in oil and gas as an offshore drilling engineer and suddenly finds himself the chief operating officer of his company is facing a dilemma of not knowing how to manage HR, marketing and so on.”

Kingl also notes that a course such as an executive MBA may not help you get a new job, at least in the short term.

“It’s tougher when doing an executive MBA while you’re in work to then use that MBA to change jobs. That [qualification] would probably be more for development within your organisation. Often people will do a full-time MBA in order to change careers, industries or functions.”

WHERE TO STUDY?

As executive education has become more focused on delivering results for companies, the scope to study abroad has lessened. But many institutions offer some flexibility to take some courses in different parts of the world, often at their home campus.

“We offer a range of electives in our centres, but in Glasgow we offer a huge range. Students go not just for the electives, but the experience of living in Scotland for a while, meeting other students, meeting academics,” says the University of Strathclyde’s Bradfield.

“The advantage of doing a course abroad is you’re going to meet a different set of people, experience a different culture, different ways of doing business,” he says.

For those considering a longer session of international study, LBS’s Kingl suggests considering what you, or your company, can gain from the experience. “If, for example, your company wants to improve its market share in Europe, look at European business schools.”

CUSTOM OR OPEN?

Many companies now offer customised executive courses, designed specifically for them in conjunction with an academic institution. But most custom programmes do not issue degrees, which might cause some students to think twice about choosing these courses – even if the alternative is not subsidised.

“Some people in a custom programme, who are putting in a lot of their own time, sacrificing weekends and so on, may say this is the time for them to embark on an executive MBA, rather than a custom programme,” says Kerbache.

But he adds that a lot of the skills in a custom course may be transferable. “Although it’s true that we cater specifically to the needs of the company, we still have a core that is standard – which a person can eventually leave with, and go somewhere else. On a CV you can say you’ve been going through these custom programmes. It could also be an element that you can market and leverage if you go elsewhere.”



WHAT TYPE OF COURSE?

From degree-granting MBA courses to short modules lasting just a few days, there is a huge variety in the scope and scale of executive education courses. Picking the most suitable one means sticking to your clearly-defined goals.

“What do you most need? Is it a focused need – to understand pricing, strategy or leadership better? Then an executive education course would be good,” says Kingl. “If, on the other hand, you need a general management suite of learning, then you could look at either executive education or an executive MBA. Then the question is, how much are you and your company prepared to commit to?”

“If it’s something like four weeks, then it will probably be an open enrolment programme – but if you want two years of off-and-on learning, then the executive MBA might be for you.”

Ronald Bradfield, manager of the University of Strathclyde Graduate School of Business, says, “If you want to progress from technical to general management, you should be thinking about a good MBA – a degree about the breadth of study. If you want to remain a technical specialist in a particular area ... you do an MSc – a specialist degree about depth of study.”

Cost is another factor, especially for those students whose learning will not be subsidised by their employer. HEC Paris’s executive MBA costs \$90,000, with some other courses coming in at even more.

Bradfield suggests many ‘premium’ courses are as much about networking as learning. “Your alumni are going to be a very powerful group of people, and that’s not about learning, but networking and being in the company of other potential CEOs.

“People will go to [big name business schools] not because they want to learn, but because they want to network with a powerful group. That’s fine for a small group of people, but for the average person it’s not going to work. Apart from the cost, what are you actually going to learn that you can apply?”

“If you want two years of off-and-on learning, then the executive MBA might be for you”

Adam Kingl, London Business School



ONLINE OR OFFLINE?

Courses delivered purely online are increasingly abundant and attractive in terms of price and the range of options. But many executive education providers are dismissive of the benefits, and do not see them as offering value.

“I’m a firm believer that in executive education, at least at the level of our programmes, it would be very difficult to achieve our objectives if we deliver our content online,” says Kerbach.

“I think participation in class, cross-discussions, group work, confrontations of experiences are important. We do case studies developed from companies that are operating here.”

Ronald Bradfield, manager of the University of Strathclyde Graduate School of Business, says: “In the UAE, online courses are not accredited by the government, and that’s a good reason for not doing an online course. I don’t mind if you have a particular interest – I’ve done some online courses because I’m interested in particular areas – but learning is pretty nominal when you’re doing an online course. There’s

nobody to interact with, nobody to discuss, debate and share ideas with. It’s just you and your computer.

“For me, the real value of education is the interaction between the students and academics, sharing and discussing. When you’re sitting at home on your computer, what are you actually learning? How do you interact with other people and discuss and debate these ideas? You don’t.”

Kerbach suggests there is a middle ground between online and offline learning. He says HEC Paris uses online material to allow students to explore a subject in greater depth than is possible in the short time available for a module.

“Even if we do five or six hours a day for 12 days, we don’t cover a lot of the main corpus of a specific subject – so we put reading, cases, articles, papers and videos online for [students]. If we were delivering standard content at undergraduate level, and I was teaching a class of 100 students in a passive mode, then I imagine that could be done online,” he says.

CASE STUDY

LS, an Emirati manager working at a government-owned company in Dubai, is doing a certificate of project management course at Penn State's World Campus. She plans to complete the 12-credit programme within two and a half years.



Classes are all conducted online and can be done at my pace for the most part. This is my first semester of the certificate so I've started off by doing the Introduction to Project Management course. There are weekly readings and lectures, which I need to participate in by posting comments in the discussion boards. In addition, there is a virtual simulation where a team of us manage a project, competing against other class members to get it done successfully (in time and within the allocated budget).

I first started looking for courses in Dubai. However, I couldn't find any that were suitable for my schedule. I was surprised by the lack of evening courses on offer. I work full-time, with sometimes unpredictable hours, so can't always commit to a fixed schedule for evening classes. I thought an online course might suit my schedule more, especially considering the variety of courses available once I looked beyond educational institutes in Dubai.

Unfortunately, my employer only provides financial assistance for educational institutes within Dubai, which is a pity as there aren't any similar courses offered here.

I was apprehensive about doing an online course, however. It is so easy to fall behind as

you need real discipline to keep on top of assignments, reading and so on. My preference would have been a course on Saturdays from a reputable institute here in Dubai, as it would have helped me stay on track, as well as given me the chance to meet new people in Dubai.

Choosing Penn State's World Campus was easy – it's a school with a great reputation, so would be credible despite the online nature of the certificate (I'm not entirely sure how employers/recruiters view online degrees). In addition, depending on how the courses go, I can choose to apply for the 30-credit master of project management degree after completing the certificate, so I'd be almost halfway to a master's degree.

I'd been thinking of taking a course for a while, to learn new skills. On-the-job experience


“There is a virtual simulation where a team of us manage a project, competing against other class members to get it done successfully”

Emirati manager

is important. However, I felt that I could supplement it with some courses. I've been involved in more projects lately and thought this would give me insight into best practice, as well as giving me an edge over the competition, should I choose to search for a new job.

I hope that this course will improve my project management skills through textbook learning, as well as in my discussions with other classmates who have very different backgrounds and work in different industries. Learning about the challenges they face, and offering my perspective (and vice versa) has been quite illuminating.

Project management isn't a field that dramatically changes, so once I understand and can use the principles properly, I imagine this will be a lifelong skill I can use. In addition, I expect that this will be a good addition to my CV as it demonstrates that I'm interested in furthering my education, and have new skills to offer potential employers.

Browsing through the available courses both at Penn State and other US universities, I'd definitely consider doing more courses in different fields to improve my knowledge, both on subjects in my field and in fields that I have a general interest in. 

CREATING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

Organisational nimbleness, risk-taking and continuous learning must be promoted if the UAE's competitiveness is to be enhanced

The Global Competitiveness Report (GCR) is a comprehensive annual benchmark of countries' competitiveness that provides a detailed picture of a nation's economic environment and assesses its ability to achieve sustained levels of growth and prosperity.

In the GCR 2015-16, the UAE is ranked 17th among 140 participating countries, losing five positions from last year's ranking. Moreover, in terms of its 'capacity for innovation' – the first of the seven factors constituting the 'innovation pillar' – the UAE is in 26th position, which appears to be far behind international standards compared with other top-ranked countries.

At the same time, the modest quality of scientific research institutions (ranked 30th), lack of university-industry collaboration in research and development (ranked 22nd) and companies' low spending on research and development (ranked 22nd) hinder the UAE's innovation capacity, which still remains behind top international levels.

Organisational culture

To enhance its national competitiveness, the UAE needs to strengthen its capacity for innovation by upgrading its scientific research and investing more in training and development. The UAE needs to considerably strengthen its capacity to innovate.

There are several ways corporate leaders can enhance the innovation capacity of their employees and organisations. One of the most important sources of innovation and competitive advantage is organisational culture and the mindset of workers. Creating a 'culture of innovation' that encourages employees to take risks, be more playful, explore and pursue new trajectories, think out-of-the-box and in a divergent fashion, and share know-how and best practices internally in the workplace can be a winning strategy.

In order to engage in the arduous journey of transforming the mindset of employees, top management needs to be ready to challenge the status quo, facilitate organisational nimbleness, encourage risk-taking and



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exploration, and enable a culture of continuous learning.

In an environment characterised by frequent technological disruptions, changes in customer behaviour, alterations in communication patterns, and shortages of critical resources, the principles of 'business as usual' do not apply.

Companies that seek to capture competitive advantage in today's increasingly complex world ought to embrace this dynamic reality by infusing a 'design thinking culture' throughout the whole enterprise.

This implies a new way of thinking, working and interacting with colleagues, customers and stakeholders that allows seizing unexplored business opportunities and improving the quality of decisions made. Leading-edge organisations that transform design thinking into strategy succeed in navigating through uncertainty and delivering

"In the GCR 2015-16, the UAE is ranked 17th among 140 participating countries, losing five positions from last year"




UAE: Research needs to be given a higher priority

consistent value from product/service and process innovations.

Another critical source of innovation and competitive advantage is organisational and workers' knowledge. Implementing effective knowledge creation and transfer processes through which knowledge is strategically managed, and adopting a suitable organisational configuration along with procedures and policies that support employees' proactive behaviours and knowledge fluidity can help firms enhance their innovation outcomes, become learning organisations, increase productivity and secure organisational success.

National priority

Policymakers are focusing their efforts on finding means of dealing with the increasing turbulence and instability we are currently witnessing, and organising their economies to ensure higher innovation productivity in a business environment characterised by vertiginous technological changes. In this context, putting in place the foundation pillars of economic growth and innovation capability development becomes an urgent national priority for many countries around the globe. 

Martin Spraggon

THE FUTURE IS 'BUSINESS UNUSUAL'

In today's fast-changing business environment, scenario planning models are more effective than those based on historical experience

Almost every day we hear about yet another company that is restructuring, rationalising its activities, trimming its workforce or closing down. At the same time, companies are investing heavily in implementing processes and systems such as 'Value-based Management', 'Lean Six Sigma', 'Customer Relationship Management' and, of course, 'e-everything'.

What does this tell you about the state of management? Among other things, it indicates that managers today are confused, because they are operating in a complex and uncertain business environment that is changing faster than their ability to understand what is happening, and they have no idea where it is heading.

Rapid transformation

We are, according to many writers, living in an age of uncertainty and paradox in which our world is being transformed at an exponential rate. The causes of this are numerous and multifaceted, and include the advent of globalisation and global hyper-competition, the increasing amplitude of economic cycles, the unprecedented speed of technological innovations, ideological, cultural and societal value shifts, changing demographics and the unparalleled explosion of knowledge.

Meanwhile, the science of networks is beginning to show us that everything in life is part of a wider, non-linear and interconnected milieu. As the financial crises in 2007 demonstrated, what may appear as standalone events in distant parts of the world are, in fact, all part of interacting systems that combine to form complex global systems. It is little wonder that managers are confused; they are having to deal with larger-scale, more complex, more systematically interwoven and more perplexing problems today than at any time in the past.

More importantly, they have discovered that traditional managerial recipes that have worked so well in the past are no longer effective in the new environment. 'Business as usual' has been replaced by 'business unusual'.

How do managers make decisions about the future? Empirical evidence suggests they tend to rely upon a combination of intuition and past



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experience. Although there is an important element of practicality that comes from experience, past experience is no longer a sure guide to the future. At the same time, the emphasis in developing planning models has been on improving the accuracy of forecasts, the assumption being that the key to enhancing accuracy revolves around the ability to improve the modelling of past trends and relationships, and simultaneously considering as many factors as possible. The result is that planning models have become increasingly sophisticated and complex.

However, comparative forecasting studies have shown that complex models usually produce no better results than simpler models and the models fail when needed most – when there are rapid and profound structural changes in the business environment, as is currently the case.

The consequence is there appears to be a growing awareness that what is needed is not more of the traditional 'predict and control' planning models based on historical experience, but

"The scenario methodology assumes it is neither useful nor possible to forecast the future"




Strathclyde: Staff have expertise in scenario planning

a new approach that adopts a pluralistic view of the future business environment without presupposing it to be well established. Scenario planning is such an approach.

Scenario planning

The significant departure of scenario planning from conventional long-term planning models is that the scenario methodology assumes it is neither useful nor possible to forecast the future, and therefore presents the future not as a single-point estimate, but rather as a range of plausible and bounded alternatives. The focus is on understanding the interactions of the amalgam of driving forces in the contextual environment in which all businesses operate but over which individuals, businesses and governments have little control or influence.

Over the 20 years we have been running a scenario-planning course as part of the Strathclyde MBA's strategy module, students have repeatedly expressed wonder that their companies do not use these tools. A scenario methodology, known as the intuitive logics model, is used to develop a set of scenarios that outline the limits of possibility and plausibility detailing the interplay between forces in a contextual environment, to start thinking about how the future may evolve and what a company must do to survive. The process is intense and time-consuming, but produces more than the same old template-based strategies that may have worked in the past but are not working now and will not work in the future. 

Ron Bradfield

5 WAYS TO BE A POLITICIAN AT WORK

Developing strong political skills is an essential part of becoming an effective leader who gets things done and gets ahead

Leaders are smart people, but they can often be remarkably stupid. Too often they assume problems can be solved with superior analytical abilities. This means they spend their time trying to come up with the most rational solution. However, these technically perfect results frequently run into stiff opposition and eventually get dropped, often in favour of an inferior solution. This can be disastrous. It can mean good ideas get shelved, talented people become frustrated and demotivated, and organisations get weighed down.

We think the reason behind this is many leaders convince themselves that someone's analytical abilities are the only quality that matters. Some leaders try to build up their emotional intelligence, but what is still too often overlooked is political skill. This is the understanding of how power and politics works in an organisation.

Political skill is a vital ability that helps good leaders make their way through the corporate jungle. Leaders with highly developed political skill do five things that make it easier for them to climb the corporate greasy pole:

They accept politics is a part of life

The majority of seasoned leaders believe that politics in organisational life is a damaging waste of time. This puts a handbrake on their ability to get things done and get ahead. Politically savvy leaders drop the fallacy that politics is always dirty and destructive. They accept that understanding the political is an essential part of achieving tasks both small and large. This helps them to think ahead and devote time and effort to getting the politics right around a particular project, rather than simply focusing on how the most rational decision can be delivered on time.

They nurture their political skills

We often believe that some people are, by nature, politically astute. However, political skill is learned. Good training institutions recognise this when they create situations and scenarios that school leaders in the art of politics. For instance, one of the big lessons students learn in the MBA classroom is how to gain airtime



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among many other bright people and how to shift the direction of argument and debate. It is likely that those with high political intelligence have experienced a number of these pressure-cooker situations that teach them how to simultaneously compete and collaborate in order to advance themselves and their projects.

They understand their firm's political map

Leaders with strong political nous look beyond the formal chain of command to see the informal political map of the organisation. They ask themselves questions such as: Who controls the most important resources in my firm? What do the informal social networks look like? What are the deeply rooted values in my organisation? Which identities are most important?

By exploring each of these questions, a politically skilled leader can start to see beyond the official story to the real mechanisms through which power works. They see who controls

resources, who is connected, which arguments win and who is respected. This gives them a road map to negotiate the tricky organisational terrain.


They build up their political toolkit

Politically savvy leaders build up a tool box of political tactics over time. One way they do this is by gaining control over critical resources in their firm. Sometimes this is money or budgets, but most of the time it is intangible things such as information and access. Another way they build their own power is by becoming bridges of gaps in social networks. When managers can successfully act as a bridge between two otherwise separate networks, they often obtain privileged access to information, resources and much more. Finally, they learn about packaging projects in a way that resonates with widely accepted values. They intuitively understand how to connect their proposals to deep-seated values in different parts of the organisation.

They play the political game at many levels

The final distinguishing feature of politically skilled leaders is that they activate their tactics on a number of levels. They are adept at influencing downwards to gain support from subordinates. They know direct commands rarely do the trick; softer forms of persuasion often work better.

The politically skilled leader is also good at influencing sideways. This often relies on more subtle forms of power such as the control of attractive scarce resources. They are great at influencing upwards in their organisations. They seek to build informal networks, go the extra-mile to develop a cache of returnable favours, and prove themselves indispensable by building a strong reputation. Finally, politically skilled leaders are good at influencing outwards. Being able to mobilise extra-organisational bodies makes it easier to create the conditions for desired change and outcomes.

Leaders with strong political skills often have an astute understanding of how their behaviour is perceived by others. They avoid being labelled 'Machiavellian' at all costs because this can instil paranoia among important stakeholders. 

Andre Spicer

"Politically savvy leaders drop the fallacy that politics is always dirty and destructive"

CLOSING THE FUNDING GAP

Different models for financing SMEs are needed to ensure the sector continues to create much-needed jobs in the region

Adaptable, entrepreneurial and strategically vital, small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the lifeblood of many economies in the world. Certainly this is the case in Middle East economies, where job creation and economic growth and development can depend upon them.

SMEs continue to play an important and vibrant economic role in creating jobs and fostering entrepreneurship and technical innovation. According to a study by the International Finance Corporation, part of the World Bank, it is estimated that SMEs account for 80-90 per cent of the total number of businesses in most countries in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Helping start-ups

Even though this sector makes a big contribution to GDP, it could achieve much more with improved financial support and the creation of a mechanism to foster and nourish start-ups. As such, it is important to define an economic, financial, legal and regulatory framework, obtain government backing, and explore new entrepreneurial and management models. This will help SMEs access finance and gain management support so that they drive GDP to an even greater extent. This will not only help existing SMEs but also support the creation of start-up enterprises across industries.

Until the start of the financial crisis in 2007, it was relatively easy for SMEs around the world to attract finance. Venture capitalists and private equity funds were able to access plentiful funding from financial institutions.

But in 2007, the financial crisis had a ripple economic effect in many parts of the world. Companies in the financial sector had invested in paper products that created a bubble, which collapsed. The first phase of the crisis left many banks and other financial companies facing serious liquidity and solvency problems, meaning they had to tighten up conditions governing lending to businesses, particularly to SMEs.

Because most SMEs depend to some extent on loans, overdrafts and short-term credit to support day-to-day liquidity and working capital requirements, they are generally more vulnerable to economic shocks. They also usually have



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smaller balance sheets, a lack of collateral, less room for manoeuvre in terms of cost-cutting or diversification, and, most pertinently, a limited supply of alternative financing options.

The increase in the funding gap for SMEs has been bad news for many economies, especially in Europe, because growth within the SME sector might otherwise have helped offset the effects of downsizing and restructuring within larger enterprises.

During economic shocks, many individuals unable to find employment are forced to become more entrepreneurial. They start new companies and take on business risk in developing and selling new products or services. These self-employed workers and micro businesses, which have the potential to make a valuable contribution to many macroeconomic indicators, will struggle to grow without adequate financial support and managerial and entrepreneurial structure.

"Regulatory and solvency requirements now restrict the banking sector's ability to lend to smaller businesses"

SMEs are the creators of jobs, and job creation always has a positive ripple effect as rising consumer confidence and consumer spending help to boost GDP. Therefore, we need to explore different models for funding SMEs.


Regulatory and solvency requirements now restrict the banking sector's ability to lend to smaller businesses, so new, complementary models are needed. Their emphasis must be more on equity than on debt finance, because there is a ceiling to how much debt a company can raise.

New models could be based on a combined or syndicated funding structure, within which, for example, banks, private equity firms and invoice-factoring companies all play a role in providing credit, equity and working capital. In addition, the shadow banking system and crowdfunding platforms look to be growing, and there are sources of corporate venture capital. Entities such as family offices, private companies that manage investments for individual families, may also become a more widely used source of equity investment.

Identifying winners

On the supply side, those financing SMEs will need to make sure they can minimise their risks. They will need to identify the industries, sectors and firms likely to be winners in the longer term. On the demand side, business owners seeking credit need to show they are capable of managing their businesses effectively and that they understand the markets in which they are trading.

Markets in the Middle East could establish entrepreneurship centres to work as incubators and accelerators, which would allow these start-ups to gain expertise in management and benefit from business monitoring, thereby helping to reduce risk.

At this important moment in the sector's development, if a new, effective, self-sustaining funding model, and a support mechanism such as entrepreneurship centres can be created, SMEs will once again be able to act as a crucial source of new jobs, innovation and competition, and as an engine for economic growth. 

Khaled Soufani

HOW TO INTERVIEW CANDIDATES

Getting the right people on board involves knowing who and what you are looking for, and creating questions to gauge these attributes

In his book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins describes the importance of hiring outstanding employees as an essential component of business success. He says, “Leaders of companies that go from good to great start not with where but with who. They start by getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats.”

We know we must get these outstanding employees onto the bus, but how do we identify them? There is an art to interviewing potential candidates. Once you have sifted through CVs and narrowed down your list to interviewees, you can use these guidelines to help you maximise the interview process.

Key skills

The first step to knowing what you want is to analyse the job description of the role and identify the key skill set that the candidate will need to be successful in the position.

- Will your new employee need to be organised?
- How about great at communicating with others and good with customers?
- Perhaps you need someone who is adaptable and can cope with new challenges and a dynamic work environment?

Be realistic about the daily duties of the position and match your desired skills to those duties. As a next step, prioritise what skills are most important to the role.

When choosing a new employee, always consider the current team dynamic and values of your company. You want someone who will complement and complete your team, not compete with them. It is also important to get a good understanding of your candidate's personality to see if they will fit in your workplace environment. If a candidate's values conflict with your company's values and culture, it is unlikely they will last for a long period of time.

Moreover, you must assess whether the candidate will cope well with your management style. In order to do this successfully, any manager must first know themselves. If you like to keep a close eye on your employees, a candidate who appreciates consistent guidance and regular feedback could be a great fit.



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Alternatively, if you prefer to delegate and leave your employees to do their work in their own way, you need someone who takes initiative, is responsible and will be self-motivated.

An example of a question to ask is: “Can you describe your ideal work environment and the type of management you need in order to be most successful?”

Once you know what and who you are looking for, you must create questions that will get genuine and meaningful answers. Above all, remember that closed-ended questions are the enemy of good interviews. Instead, be specific. Rather than starting with “Tell me about yourself”, try a question like: “What professional experience do you possess that would help you to be successful in this role and why have you decided to pursue a career with us?”

With the first question, your interviewee can talk about anything. The second version will give them clear guidelines as to the type of information you are interested in hearing.

“By requiring candidates to provide specific examples, you can assess their true knowledge base”

Give them scenarios tailored to your specific needs. Scenario questions are a great way to elicit genuine responses and assess your candidate's ability to think on his or her feet. When choosing your scenario questions, be realistic about the job, and design questions that are applicable to what you expect the candidate to do as part of their role. Scenario questions are also an excellent way to see into a candidate's thinking process. Many candidates will ask several follow-up questions before giving you an answer. Others just blurt out ideas. This can give you valuable insights into their thinking processes.

Ask for proof too. Any candidate can read a job description prior to an interview and list skills they think you want to hear. It is easy for someone to tell you they are great with customers. But, as a manager, you want proof.

Rather than asking, “Do you have good customer service skills?” try a question like: “Can you describe a specific example of when you used your customer service skills to create a successful outcome?”

By requiring candidates to provide specific examples, you can assess their true knowledge base and the authenticity of their qualifications.

Follow-up questions

By using follow-up questions, you can allow for elaboration and clarification. Often, candidates need follow-up questions to allow them the opportunity to provide examples, further explain their answers and provide reasoning for their responses. In addition to the most classic follow-up question, “Why?”, you may also consider some of these examples to help you dig into a candidate's responses:

- If a candidate claims leadership as a top skill, you can follow up by asking: “Can you please describe your own personal leadership style, and how you would apply that style to this role?”
- If a candidate gives you an example of a previous successful outcome, you can follow up by asking: “What specific actions did you take that were essential to ensuring the success of the outcome you described? Why were those actions essential?”

Samantha Miles

SUCCESSFUL FIRMS ARE CHANGE-READY

Rather than forcing compliance from the top down, effective leaders encourage a desire for change among employees

In a dynamic world where a 'good career' means much more than a stable place to work for 25 years, one of the biggest issues facing executives is how to attract, maintain and engage the workforce. According to a recent study by Deloitte University Press, human resources (HR) leaders now consider workplace culture to be their top challenge. How to instill, change and maintain a performance-oriented culture in an organisation is a much-debated topic.

What do we mean by organisational culture?

Organisational culture can loosely be defined as a set of assumptions and unwritten rules that define the way things are done in a workplace. It evolves over time, often driven by the vision of company leaders and by policies, practices, systems and processes put in place to respond to business challenges and internal alignment issues. While a strong work culture provides stability and a sense of direction, too strong a culture can potentially be an impediment to change.

What if a culture needs to change?

Sometimes, businesses need to reassess how they go about doing things. They may have reached breaking point, where they are no longer achieving strategic deliverables. A deep-rooted change to fundamental assumptions might have to happen to allow things to be done differently. This means the company needs to go back to the drawing board and come up with new ways to achieve its strategic objectives by developing a fresh organisational culture built on key values.

Effective leaders must spend time asking the big questions at this stage: Why is the change being brought about? Who are the key stakeholders? Who is going to be affected? What specific changes do we want to make? How are we going to make the changes? It is also important to question what systems, processes and practices are already working well, so they can be built on. The wheel does not need to be reinvented every time change needs to be made.

Engaged and inspiring leadership

A company's leadership plays a key role in encouraging a desire for change among employees. Those with sufficient operational and



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strategic understanding should be brought on board early on to work collaboratively towards a new company vision. Leaders also have a responsibility to provide sufficient power to core personnel to drive the rest of the organisation towards a new way of doing things. Rather than pushing for change by forcing compliance from the top down, encouraging a collaborative process involving individuals at multiple levels of the business to agree on key values is an important tactic for success.

Communication is key

Once a new set of values are agreed upon, it is important to communicate them to employees in a way that creates excitement, as opposed to the fear or anxiety that is often associated with change. The key is to make employees feel as though they are in a safe environment for taking risks and are supported in unlearning the old values while internalising a new set. Company lead-

"Leaders should use every possible channel of communication to convey the behaviour expected of staff"

ers should model the new values and use every possible channel of communication to convey the behaviour expected of staff.


Measurement is essential

"What gets measured gets done." When instilling company values, this mantra comes into its own. Measurable behaviours should be associated with each new company value, and everyone – irrespective of function or level within the organisation – is required to understand what the values mean in action within his/her role. Consulting with staff to set high performance goals that are aligned with individual skill sets is very important. Employees should be given feedback on a regular basis. It is also important that employees are provided with opportunities to build on their skills, and that any other barriers that may prevent them from working towards the goals are removed.

Maintaining a successful culture

Once an organisation is clear about its strategic deliverables and vision, the systems, structures, processes, technology, people, resources and skills of the business should be modified in line with the new values upon which the culture is built, to help with adoption internally. HR should play the role of a strategic partner and facilitate strategy execution through developing improved and focused recruitment and selection processes, helping employees to integrate successfully, and introducing induction mechanisms and performance management systems. It is also essential to design performance-based incentive schemes to bring about a long-term commitment to a high-performance culture. These should be implemented in a fair and equitable way.

The only constant is change

Cultural change is a dynamic process, which can be maintained by committed leaders who work towards building a learning-oriented culture that enables the sharing of ideas and risk-taking. The most successful companies are change-ready and continuously review existing systems and processes to introduce incremental changes in alignment with the core values and strategic deliverables of the organisation. 

Payyazhi Jayashree



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Kerbache has published papers in top journals and has extensive experience in teaching activities worldwide. He has also acted as consultant to numerous international organisations, designing and implementing programmes in newly created business schools and universities.

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Nabil Ibrahim

Position Chancellor, Abu Dhabi University (ADU)

Biography Nabil Ibrahim was appointed chancellor of ADU in December 2007. Prior to this, he was vice-chancellor for academic affairs and chief academic officer at the US' Purdue University, Calumet. He has also worked at San Jose State University and Bradley University in the US, and the University of Manitoba in Canada. Throughout his career, Ibrahim has

raised more than \$20m in research and development grants, served as principal investigator on 35 technical projects, written publications and presented at conferences, and developed laboratories. He holds a bachelor of science degree in engineering from Cairo University and a doctorate from Canada's McMaster University.

Contact (+971) 2 501 5555; www.adu.ac.ae



Christoph Loch

Position Dean, Cambridge Judge Business School

Biography Christoph Loch is a professor of management studies as well as dean of Cambridge Judge Business School in the UK, where he has been since 2011. Previously, he was the GlaxoSmithKline chaired professor of corporate innovation, professor of technology and operations management, and assistant associate professor at Insead. In 2009-10, he was also

visiting professor of operations management at the Stockholm School of Economics, and in 2002-03 was visiting professor at Hewlett Packard's information dynamics lab in California. Loch has a diploma from Germany's Darmstadt Institute of Technology, an MBA from the University of Tennessee and a doctorate from the Stanford Graduate School of Business, both in the US.


Contact (+44) 122 333 9700; www.jbs.cam.ac.uk



Andrew Likierman

Position Dean, London Business School (LBS)

Biography Andrew Likierman is dean of LBS and also non-executive chairman of the UK's National Audit office. He was founding director of LBS's executive MBA programme and has been a professor for many years, lecturing on executive and degree programmes. His research interests lie in the field of performance measurement. Likierman has run a textile plant in

Germany, headed the UK's Government Accountancy Service and been managing director of the UK Treasury. He was also chairman of the Economist's Bookshop Group and market research firm Mori. He was non-executive director of the Bank of England and Barclay's Bank, and president of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. 

Contact (+44) 20 7000 7000; www.london.edu

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Johann Xavier, Saatchi & Saatchi

THE CAMBRIDGE EXECUTIVE MBA, CAMBRIDGE JUDGE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Cambridge is a globally acclaimed seat of learning, home to world-leading faculty and renowned for its standard of teaching

PROFILE

Since 1990, Cambridge Judge Business School has forged a reputation as a centre of rigorous thinking and high-impact transformative education, situated within one of the world's most prestigious research universities, and in the heart of the Cambridge Cluster, the most successful technology entrepreneurship cluster in Europe.

Cambridge Judge pursues innovation through inter-disciplinary insight, entrepreneurial spirit and collaboration. Cutting-edge research is rooted in real-world challenges, and undergraduate, graduate and executive programmes attract innovators, creative thinkers, collaborative problem-solvers, and current and future leaders, drawn from a huge diversity of backgrounds and countries.

In addition to the Executive MBA, programmes include a full-time MBA, MFin and a portfolio of executive education programmes. Last year we launched a virtual Middle East Leadership Research Centre, whose purpose is to become a leading research centre for the study of Middle East-focused leadership and related management issues.

The Cambridge Executive MBA is designed specifically for executives who have already reached a senior level, and are now looking at leading roles within their organisations. The programme develops both hard and soft skills, and provides practical, relevant knowledge. It takes place principally in Cambridge, UK, attracting students and faculty from across the world, and convenient for participants to access, being within easy reach of major airports.

The Cambridge Executive MBA has been designed to fit in with the busy schedules of senior executives and is delivered over 16 weekends and four week-long blocks over a 20-month period, so participants do not need to spend significant time away from their organisations. As well as providing a relevant curriculum, learning comes from being part of a powerful network of peers, who will form the backbone of an education for senior executives.

The programme is also aimed at creating and giving access to a global network of senior influencers and supporters. This comes from the class itself, as well as the University of Cambridge's extensive global network.



Name: Cambridge Judge Business School

Address: Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1AG

Tel: (+44) 1223 339700

Website: www.jbs.cam.ac.uk

Contact for admissions: emba-enquiries@jbs.cam.ac.uk

Tel: (+44) 1223 766329

Status of EMBA: Ranked 24th in the Financial Times Executive MBA Rankings 2015

Date founded: 2009

Head of the school: Christoph Loch

Cost of EMBA: £63,960

Areas of specialisation: As well as the Executive MBA, Cambridge Judge offers an MBA, MFin, and a portfolio of executive education programmes.



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Email: mba@mbs-worldwide.ae | Tel: **+971 (0)4 446 8664**
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The University of Manchester
Manchester Business School



"With an extensive international alumni network, the Manchester Global MBA is a leap forward towards achieving professional and personal goals"

Ibrahim A Idriss, GT&C

MANCHESTER BUSINESS SCHOOL (MBS) MIDDLE EAST CENTRE

MBS Middle East Centre opened in Dubai Knowledge Village in 2006 and, today, supports more than 1,900 part-time MBA students. It is the fastest-growing centre in the MBS international network

PROFILE

Part of the University of Manchester, MBS is the UK's largest campus-based business and management school. MBS is consistently ranked among the Financial Times' top international schools; the 2015 Financial Times survey ranks our MBA fifth in the UK, 12th in Europe and 35th in the world. Over the last three years, the Financial Times has ranked us at an average global position of 34.

The MBS Middle East Centre at Dubai Knowledge Village is one of six international executive centres worldwide. It is the largest centre in the school's international network, and offers a more personalised part-time MBA for the most senior executives.

The 30-month, Global Part-time MBA offers students four learning pathways – engineering, finance, projects and global – with a minimum of 250 hours of face-to-face workshops in Dubai or any of the international centres. Contact with faculty is a major component of the Manchester Global MBA and the student workshops bring together many of the MBA students not only from the region, but also those international students who elect to come

to the Dubai centre for their workshops, enabling them to build on their global network. Leading faculty from MBS deliver MBA programme modules – including new elective modules such as sustainable business, and venture capital and private equity – as well as running business simulation exercises.

MBS Global Part-time MBA students are all experienced working professionals and many are employed in senior positions by some of the world's leading multinational companies, as well as local and regional companies. About 30 per cent of students are already in C-level roles and 10 per cent already hold a master's degree.

Students graduating through the Global Part-time MBA programme are awarded the same Manchester MBA as those on the full-time, campus-based programme.

Graduation is just the beginning of a lifelong relationship with MBS, with a very active international alumni network and Middle East alumni group, and a careers service providing access to tools and opportunities for a successful senior-level career.



Name: Manchester Business School

Address: Manchester Business School | The University of Manchester | Middle East Centre | Dubai Knowledge Village | Block 2B, Office F16 | Dubai, UAE
Tel: (+971) 4 446 8664

Email: mba@mbs-worldwide.ae

Website: www.mbs-uae.ac.ae

Contact for admissions: Jaishree Chaturvedi, assistant manager, marketing and recruitment

Status of MBA: MBS is part of a small and select group of institutions worldwide that is accredited by all three major bodies – AACSB International, AMBA and EQUIS

Date founded: MBS – 1965; MBS Middle East Centre – 2006

Heads: Professor Fiona Devine, dean; Randa Bessiso, director, Middle East

Typical costs: Global Part-time MBA full tuition costs, including learning materials and workshops – \$49,705

Areas of specialisation: Global Part-time MBA with four learning pathways – engineering, finance, projects and global

All information on this page has been supplied by Manchester Business School. MEED cannot guarantee the accuracy of this information and does not endorse any views expressed

SELECTED EXECUTIVE EDUCATION COURSES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (OR OVERSEAS, BUT WITH SIGNIFICANT MIDDLE EAST STUDENT UPTAKE)

Academic body	Location	Course	Course structure	Duration	Accrediting body	Course details	Fees (\$)
American University of Beirut	Beirut	EMBA	Part-time	22 months	AACSB	Practical, Middle East management focus	52,500
American University of Sharjah	Sharjah	MBA	Flexible	1-5 years (part-time/full-time)	AACSB, MSA, MOHESR	Optional focus on HR, finance, innovation and entrepreneurship, management consulting and public management	32,162-49,034
American University of Sharjah	Sharjah	EMBA	Part-time	2 years (part-time)	AACSB, MSA, MOHESR	Alternating weekends	51,730
Ashridge Business School	UK and one compulsory international visit	EMBA	Part-time	24 months	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Further international visits optional	52,118
Ashridge Business School	UK and one compulsory international visit	MBA	Full-time	12 months	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Further international visits optional	52,118
Bradford University School of Management	Dubai	EMBA	Part-time	24 months	AMBA, EQUIS	Weekend classes, every 5-6 weeks	22,612
Cass Business School, City University London	Dubai	EMBA	Part-time	2 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB, KHDA	Core courses, electives and business mastery project	60,000
Duke University, Fuqua School of Business	US, Dubai, China, India, Russia	Duke MBA (Cross Continent)	Part-time	16 months	AACSB, SACS	Residential and distance; 9-day residencies every 2.5 months	135,000
Duke University, Fuqua School of Business	US, Dubai, China, India, Russia, UK	Duke MBA (Global Executive)	Part-time	15 months	AACSB, SACS	Residential and distance; 2-week residencies every 3 months	162,200
Edinburgh Business School of Heriot-Watt University	UK, Dubai, Malaysia	MBA	Full-time	1 year	Royal Charter, KHDA	The largest international MBA programme. Delivered by UK faculty on weekends. Flexible/global MBA	22,050
Glion Institute of Higher Education (GIHE)	Glion-sur-Montreux, Switzerland; London, UK	MBA	Full-time	2 semesters	NEASC	International hospitality and service industries management with leadership or marketing specialisation	48,800
Hull University Business School (HUBS)	Bahrain	EMBA	Part-time	2 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	12 modules and dissertation, taught by HUBS faculty	27,082
Hull University Business School	Oman	EMBA	Part-time	2 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	12 modules and dissertation, taught by HUBS faculty	27,082
Hult International Business School	Dubai, London, Shanghai, Boston, San Francisco	EMBA (evenings)	Part-time	2-5 years	AMBA, BAC, NEASC	Optional rotation to other campuses; action learning projects	27,740 a year
Hult International Business School	Dubai, London, Shanghai, Boston, San Francisco	EMBA (monthly)	Part-time	2-5 years	AMBA, BAC, NEASC	Optional rotation to other campuses; action learning projects	27,740 a year
Hult International Business School	Dubai, London, Shanghai, Boston, San Francisco	MBA	57 credits 5 modules	1 year	AMBA, BAC, NEASC	Optional rotation to other campuses; action learning projects	55,500
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Specialised master's degree in strategic business unit management	Part-time	18 months	CGE	12 modules of 3-4 days on a monthly basis; professional thesis	59,500
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha, Shanghai, Beijing, Paris	Executive MBA (Global)	Part-time	16 months	EQUIS, AACSB, AMBA	15 modules of 4-6 days on a monthly basis; 1 major to choose out of 8 to specialise; 1 capstone project	87,500
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Specialised master's in strategic business unit management	Part-time	18 months	CGE	3 full-day classes a month; 14 modules followed by thesis	56,000
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha, Shanghai, Beijing, Paris	EMBA (Global)	Part-time	16 months	EQUIS, AACSB, AMBA	4 full-day classes a month; 12 core modules; choose from 8 majors to specialise; 1 project (group/individual)	84,450
Insead	Abu Dhabi/ France/Singapore	EMBA	Part-time	15 months	AACSB, EQUIS,	Choice of Middle East, Europe or Asia. Leadership development process	100,500
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	MBA	Full-time	1 year	AMBA, EQUIS	UK's top 1-year MBA; 2 consulting projects, one of them global	58,000
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	EMBA	4 weeks and 16 w/ends	20 months	AMBA, EQUIS	Senior executives	97,000
King Abdulaziz University	Saudi Arabia	EMBA	Part-time	2 years	AMBA	Core courses plus electives in management, marketing and finance	23,500-25,600
King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals	Saudi Arabia	MBA	Part-time	Flexible	AACSB	General MBA, evening classes	1,800
King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals	Saudi Arabia	EMBA	Part-time	2 years	AACSB	Small classes, held fortnightly	34,660
Lebanese-Canadian University/ Université Montesquieu Bordeaux IV	Lebanon	EMBA (financial management)	Part-time	2 years	MOEHE	Joint diploma. Taught in French	7,250
London Business School	Dubai	EMBA (Dubai)	Part-time	20 months	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Executive MBA for mid-career managers. Modules in Dubai and London, as well as international assignments geared to building global business skills	100,200

SELECTED EXECUTIVE EDUCATION COURSES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (OR OVERSEAS, BUT WITH SIGNIFICANT MIDDLE EAST STUDENT UPTAKE)

Academic body	Location	Course	Course structure	Duration	Accrediting body	Course details	Fees (\$)
London Business School	New York, London, Hong Kong	EMBA (Global-Asia)	Part-time	20 months	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Joint programme at Columbia, London and Hong Kong University business schools	154,140
Maastricht School of Management	Egypt	Executive MBA	Part-time	2 years	ACBSP, AMBA, IACBE	Partnership with Regional Information Technology Institute. 2-4 lectures a week	On request
Manchester Business School	Dubai	Global MBA	Part-time	2.5 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Blend of self-study and face-to-face workshops	54,643
Manchester Business School	Dubai	Global MBA (finance)	Part-time	2.5 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Blend of self-study and face-to-face workshops	54,643
Manchester Business School	Dubai	Global MBA (projects)	Part-time	2.5 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Blend of self-study and face-to-face workshops	54,643
Manchester Business School	Dubai	Global MBA (engineering)	Part-time	2.5 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Blend of self-study and face-to-face workshops	54,643
Manchester Business School	Dubai	Global MBA (finance - accelerated learning)	Part-time	2 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Finance – accelerated pathway for professionally qualified executives	52,726
Manchester Business School	Manchester, Dubai, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sao Paulo	Global Executive MBA	Part-time	20 months	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB	Blend of self-study and face-to-face workshops	83,000
Middlesex University	Dubai	MBA	Full-time	1 year	Audited by QAA UK	Specialisations in finance, logistics, business excellence, operations, international business	23,160
Middlesex University	Dubai	MBA	Part-time	2 years	Audited by QAA UK	Specialisations in finance, logistics, business excellence, operations, international business	23,160
Prince Mohammad bin Fahd University	Saudi Arabia	EMBA	Part-time	2.5 years	ACBSP, AMBA, IACBE	Partnership with Maastricht School of Management	27,126
Skyline University College	Sharjah	MBA	Full-time	1 year	MOHESR	Specialisation in marketing or finance	22,190
S P Jain School of Global Management	Dubai, Singapore, Sydney, Mumbai	MBA (Global)	Full-time (residential)	1 year	ABEST21, TEQSA, KHDA	4 months each in Sydney, Singapore and Dubai	47,215
S P Jain School of Global Management	Dubai, Singapore, Sydney, Mumbai	MBA (Executive)	Part-time	18 months	TEQSA, KHDA	Electives in finance, marketing and operations	23,022
S P Jain School of Global Management	Dubai, Singapore, Sydney, Mumbai	MGB (master of global business)	Full-time (residential)	16 months	ABEST21, TEQSA, KHDA	4 months each in Sydney, Singapore and Dubai, 4-month internship	40,915
University of Dubai	Dubai	MBA (leadership and human resource management)	Full-time/ part time	15-18 months	MOHESR, AACSB	Students must take 39 credit hours (13 courses). There are 3 courses a term full-time, 2 or 3 part-time	21,200
University of Dubai	Dubai	MBA (International business/marketing)	Full-time/ part time	15-18 months	MOHESR, AACSB		21,200
University of Dubai	Dubai	MBA (operations and logistics management)	Full-time/ part time	15-18 months	MOHESR, AACSB		21,200
University of Strathclyde	UAE, Bahrain, Oman	MBA	Part-time	2 years	AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB, MOHESR	Focus on strategy; opportunity to rotate campuses	29,945
University of Wollongong in Dubai	Dubai	MBA	11 core and 1 elective modules	2 years	MOHESR	Classes held in evening; can be completed in 6 semesters	26,289
Zayed University	Abu Dhabi	EMBA	Part-time	24 months	MOHESR, MSCHE, AACSB	Blend of full-day face-to-face workshops on Thurs, Fri and Sat every 6 weeks, and distance learning	34,800

AACSB=The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business; ABEST21=The Alliance on Business Education and Scholarship for Tomorrow (Japan); ACBSP=Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programmes; AMBA=Association of MBAs; BAC=British Accreditation Council; CGE=Conference des Grandes Ecoles; EMBA=Executive Master of Business Administration; EQUIS=European Quality Improvement System; HR=Human Resources; KHDA=Knowledge and Human Development Authority (Dubai); MBA=Master of Business Administration; MOEHE=Ministry of Education and Higher Education; MOHESR=Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research; MSA=Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; MSCHE=Middle States Commission on Higher Education; NEASC=New England Association of Schools and Colleges; SACS=Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; TEQSA=Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (Australia); QAA=Quality Assurance Agency. Source: Supplied by universities and schools

SELECTED REGIONAL DOCTORATES IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Academic body	Location	Course	Structure	Duration	Accrediting body	Course details	Fees (\$)
Abu Dhabi University	Abu Dhabi	DBA	Part-time	3-4 years	MOHESR	Cohort-based programme and dissertation	75,468
Arab Academy Graduate School of Business	Egypt	DBA	Part-time	3-6 years	ESCU	Core research methods, electives and dissertation	On application
Manchester Business School	Dubai	DBA	Part-time	5 years	EQUIS, AACSB	Blended learning research programme for working executives	80,106
Maastricht School of Management	Egypt	DBA	Part-time/ full-time	4 years	ACBSP, AMBA, IACBE	Partnership with Regional Information Technology Institute	On request
UAE University	Dubai	DBA	Part-time	4 years	MOHESR	Blended learning and research programme	68,746
University of Wollongong in Dubai	Dubai	DBA	Full-time or part-time	6-10 semesters	MOHESR	Independent research focused on important workplace issues	45,603

AACSB=The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business; ACBSP=Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programs; DBA=Doctorate of Business Administration; EQUIS=European Quality Improvement System; ESCU=Egyptian Supreme Council of Universities; AMBA=Association of MBAs; IACBE=International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education; MOHESR=Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Source: Supplied by universities and schools

SELECTED OPEN ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT COURSES

Academic body	Location	Course	Target intake	Fees (\$)
Ashridge Business School	UAE	Ashridge leadership process	Mid-senior managers	9,750
Ashridge Business School	UAE	Management development programme	Managers	6,550
Ashridge Business School	UK and UAE	Fast track advanced management	Senior regional and international managers	14,550
Cass Business School, City University London	Dubai	Open access to EMBA elective modules, various dates	Senior executives and managers	3,315
Gilon Institute of Higher Education	Online or London	Executive certificate with finance specialisation	General	9,000
Gilon Institute of Higher Education	Online or London	Executive certificate with marketing specialisation	General	9,000
Gilon Institute of Higher Education	Online or London	Executive certificate with leadership specialisation	General	9,000
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Negotiation skills and strategies	Executives and managers	1,950
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Demystifying finance	Executives and managers	1,950
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Managing for success	Executives and managers	On application
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Leading strategies for outstanding performance	Executives and managers	On application
HEC Paris in Qatar	Doha	Marketing strategies	Executives and managers	On application
Insead	Abu Dhabi campus	Negotiation dynamics	25 participants	8,340
Insead	Abu Dhabi campus	Value creation for owners and directors	30 participants	9,475
Insead	Abu Dhabi campus	Blue ocean strategy	30 participants	9,475
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Cambridge advanced leadership programme	C-suite, senior leaders	19,200
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Cambridge general management programme	Mid-senior management	14,400
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Making your organisation innovative	Mid-career professionals	5,994
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Managing innovation strategically	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Business model innovation	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Service innovation	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Transformational leadership	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Strategic management	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Successful negotiation strategies	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Strategic performance management	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Best practice in managing people	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Creating high-performance teams	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	People and organisational effectiveness	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Creating winning brands	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Strategic marketing management	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Finance and accounting for non-financial managers	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Corporate investment	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Raising capital	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Portfolio management	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Options, futures and other derivatives	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Behavioural finance	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Corporate governance	Mid-career professionals	2,394
Judge Business School, University of Cambridge	UK	Islamic finance	General	2,394
London Business School	UK	Executing strategy for results	Managers	12,948
London Business School	UK	Leading teams for emerging leaders	New leaders	11,288
London Business School	UK	Leading businesses into the future	Senior professionals and leaders	17,430
London Business School	UK	Leading change	Senior professionals and leaders	11,620
London Business School	UK	Accelerated development programme	Experienced functional managers and new general managers	43,990
London Business School	UK	Human resource strategy in transforming organisations	HR directors, advisors	11,620
London Business School	UK	High-performance people skills for leaders	Senior professionals	12,948
London Business School	UK	Senior executive programme	High-calibre executives, 15 years' experience	48,140
London Business School	UK	Negotiation and influencing skills for senior managers	Senior managers	12,948
London Business School	UK	Financing the entrepreneurial business	Venture capital, private equity, entrepreneurs	11,122
London Business School	UK	Proteus	Top professionals and change agents	20,418
London Business School	UK	Project and infrastructure finance	Finance professionals	11,122
London Business School	UK	Strategic investment management	Asset manager, institutional/private investors/financial advisors and consultants/regulators/risk managers and auditors	11,122
London Business School	UK	Financial seminar for senior managers	Senior managers from non-financial backgrounds	11,122
London Business School	UK	Masterclass in private equity	Fund managers and financial professionals	7,138
S P Jain School of Global Management	Dubai, Singapore, Sydney, Mumbai	Executive education and certification programmes in all fields of management	Managers, senior managers, top managers	2,000 minimum

EMBA=Executive Master of Business Administration; HR=Human Resources. Source: Supplied by universities and schools

An overhead view of four business professionals (three men and one woman) sitting around a white circular table. They are dressed in business attire. On the table are several items: a smartphone, a tablet displaying a bar chart, a laptop with a MEED magazine cover, a 3D pie chart, a 2D pie chart, and three coffee cups. The man at the top left has his hands clasped. The woman at the top right is looking at the tablet. The man at the bottom left is writing on a clipboard. The man at the bottom right is looking at the 3D pie chart.

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