



الرصد الإعلامي اليومي

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UAE's work culture is getting future ready



AYOUB KAZIM

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Remarkable forces are reshaping the world of work in radical ways, not just in the Middle East but around the world. Disruptive innovations are creating new industries and business models and destroying the old ones. New technologies, data analytics and social networks are having a huge impact on how we communicate, collaborate and work. Many of the roles and job titles of tomorrow will be ones we've not even thought of yet.

Dubai and the UAE are at the forefront of meeting the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As the global push towards smart cities hits a tipping point this year, with movement from smaller pilot projects to larger deployments of smart city technology, it is important to humanise the government's technology and processes that intersect with people's working lives.

One of the novel ways Dubai is doing this is through the plan unveiled in October 2016 by Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Dubai Future Foundation. It aims to shift all local government transactions to blockchain technology by 2020. Such a revolutionary concept will lead to a more transparent, safe and secure pro-

cesses and drastically eliminate any manipulation in transactions. When that is accomplished, the emirate's government will be paperless, cutting the number of paper transactions by almost 100 million a year and resulting in millions of dollars of savings.

Dubai's 10X initiative is also important in preparing us for the workplace culture of the future. This ambitious plan aims to not only make Dubai a world

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leader, but to put us a decade ahead of anyone else.

Sheikh Hamdan outlines on the Dubai Culture website that one of the key elements of implementing 10X is removing regulatory obstacles, particularly for truly disruptive companies.

On the national scale, the President, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has decreed that the Federal Authority for Identity and Naturalisation should be created to operate under

the **Emirates Identity Authority**. It'll bring naturalisation and residency affairs departments under one roof, and thereby allow the government to streamline processes.

Let us look at two international measurements compiled by global experts. First is the global digital competitiveness index compiled by the IMD business school based in Lausanne, Switzerland. The UAE was ranked 18th in the index this year, one spot behind Germany and one ahead of South Korea. This continued the upward trend from 24th place in 2013. The UAE was ranked eighth in IT integration, fifth in regulatory framework and first in the use of big data and analytics.

Secondly, the UAE features on the 17 rung of the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness ranking. The country reached 13th position in the business sophistication stakes; it is 24th in technological readiness pillar and 25th when it comes to innovation.

In summary, the world is changing, work is changing and we are working to help the UAE prepare for this world of change and indeed embrace it.

Dr Ayoub Kazim is Managing Director of axa, a business service platform launched by Tecom Group



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