How the Abu Dhabi School of Government empowers employees to develop critical skills for digital transformation

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OVERVIEW

Abu Dhabi launched the Abu Dhabi School of Government to develop the capabilities of Abu Dhabi government employees and accelerate the knowledge economy

The academy is a supporting pillar of the Ghadan 21 program launched by His Highness Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council.

Ghadan 21, which translates to Tomorrow 21 in Arabic, aims to enhance the overall competitiveness of Abu Dhabi by focusing on three pillars: economy, knowledge, and community. ADSG supports professional development efforts within the government, incorporating the latest trends and research, to ensure employees can meet the Emirate's future needs.

To support this vision, ADSG sought an online learning platform that would complement their in-person curricula to empower government employees with the skills needed for the future of work.

CHALLENGE

Research by the World Economic Forum finds that 1.1 billion jobs worldwide are liable to be radically transformed by technology in the next decade

Due to this skill instability, nearly half of core job skills are set to change by 2022. Governments are finding that they must take more of a leading role in shaping these trends—which are currently driven by the private sector— so that the public sector is not left behind.

ADSG aims to develop the most effective and forward-looking government workforce by providing the highest quality of training and development activities by leveraging international best practices tailored to Abu Dhabi's short- and long-term needs.

Her Excellency Alia Abdulla Al Mazrouei, Acting Director-General of Abu Dhabi School of Government, said: "ADSG forges partnerships with the best-in-class learning institutions to build a sustainable knowledge-based economy. Skills mapping is an essential piece of our remit to enhance the capabilities of Abu Dhabi government employees, and ensure they are prepared to navigate evolving market conditions. We seek to develop both the technical and behavioral skills of our learners to build the next generation of leaders. Our blended in-person and online training strategy enables us to reach a large group of our stakeholders."

ABOUT ABU DHABI SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

The Abu Dhabi School of Government (ADSG) was established in 2018 and is the government entity responsible for overseeing and planning the learning and development of all Abu Dhabi government employees.

ADSG is reshaping the culture of learning and plays a significant role in Abu Dhabi's ambition to build a sustainable and open economy, driven by a confident society. Its remit is to develop the most effective government workforce for the Emirate through the provision of high-quality training programs based on international best practices while considering the priorities and requirements of Abu Dhabi.

As an innovator in continuous learning and development, ADSG brings new concepts to skills and expertise through world-class initiatives, partnerships, and technology. Since October 2019, ADSG has been a part of the Department of Government Support, by royal decree. It also includes the Abu Dhabi Statistics Centre, Human Resources Authority, and Abu Dhabi Digital Authority.

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Coursera partnered with ADSG to provide 60,000+ government employees with access to 3,600 online courses—including 90+ in Arabic—to develop critical skills in data science, artificial intelligence, leadership, and digital transformation

This program enables all government employees to perform their duties to the highest standards while establishing Abu Dhabi as a center of government excellence and contributing to the Emirate's vision of building a robust and forward-looking economy.

In addition to the depth, breadth, and language availability of the Coursera catalog, ADSG chose Coursera for its practical, hands-on project focus and availability of credential programs such as the Google IT certification. Knowing that learners in the region consume much of their information on mobile phones, finding a mobile-ready solution with video content accessible offline, was also a critical criterion for the ADSG team.   And because ADSG needs to demonstrate the return on training investments, they chose Coursera for the real-time insights into learner progress and achievement.

The ADSG team also found Coursera's Global Skills Index 2019 (GSI). This report leverages data from Coursera's 47+ million learners to identify the world's top trending career skills across 60 countries and 10 industries, valuable in identifying and prioritizing skills gaps. Today the team is using the GSI as the basis for their future skills maps.

RESULTS

Coursera partnered with ADSG to help them identify and map courses to their internal "competency framework"

Together, they mapped content to each of their employee tiers: Executive Directors, Operational Managers, Early Operational Managers, Junior-level staff, and Administrative staff. They also connected the completion of Coursera business courses to professional development criteria and internal promotion rubrics. Additionally, they worked together with Coursera to curate a subset of content for each government entity, prioritizing skills based on each department's mission.

KEY METRICS

489,162
learning hours total

33,189
courses completed

KEY METRICS

To date, ADSG learners have completed 489,162 hours of coursework on the Coursera platform, and have completed 33,189 courses.

"ADSG aims to embed a culture of continuous learning across all levels of the Abu Dhabi government. We seek to empower government employees to be curious, knowledge-seeking learners that understand how to interpret the data available to them and build the necessary skills in their sector. Together with Coursera, we identified courses tailored to the context and needs of the Abu Dhabi government. Our partnership has also provided us with access to a vast library of courses that develop the most in-demand skills for the future."

Her Excellency Alia Abdulla Al Mazrouei, Acting Director-General of the Abu Dhabi School of Government.

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