

# CAREERGuide

## BREAKING THE CLOUD CEILING

Meet Qatar Airways' pilot **Hadfah Muhammad Al Marri**, the woman who dared to dream big.

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“ We call upon ourselves to develop our educational, research and media institutions, as well as our sources of soft power at the international level and with the interaction of the best national, Arab and foreign expertise”.

**His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani**  
The Emir of the State of Qatar

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# BREAKING THE CLOUD CEILING

Have you met a female pilot before? Well, here's one who is among the five percent of female pilots globally – Qatar's very own Hadfah Muhammad Al Marri.



## IMPROVING YOUR QUALITY OF WORK



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Snippets of information that accompany this icon are results of a nationwide study titled 'Careering Towards A Sustainable Qatari Economy' undertaken by Qatar Career Development Center.

Produced by Qatar Career Development Center in collaboration with Qatar Foundation Communication Directorate.



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دليلك المهني CAREER Guide



# PREPARING FUTURE LEADERS

Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC) is gearing up to release the latest issue of its Career Guide, a magazine that aims to inspire future generations into developing their full potential and refining their educational and professional capacities. Through such publications, QCDC seeks to help youth achieve their ambitions and realize their hopes and dreams by guiding students into choosing the career and educational path that ensures success, prosperity and stability for youth, their families and our country.

The genuine advancement of any nation can only be realized by its people. It can only be accomplished through the will and determination of people seeking to cement their status and propel their homeland's progress. Any nation that aspires to have a prominent place in this world should take good care of its youth, and provide them with the necessary education and training tools to walk them throughout their journey towards real honor and glory.

To that end, QCDC has focused its efforts on preparing young people by building their capacities, helping them discover their talents and developing their skills, in a way that enables them to choose the academic and professional path that best suits their aspirations and meets the country's current and future needs.

Thanks to its wise leadership and loyal people, Qatar has succeeded in transforming the hardship of the blockade into the reward of prosperity, a reward which has bestowed upon this country the self-sufficiency and political and economic

independence that all nations aspire to achieve. This has given rise to dynamism and momentum in the labor market, and has unleashed the potential and creative ideas of residents of our dear homeland. In this guide, we review a number of local sectors and industries that have contributed to achieving Qatar's self-sufficiency and addressing its needs in terms of services and resources. At the same time, Qatar's labor market is offering Qatari youth new opportunities and perspectives that have not been explored before.

In QCDC, we design our programs and initiatives based on field studies and research; and in this guide, you will find the results and recommendations of a comprehensive study conducted by our center to highlight issues of priority regarding professional development in Qatar, and ways to contribute further to our national vision by acquiring a deeper understanding of the labor market dynamics. This study will not only contribute to the development of our strategy and programs, but it will also serve as a reference for those concerned with promoting human and career development in the State of Qatar.

One of the interesting recommendations of this study is to encourage the participation of female graduates in the national workforce. I am confident that our interview with this issue's personality, a female Qatari pilot, will inspire and encourage you to raise your expectations when it comes to your future careers.

In the same way I speak to our youth, I also

speak to parents. It is not merely a personal mission or passion that you look after your youth, encourage them and keenly provide them with the appropriate environment that helps them flourish and attain scientific excellence, develop their personality and acquire the skills that make them engage with life bravely to achieve personal, professional and educational success; this is truly the best approach we should embrace to serve our beloved country. Youth are the veins and arteries that breathe life and hope into a nation. Thus, no nation can advance without investing in its people and its labor force, who represents the cornerstones of a diversified and competitive economy and catalysts of sustained economic growth, which goes side by side with human development.

Now I leave you with the pages and articles of Career Guide, where you will find inspiring stories and valuable information that help you choose the educational and practical path that ensures your scientific and professional excellence.

I hope that this guide will motivate you to do your best, explore your potential and raise your ambitions toward reaching your goals and realizing your hopes.



**Abdulla Al-Mansoori**  
Director  
Qatar Career Development Center





## FIFTH CAREER ADVISOR TRAINING COURSE

Building on the success of its previous editions, the Career Advisor Training Course (CATC) returned in March 2018. The course was organized by Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC) in recognition of the importance of career advisors in guiding students and professionals toward the right courses and careers.

Targeting counselors, advisors, parents and just about anyone wanting to pursue counseling as a career option, the fifth edition of CATC brought together 15 experts from leading Qatari organizations such as Qatar Foundation (QF), Awsaj Academy, Qatar Airways and Qatar Petroleum (QP).

Course instructors included Anita Abraham from Qatar University's College of Education. "The CATC is quite different from the other workshops, as it meets the competencies required from career advisors," said the education industry veteran. "Participants learn

how to deliver, plan and implement a career guidance program at their workplace with students or the human resources they work with."

The course focused on nine areas: Helping Skills, Career Development and Choice Theory, Assessment and Career Planning, the Role of Information in Career Planning, Ethical Guidelines, Working with Groups, Using Technology, Employability Skills and Program Planning and Implementation.

"Throughout the five-day program, participants learned how to use technology-driven applications to advance career development and to help students and adults make informed choices about university tracks and determine their career plans," said Abdulla Al-Mansoori, Director of QCDC. "Thus, this initiative plays a role in shaping our nation's future by equipping participants with the necessary skills to guide Qatari youth."



## CAREER VILLAGE 2018



The second edition of Career Village, the brainchild of QCDC, kicked off recently. This initiative aims to tap into the potential of Qatari high school students and prepare them for a better and brighter future by instilling a strong career culture and familiarizing them with the dynamics and specific needs of Qatar's labor market.

Held at Multaqa (Student Center) over three days from April 9 to 11, Career Village was open to both public and private school students along with parents, families, academic and career counselors

and the general public.

Representatives from 40 leading Qatar-based entities and educational institutions came together to introduce students to career fields that would best serve the country, such as education, business and finance, energy and manufacturing, communication and transportation, health, security, media and culture. Participants included Qatar University, College of the North Atlantic Qatar, Qatar National Bank, Qatargas, Qatar Aeronautical College, Hamad Medical Corporation, Police College and Al Kass Sports Channels.

Aside from gaining information on courses, scholarships, internships, career fields and opportunities, students also enjoyed interactive activities and job simulations, a unique aspect of Career Village.

Commenting on the event, Saad Al-Kharji, Head of Career Programs and Services, QCDC, said: "I commend all efforts that led to the great success of our Career Village activities. Students learned about Qatar's latest career trends, which can bolster the growth and progress of our nation and help us tackle key national challenges."

Unleash your creativity and get awarded for your photography skills!

**Here's the challenge:** Simply think of a profession that interests you the most, and send in your best shot, either of a professional in his or her work environment or an image that best captures the essence of a particular profession.

Don't miss this opportunity to showcase your talent, and the chance to win amazing prizes! Send your entries to [qcdc@qf.org.qa](mailto:qcdc@qf.org.qa)

PARTICIPATE IN THE CAREER PHOTO CONTEST



## QCDC-AWSAJ ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



Earlier this year, QCDC and Awsaj Academy joined hands through a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance the delivery of career guidance services at the academy.

Awsaj Academy is a K-12 specialized school that addresses the needs of students with mild to moderate learning challenges. It is the only school of its kind in Qatar and one of a handful of schools dedicated to working with students who have demonstrated aptitude

in certain areas while facing academic challenges in others.

Tailored to quick learners who are eager to learn outside the traditional classroom environment at a pace more suited to them, the joint program is being rolled out in two stages. The first phase targeted 20 senior students in the 2017-2018 academic year. The second phase, planned for the 2018-2019 academic year, will target a higher number of students.

Delivered through a four-step

process that is in line with the best international practices and adapting specially selected models into the local context, the program is designed to help participants explore their potential, understand the concept of career and make informed academic and career choices. It also aims to engage key influencers such as parents, employers and talent development specialists whose collaboration is vital for the success of the program.

## WINTER CAREER CAMP 2018

The fourth Winter Career Camp recently closed at Multaqa (Student Center). Held annually by QCDC, the week-long camp provides an integrated educational and recreational experience for secondary school students, and introduces them to numerous life and practical skills. Students receive an invaluable opportunity to visit various institutions in Qatar and receive first-hand knowledge on professions from specialists.

"Our Winter Career Camp is designed with a very simple yet effective approach," said Kholoud Al-Manaai, Career Programs and Services Lead, QCDC. "Young participants are given the opportunity to reflect and learn about their abilities, skills and professional preferences in

a simple, enjoyable and uncomplicated way, with the aim of choosing the career that best suits their talents."

The 2018 camp included trips to the Qatar National Library, QF's partner universities (such as Northwestern University in Qatar), Katara Cultural Village, Sawt Al Khaleej radio station, the Visual Art Center, the Youth Hobbies Center, Brooq Magazine, the Qatar Railways Company and Qatar Airways.

Aside from enjoying unforgettable experiences, such as attending a live demonstration of a TV presentation at Northwestern



University in Qatar and using a flight simulator at Qatar Airways, students also took part in various activities, programs and interactive workshops. The activities were designed to make them more aware of the importance of planning their future and to provide them with practical skills that enhance their self-confidence and instill entrepreneurship, perseverance and teamwork.

## QCDC CELEBRATES NATIONAL EVENTS



Qatar National Day celebrations kicked off on December 9 at Darb Al-Saai. Many QF centers took part in the festivities, resulting in a slew of activities at the QF pavilion.

QCDC presented a recreational activity to promote career awareness and introduce young people to the various professions that Qatar has to offer. The activity featured an interactive variant of the traditional Snakes and Ladders

game, with career and educational dimensions intended for primary and preparatory school students.

The events at Darb Al-Saai ran until December 20 and were a big success.

QCDC also celebrated the National Sport Day on the second Tuesday of February at QF's Oxygen Park with a range of football activities for people of all ages and athletic abilities.

This is part of QCDC's contribution to help build an active,

sports-loving community and to encourage the public to make long-term changes for a healthy lifestyle.

Backed by the belief that good health is the most precious of all possessions, QCDC began its National Sport Day initiative last year by encouraging its employees to dedicate one hour every Tuesday to exercise. To date, QCDC has clocked in more than 600 hours of fitness.

## DOHA LEARNING WEEK

At Qatar's first ever education festival, Doha Learning Week, QCDC marked its presence by delivering two key workshops.

The first workshop, "The Role of Parents in Guiding their Children's Career Paths," discussed the impact parents have on their children's career-related decisions and the importance of introducing career guidance to both parents and their children. Delivered by Abdulla Al-Mansoori, Director of QCDC, the workshop brought together more than 45 parents and their children to learn about the Career Decision-Making Paradigm, which aims to help young people identify optimal academic and career paths.

The second workshop, "Technology-Driven Career Advising

Skills," trained school counselors to use QCDC's new Career Advising System across schools. More than 30 public and private school counselors attended this workshop and received certificates of participation.

QCDC also took part in a TEDx forum at the Qatar National Library to highlight the importance of career guidance and introduce QCDC's various programs and services. The event attracted a large number of visitors, including Her Excellency Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Vice Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Foundation.

Doha Learning Week was held in November 2017 and was open to students, parents, teachers, and education enthusiasts.





# QATAR'S RISE TO POWER

## How the Gulf crisis turned out as a blessing in disguise for Qatar's economy.

While some may have looked at Qatar with skepticism since the 2017 Gulf crisis, it has simply been business as usual for the country, if not business at full speed! Its laser focus vision of becoming a fully sustainable economy by 2020 has left Qatar unfazed in the wake of a crisis that posed significant challenges. But in graceful fashion,

Qatar has risen to the occasion. 2017 figures from the Ministry of Development, Planning and Statistics showed that despite the political turbulence, coupled with lower oil prices, Qatar's growth remained healthy at 3.8 percent, with the non-hydrocarbon sector continuing to account for most of the economy's expansion. Qatar's logistics sector,

which features major development projects such as roads, rail networks, Hamad International Airport and Hamad Port, is a catalyst for the country's development and growth.

We take a look at a handful of the industries that are driving Qatar's economic boom and speak to some experts who explain what this means for the job market.

## Qatar Rail

Since its establishment in 2011, Qatar Rail has been responsible for the design and development of the country's rail network, and upon its completion, to manage, operate and maintain it. Qatar Rail has three major projects:

- The Doha Metro: a mostly underground rail network that connects communities within Doha and its suburbs.
- The Lusail Tram (LT): a tram network providing comfortable and convenient travel within the new city of Lusail.
- The Long Distance Rail: connecting cities in the north and west of Qatar with Doha, as well as connecting the country with the forthcoming GCC rail system.

To honor this mandate, Qatar Rail has been given the responsibility to: develop the railway sector regulatory framework and standards; manage costs and feasibilities; appoint and oversee

management consultants to ensure timely delivery and quality of service; integrate the rail network with other pre-existing modes of transport; develop railway sector policies and strategies; and enforce regulations and standards on all rail service operators.

Abdullah Nasser Al Kaabi, Mechanical Engineer in the Doha Metro Project from Qatar Rail, says that the company, which is currently undertaking one of the largest and most distinguished projects in the world, is a pioneer in the field of modern transportation.

"As a result, it is necessary to have many modern professions and use up-to-date technology in the design, construction, management, operation, and maintenance of these projects once they are completed (i.e., tunneling machines, train systems, network operation, and maintenance)," he says.

Some of these professions that are identified by Qatar Rail are new in Qatar, and are key to ensuring the progress and implementation

of the project in accordance with global technical requirements and standards.

"To meet these requirements, we are keen on developing and supporting Qatari engineers working at these projects through presence in the work sites, as a work site is a fertile, rich and suitable place to benefit and acquire expertise and technical specialties," he says.

Since the Gulf crisis in 2017, the company has seen an increase in its workforce in an effort to accelerate its pace of work and productivity.

"The siege has made the company more determined in seeing achievement and success in all stages of the project. We have focused on supporting national products and are working with local companies to upgrade the quality required for our projects, to qualify them to open alternative markets, and to expand the scope of the approved materials in implementation without compromising the quality," he says.





## Hamad Port

From January 2017 until the end of May 2018, Hamad Port received a total of 2,626 vessels, handled 1,323,244 standard shipping containers, up to 1,926,883 general and bulk cargo, 893,049 livestock and up to 92,472 equipment and vehicles.

Hamad Port, an addition to Qatar Ports, is one of the largest multi-purpose ports in the region. The establishment of this state-of-the-art facility is set to modernize the way Qatar handles ocean imports and exports, helping facilitate the growth and diversification of Qatar's economy.

Once fully operational in 2020, Hamad Port will be able to handle six million containers a year. In addition to handling general goods, food grains and vehicles, the port will also have a livestock terminal, a multi-use terminal, an offshore supply base, a coast guard facility and a port marine unit.

Along with regional transport development plans, Hamad Port will provide transshipment links by rail, sea or road to the GCC and other Arabian Gulf states, making use of its advanced safety, security system and a dedicated customs inspection area equipped with the latest technologies to speed the clearance of goods.

Strategically located adjacent to an economic zone, Hamad Port will help

facilitate manufacturing industries to increase non-oil and gas exports. Along with the new expressway interchanges, the port will facilitate cost-effective cargo handling and will position Qatar as the new regional shipping hub.

According to Engineer Nabil Mohammed Al-Khaldi, Chief Executive Officer of Port Management at Mwani Qatar, Hamad Port played a critical role in helping overcome the challenges that came with the Gulf crisis in 2017.

"We achieved success by ensuring the continuous flow of commodities, raw materials, goods and all supplies to the local market – a move that strengthened global confidence in Qatar's products and its strong economy," he says.

According to Al-Khaldi, efforts were focused on accelerating the company's plan to eliminate intermediate ports and expand direct shipping lines between Hamad Port and regional and international ports.

"A number of initiatives were launched to support the private sector and shipping companies, such as the opening of a management and handling terminal in the area of Gari Misbah and the provision of necessary services for this sector at a very nominal rate. These initiatives

and new shipping lines have greatly contributed to doubling the number of vessels and increasing the volume of handling and occupancy rates in the country's commercial ports," he adds.

This, and the fact that Hamad Port plays a vital role in supporting Qatar's economy, means that the company is at the forefront of generating job opportunities.

"These opportunities include jobs in various fields that are directly or indirectly linked to the port's various operations. With the aim of transforming Qatar into a vital regional trading center, and with the expansion of port activities in coming years, more new opportunities will be created for Qatari youth with professional expertise in various fields," he says.

According to Al-Khaldi, Qatari youth looking into penetrating this field should have good planning, organizational and leadership skills with a desire to learn.

"The most important advice that can be offered to those wishing to enter this field is to set goals and strive to achieve them while coping with the developments in the sector. They also should constantly update their skills by expanding their knowledge base and developing their expertise," he says.



## Athba Farm

Harsh climate conditions, a fast-growing population, along with travel and transportation bans that limit food and livestock imports, have created an alarming need for Qatar to study the challenges of food provision and to look at not only expanding its existing agricultural landscape, but also at alternative farming methods.

There are approximately 1,300 farms registered with the Ministry of Municipality and Environment's (MME) Agricultural Affairs Department, and the government provides subsidies to boost and support local production. As a result, Qatar's farming industry utilizes innovative and sustainable farming methods in a bid to diversify production while adhering to international standards and practices.

Local farms such as Al Sulaiteen Industrial Complex (SAIC), AGRICO and The Global Farm for

Agricultural Supplies, for example, have embraced hydroponics: a non-soil farming method that produces higher yields, and uses up to 70 percent less water than traditional farming. Greenhouse farming is another efficient method of growing crops that improves yields, reduces environmental impact and controls agricultural pests, in addition to protecting crops from adverse climatic conditions.

Athba Farm, whose products can be found at LuLu Hypermarket and Al Meera, currently produces free-range, vegetarian-fed poultry products, and plans a major expansion to increase their production from 5,000 chickens to 30,000 chickens per day to cope with the local demand.

Speaking on the impact of the Gulf crisis on Qatar, Awaida Bin Salem Al Kuwari, owner of ASAK Group and Athba Farm, says that while the blockade hampered the

delivery of resources and raw materials from the UAE and Saudi Arabia, it was an eye-opening moment for Qatar.

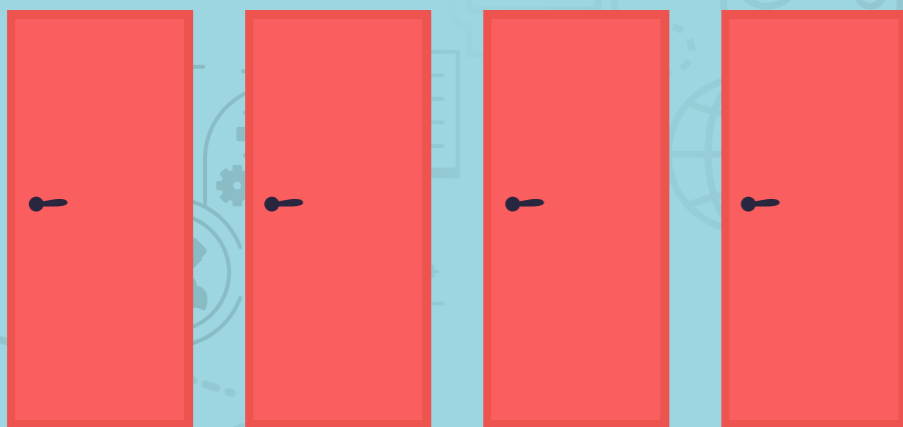
"The blockade made us realize the importance of food and industrial security, and how imperative it is to lay down strong foundations in the agricultural sector. Thankfully, we are now on the road to relying fully on ourselves," he says.

In looking at the opportunities that the crisis has brought about, Awaida says that the experience presented an opportunity for industrialists to become self-sufficient.

"The blockade also offered people the opportunity to become entrepreneurs. Some people have sought to open a factory, a farm or enter into a business that improves the Qatari economy. Qataris have taken part in the realization of their country's potential," he says.



# EXPLORING CAREERS



The best way to find out about a particular profession is to actually speak to someone who is already in the field. In this issue, we talk to five professionals in Qatar about their roles and what it takes to excel in their chosen line of work. We start with the winning interview of last year's "Career Interview Competition", submitted by **Sarah Mansour**.



Among university students and graduates, 20 percent are in political international affairs, 19 percent in engineering and 14 percent in Communications/Media/Journalism.



## Academic Counselor

Academic counselors are professionals who assist students in their growth and development by constructing meaningful educational plans that are compatible with a student's life goals as well as their strengths and interests.

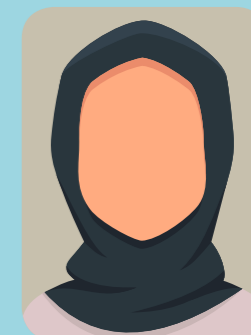
They also help students examine school programs, select a major, stick to their plans and track their advancement while providing support where needed. They also work closely with professors and other school or university administrators to stay up-to-date on program changes. In addition to advising students, academic advisors also guide parents in planning and making informed decisions for their child's education and career pathways.

Aspiring academic counselor should have an education-related bachelor's degree or a master's degree related to educational counseling.

### Ms Khadija Amanat Gul

Academic Counselor,  
Al Ghuwairia Girls School

"I came upon this profession by accident, as I wanted an administrative job that would help me complete my postgraduate studies. However, over time, I've come to love this job, and it has become my passion as it now gives me so much joy to see students achieving their dreams. An academic counselor needs to be able to understand each student's unique wishes and interests, and should help them reach what they aspire for. It is especially important to be able to offer encouragement and support to students to bring out the best in them. If I went back in time, I would definitely make the same career choice, because I have realized the importance of this profession in helping students; and my happiness is indescribable when I notice happiness in the eyes of students as they achieve their goals or progress greatly in their academic and practical life."





## Nurse

Nursing is consistently ranked as the most trusted profession in the world. Nurses make up the single biggest workforce in health care. Their duties go beyond providing care and administering medicine.

Nurses also need to communicate with patients and doctors, provide emotional support to patients and their families, teach patients how to self-administer medication and therapy, supervise junior staff and maintain records.

There are many types of nursing jobs, including registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, nurse practitioner, ICU registered nurse, emergency room nurse, operating room nurse and home health nurse. Although hospitals are the main place of work, nurses are also employed in a variety of settings, such as clinics, private practices, schools, homes and even prisons.

To become a nurse, first decide on the area to specialize in as requirements can vary with each speciality. Start with a diploma program and work your way up to an associate's degree, a Bachelor of Science degree, a Master of Science degree and finally a Doctor of Nursing degree.

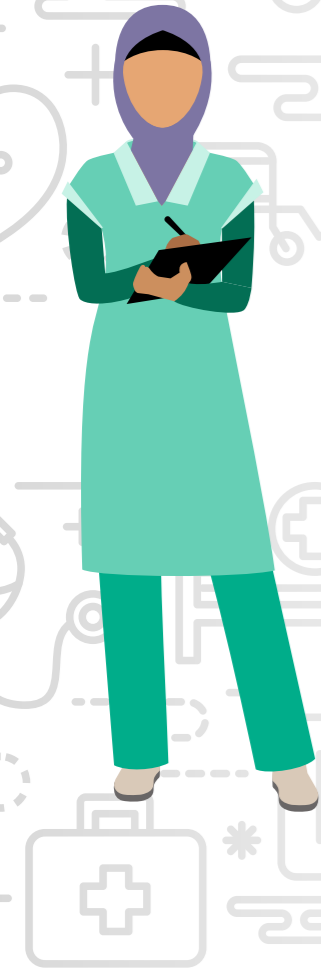
## TV News Broadcaster

Although usually regarded as a glamorous career, TV news broadcasters are in the serious business of communicating current events and breaking news to local, national and international audiences.

They are usually required to take on multiple tasks, such as researching, scriptwriting, presenting and even directing news segments. Being able to work with tight deadlines and irregular hours is also advantageous.

Analytical and investigative skills are important in putting news stories together, as is communication and interpersonal skills to conduct interviews with a wide variety of people. They also need to be able to think on their feet when broadcasting live. Above all, they need to have a passion for news.

The minimum educational requirement is usually a bachelor's degree, preferably in broadcast journalism or mass communications. Degrees in business, economics and political science can also be helpful in a news broadcasting career. Interning at news stations is highly recommended, as some real-world experience can exponentially increase your chances of getting hired after graduation.



**Zeinab Ismail Ali**  
Staff Nurse,  
Hamad Medical Corporation

"Nursing is for people who enjoy providing help, care and support to others. Nurses need a variety of personal qualities; they need to be compassionate, patient, have empathy, good communication and problem-solving skills and have physical endurance and attention to detail. Typically, a nurse is responsible for assisting physicians in administering patient care, providing care, advice and educating patients and their families on a variety of medical conditions. What I love most about being a nurse is being able to positively influence patients, their families, students and other health workers. It's a truly rewarding and fulfilling profession."



**Muhammad Yusuf Al Ansari**  
TV Broadcaster,  
Qatar TV

"A TV broadcaster's job is challenging, yet rewarding. Sometimes I work even while on vacation, and spend long hours at work as preparation for a news bulletin or an interview needs advance planning. But the satisfaction comes when people tell me they love and appreciate the work I do. I feel that since the blockade, people started trusting TV broadcasters more than before. During that time, we focused on reporting the truth, and to show that the siege did not affect the course of matters in the State, and that everything was normal. In my opinion, a TV broadcaster should be humble, especially when he reaches a stage of fame and stardom through achievements and live coverage of programs. They should also be flexible and modest with people, actively interact with them, and be friendly. Those aspiring to become TV broadcasters have to know that this field is not easy. You will have to face stumbling blocks at first, but pitfalls and blunders are the things that will build your media personality over time."



## Agricultural Engineer

As the world's population continues to rise, the demand for food is growing. Hence there will always be a need for agricultural engineers.

They have a variety of duties, but they essentially combine mechanical, civil, electrical and chemical engineering principles with agricultural principles to develop and design new equipment and methods to make farming safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly.

Their work takes them both indoors and outdoors. Not only will they need to draw up plans and manage projects from the comfort of their offices, but they will also need to make site visits and inspections to monitor and ensure that all technical and management issues are sorted. Other places of work include research laboratories and classrooms. Travelling is part of the job, as is putting in long hours to take advantage of good weather outdoors.

The first step to becoming an agricultural engineer is to excel in mathematics and sciences in high school. This should be followed through with a bachelor's degree, preferably in agricultural or biological engineering.

engineering, agricultural economics, plant physiology or irrigation specialties. All specialties are currently required. A student cannot be expected to become an expert in all disciplines within two years, but after joining us here in the ministry, we refine their skills and enrich their information and talents, through both internal and external lectures. We have several initiatives to attract students and offer courses. For example, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is ready to receive university graduates to complete a full course in Vienna, where students learn about the fields of atomic energy related to agriculture. We also have experts and engineers who are really useful in hands-on training.

A profession in agriculture requires someone who is willing to work in the field because the nature of the work often involves going on field trips or working in a laboratory."



### Hassan Ibrahim Al Asmakh

Head of Plant Research, Agricultural Research Department, Ministry of Municipality and Environment

"The best thing about a job in this industry is that it is not office-bound. The nature of the work is not routine; rather, it entails moving between laboratories, stations and departments, attending interviews, meetings, lectures and seminars.

With the recent blockade, we have become an integral part of the food security project in Qatar, as we are part of the National Self-Sufficiency Plan. The industry as a whole has gained a lot of attention, and there is now a high demand for agricultural engineers, experts and skilled labor in the agricultural sector. The future in this field is promising. The current requirements are to find more modern techniques that are more effective.

Students interested in this field should obtain a university specialization related to agriculture, whether in agricultural



## Cyber-Security Engineer

In today's world where everything relies heavily on the Internet, the job of a cyber-security engineer has become a crucial one. And it is a big job that includes safeguarding sensitive data such as confidential client information, trade secrets and financial records against viruses and cyber-criminals. The job also includes preventing loss of data and recovery from hard drive failures and power outages.

Experience and education will go a long way in this field. A basic requirement is a bachelor's degree in computer science, software engineering, systems engineering, information systems, or related fields. Once you have 5-10 years of work experience, you can move up to a senior security engineer position.

Although it is not a physically demanding occupation, the working hours for cyber-security engineers may be long and irregular. It is a highly technical job, but engineers would still need soft skills, such as complex problem-solving abilities, a creative mind, communication skills, and the ability to deal with stress.

### Abdulla Ahmad A. Al Ali

Director, Information Technology Department, Ministry of Economy and Commerce

"The field of information technology, especially the cyber-security aspect of it, is continuously changing. It is never boring. There are new hackers every day, and cyber-security tools and methodologies change daily, so there are new challenges every day. For me, being in this field is an honor as I work with a team to protect our beloved country and we play a role in preventing any possible threat. Since the blockade, we have had to review all of our security policies and to look for gaps in our cyber-security defenses. Although we are in good shape now, we have to be wary about new hacking techniques and technologies that are constantly changing.

In the field of information technology, the sky is the limit when it comes to opportunities. Cyber-security is a highly needed expertise, now more than ever, due to the huge expansion and usage of technology worldwide.

A profession in this field is for someone who has strong analytical skills, and the willingness to anticipate cyber-

attacks, always thinking one step ahead of a cyber-threat. He or she must be focused on the details of a security system, noting any minor changes, and foreseeing any potential problems, however small. Moreover, they have to constantly update their knowledge on the latest data-protection methods, cyber-security legislation, and practices and techniques.

A graduate degree, often in computer engineering or a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) qualification, is a mandatory requirement for someone interested in this field. Additionally, he or she needs to be up-to-date with developments in this field, and track all new techniques of preventing threats. There are many types of technical certificates for network, information, and cyber-security that can improve the expertise of a cyber-security engineer."

Read the book titled 'Thinking Security' by Steven Bellovin that highlights hacking strategies and how to think like hackers in order to stop them and stay one step ahead of them."





# 4 THINGS

## YOU WILL LEARN IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF WORK

How you tackle your first year largely dictates how you will tackle the rest of your life.

Your first year of work is crucial in helping you build your future. Why? Because everything that you learn in that first year will set the tone for your entire working life. Here's a look at some of the lessons that will help you grow:

**1 Your degree alone isn't enough**  
While your qualifications will help you get employed and earn more money, it is not what's going to propel you toward excellence. That's down to how passionate you are about wanting to achieve success, how hard you're willing to work and how committed you are toward your goals. Once you have the qualities and skills you need to push you to the top, you'll realize that money comes easily.

**2 Yes, there is still homework**  
Thought your homework days were over? Well, they are far from over. Although many organizations do not encourage their employees to take work home, there are some that deliberately put you through such tests to see how dedicated you are to your job. You can count on days when you will need to burn the midnight oil to get work done, especially during deadline time. And on many occasions, you might even need to bring work home. Don't let this discourage you though, because in time, and with experience, you'll learn to manage your time efficiently, while impressing the boss!

**3 You'll get a handle on your emotions**  
You will experience bouts of anger, frustration and impatience, but it will always be in your favor to keep calm and handle these emotions gracefully. This may be difficult at first, but not doing so could have dire consequences on your career progression. Additionally, getting a grip on your emotions displays strength of character, and expressing them in a more productive manner will serve you better as you make your way up the career ladder.

**4 You'll discover what you're capable of**  
You might feel that you never worked as hard as you did during your university days, but when you enter the workforce, complete with the pressure of manager approvals, appraisals, increments and bonuses, you will realize your true potential and how you had actually never worked at your fullest capacity. This experience will help you find strengths you were not aware of.

## TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING IN A MODERN OFFICE



Tips for new graduates on work-life balance.

There's a lot to contend with as a new graduate in an office environment. After months of going through job interviews and endless resume re-writing, it seems like the hard work is only just beginning now that you've finally landed yourself a job. In your eagerness to prove yourself, just be careful not to fall into the trap of burning yourself out mentally and physically. Here are some effective ways in which you can avoid mental and physical burnout in a competitive office environment:

weeks at work. So jot down what's important and look at your notes later so you can absorb information better. It also helps to keep track of your work assignments by using either a manual or online planner (such as Timeful and Easily Do, both on iOS) to record short and long-term tasks, as well as daily tasks. In addition to keeping your workload manageable, this will alleviate stress, especially when you can tick off the tasks you accomplished at the end of the day.

### DON'T HESITATE TO ASK FOR HELP

As a new graduate, you might be a little apprehensive about asking for help as you don't want to come across as incompetent, but if you need clarity on something, you need to ask. Your managers would rather have you ask them questions instead of making assumptions that could potentially lead to mistakes. Seeking assistance will be acknowledged as an initiative on your part to get things right for the team, so ask when you are not sure.

### TAKE A WALK

While you might be inclined to stay in during lunch to catch up on all the new information that has come your way (or perhaps to impress your manager!), do yourself a favor and take that break instead. The change in environment while you walk to get your lunch will do you a world of good, especially when you are feeling stressed. Additionally, some simple stretching exercises will also do the trick. Any form of movement will help you clear your mind of work, and get you re-focused when you get back to your desk.

### GET ORGANIZED

Let's face it, there is a ton of information about your role and the way your department works that you will need to get a handle on – and your mind is not going to be able to take in all that information during your first few

### STAY IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

To maintain work-life balance and to foster healthy mental well-being, it is important to spend time with your loved ones outside the workplace. As busy as you might be at your new job, make some time to keep in touch with friends and family. It's important to switch off from work. Friends and family can help provide that much-needed break you deserve.



### Dr Tahira Kurram,

Lead Physician at Qatar Foundation Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) offers these additional tips to keep you happy and healthy at work:

- Have a good breakfast (rich in varied fibers and protein), break down your meals throughout the day (as opposed to one heavy meal), minimize your caffeine intake (especially on an empty stomach), stay hydrated, and avoid sugary foods.
- If you have a desk job that requires you to sit for long periods of time, then you should take regular breaks to stretch and move your body.
- When you're at work and feeling overwhelmed by the multitude of tasks at hand, take a step back and focus on doing just one thing at a time instead of trying to multitask.
- If you're staring into a computer screen all day, adjust the settings to alter the screen brightness so that it doesn't put a strain on your eyes. You should also consider taking regular breaks from looking at the screen.
- If you feel lethargic in the morning, the problem is likely to have started the night before. Switch off all mobile devices before bedtime, and place them away from your bed. Having at least seven to eight hours of sleep will help you take on a new, challenging day with gusto.
- Go for regular health visits despite feeling fit and strong. Sometimes you are not aware of certain deficiencies, such as Vitamin D deficiency or anemia.



# BREAKING THE CLOUD CEILING

Have you met a female pilot before? Well, here's one who is among the five percent of female pilots globally – Qatar's very own Hadfah Muhammad Al Marri.

While women have been taking to the skies since the early 1900s, it still comes as a surprise to some people to see or hear of female pilots. Globally, the number of commercial female pilots has been steadily increasing, and the Middle East region is no exception, with several female pilots known for flying both commercial and fighter jet planes. Qatar's very own Hadfah is among them.

The 27-year-old Senior Co-Pilot for Qatar Airways has always wanted to fly a plane, and in a typical 'go after your dreams' story, tells us of her journey and the obstacles she overcame to realize her childhood ambition. Hers is a story of inspiration:

#### What does being a Qatari female pilot feel like?

I feel responsible as many Qatari girls see me as a role model. This makes me want to work harder and strive to live up to their expectations by excelling in this chosen field. I also feel proud for the admiration I receive, and I am especially proud that I contribute to the achievements of Qatar. In a small way, am living up to the aspirations of His Highness the Emir, who said that Qatar deserves the best of its people.

#### What sparked your interest in becoming a pilot?

I have always dreamt of becoming a

pilot, and as I grew older, this passion kept getting stronger as I started to love traveling and learning about different civilizations, customs, and traditions.

#### What was your family's reaction when you first broached the subject of becoming a pilot?

My mother encouraged me to enter the world of aviation. She's a firm believer that perseverance, seriousness, and diligence are necessary ingredients for achieving whatever we aspire to be. She is my biggest supporter.

#### What challenges did you face at that time?

I faced several challenges due to the fact that being a pilot was an unfamiliar profession for a woman to get into in the Gulf, especially as a Qatari woman. There were also customs and traditions to contend with.

#### What challenges did you face being a female cadet pilot in training?

Thankfully, I faced no challenges as a girl. I studied at the hands of professors from Britain. They treated everyone equally. There was no gender differentiation. The challenge was only to adapt to the laws, to study hard and deal with everyone professionally, as well as take the profession very seriously because we are responsible for the lives of many human beings.

#### What do you think of other female pilots?

They have all my respect and appreciation. It is not an easy job, as you need speed, courage, determination and also the need to make the right decisions at the right time. I've had the privilege of flying as co-pilot with three female captains so far, and the experience has been great. I hope to achieve what they have achieved one day.

#### Do you see yourself as a role model to others?

Yes, I also see myself as a role model at home, because my younger sister has also joined the Qatar Aeronautical College, and will very soon begin training with Qatar Airways.

#### What do you most love about your job?

I love everything related to my profession. I have learnt a lot from many captains I have flown with, and I have visited many countries and learnt about unfamiliar customs and traditions. I also get to meet lots of people!

#### What's the least favorite thing about your job?

There is nothing I don't like about my job. It truly is a dream that came true for me. I hope to make captain one day soon.

#### Who is your biggest supporter?

My mother. She stood by me through thick and thin since the day I joined Qatar Aeronautical College. She taught me not to give up on my dream. She always told me that I can do whatever I want, and that I am responsible for the decision I made when I was a child to become a pilot, and that I have to achieve it.

#### Who do you look up to?

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the leader of the Education Above All campaign, is my inspiration and role model.

#### What's the best piece of advice given to you?

To not stop asking questions, and to continue learning no matter what my rank or position is.

#### What was your first flight?

It was in May 2016, when I had my first takeoff and landing with passengers flying from Doha to Brussels. I had an indescribable feeling that filled me with enthusiasm, happiness, and a sense of accomplishment.

#### What's your most memorable flight?

There have been many memorable flights, but the most important trip was one I made recently to Malaga in Spain. This was the first Qatar Airways flight to Malaga. It was a new and enjoyable experience, and I was proud to be a Qatari lady who took that first flight out to Qatar Airways' new destination.

#### What questions do you get asked a lot?

Among some of the popular questions is whether we can land safely if we lost one of the plane's engines, and how to fly a plane.

#### What's the one thing you miss when you're travelling?

I miss my family and friends the most. When I travel to beautiful places, I wish they were there with me.

#### If you could fly anywhere today, where would it be?

I would like to visit many countries, including the Greek island of Zakynthos and the island of Mauritius.

#### What advice would you give aspiring female pilots?

To not give up on their dreams of flying no matter how difficult it may seem. It's a job that needs to be taken very seriously as it comes with great responsibility. I wish aspiring female pilots every success for a brilliant future!





# SIX REASONS TO CONTINUE WITH YOUR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES



You've earned your bachelor's degree, and you're now wondering if pursuing postgraduate studies is worth it. Well, here are some reasons why we think it could be:

Many students are unsure if a master's degree will really be of any use to them. Besides the additional cost, the extra time this will take also means that their journey toward achieving their career goals will be delayed. It's a tough decision to make, however, looking at the benefits, it could be worth the effort, time, and money.

## 1 Stand out in the job market

With the rising number of candidates with a master's degree in the market, an undergraduate qualification alone might be insufficient to get you noticed. In this day and age, a university education is viewed more as a rite of passage than a luxury, and with more and more postgraduates in the workforce, those holding only a bachelor's degree might fail to appeal to employers.

## 2 Invest in yourself

There's no way of predicting your future, but you can certainly have a plan for it and be prepared for whatever there is to come. Earning a master's degree is an investment in your own potential, and puts you in a solid position to tackle whatever direction your future career might lead you to. So don't look at it as a journey that prolongs your ambitions, rather as one that solidifies and strengthens it.

## 3 Deepen your interest

A master's degree presents you with the opportunity to pursue studies of personal interest at a greater extent. Think of all the research, meetings and lectures that you will be attending in order to develop your ideas around a field that interests you deeply. Consider the wealth of information and knowledge that you will be gaining from

renowned speakers, one-on-one supervision and the opportunities to engage and mingle with like-minded people. The experience alone is satisfying enough!

## 4 Make beneficial connections

This is the time when you will be connecting with people on a professional level. As a master's student you will be connecting with like-minded people in a professional context, and finding ways to collaborate, discuss and develop your own knowledge, skills and career. Whom you form lasting connections with will come in useful one day. As the saying goes, "It's not what you know, it's who you know".

## 5 Earn recognition in your field

With all the research work that you do during your studies, you could potentially stand a chance to be recognized for an achievement that is particularly exceptional. You could also be invited as a speaker to present your paper at a conference, have your work published in a journal, or even contribute to a top-level research project. International recognition is also a prospect for those who continue with research, which could lead to you becoming a prominent expert in your field one day.

## 6 Better earning capacity

Your potential of earning more is a given once you are a master's degree holder. In fact, this is one of the most-cited reasons that students enroll in a master's degree program. Compared to an undergraduate degree, there's no denying that a master's degree is where the money is.

# WAIT OR CONTINUE?

Many graduate students opt to work immediately after obtaining their first degree while some others choose to continue with their master's studies. We speak to two people from opposite ends of this spectrum.



**"I pursued my master's degree 15 years after earning my first degree."**

### Marwa Ali Serry

Personal Assistant,  
Mergers & Acquisitions Department,  
Qatar Investment Authority

In 2000, Marwa graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Cairo University, and it wasn't until 2015 that she chose to pursue her master's degree in Audiovisual Translation (AVT) from Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU).

"I could not continue with my postgraduate studies due to family commitments, so I started working immediately after I earned my degree," she says. "I graduated with my master's degree in 2017, and am now looking forward to earning my PhD in Audiovisual Translation."

Marwa says that there are benefits to earning some work experience before pursuing postgraduate studies, although 15 years is too long a gap.

"I don't recommend a huge gap between pursuing one's undergraduate and postgraduate studies because there are a lot of changes in the academic world. However, gaining some work experience will help a person acquire professional skills and knowledge that might be beneficial to their postgraduate studies. There's a chance to create a valuable professional network that can help in one's future career goals. Additionally, a person can also assess if a master's degree is actually required to fulfil their ultimate career ambition," she says.



**"I was still in student mode after my bachelor's degree, and decided to immediately pursue my postgraduate studies."**

### Hazem Asif

Postgraduate Student,  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
School of the Arts in Qatar

When Hazem graduated in 2016 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design from Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), he decided to immediately pursue his master's degree in the same field.

"I took up the Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) program partly because I got a full scholarship to attend the course. I couldn't let up on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," he said.

"I was also still in student mode, and was ready to further my learning and develop my research skills," he adds.

Hazem, who plans to pursue a career in film-making, says that although gaining some work experience has numerous benefits, he was eager to get his studies out of the way.

"For me, the benefit of continuing with my master's degree right after my undergraduate studies is that everything was still fresh and I was familiar with the latest research methodologies," he says.





# IMPROVING YOUR QUALITY OF WORK

It's not just about *what* you do, but *how* you do it.

It may come as a surprise to some that producing quality work doesn't just mean being able to tick everything off a to-do list. While procrastination and lack of motivation can have an impact on your quality of work, it is also important to know that these aren't the only factors that can hamper work quality.

In broad terms, producing quality work means meeting company standards, minimizing errors and wastage of time and resources, and being dependable.

According to Dr. Rashid Sultan Al Kuwari, Asset & Surveillance Engineering Manager at Qatargas, producing quality work is not only about what you achieve at work, but also how you achieve it.

"Employees who produce quality work perform their task with the right attitude and behavior. This means that in addition to the skills that they have acquired, they also ensure that they do the work in a safe manner (without hurting themselves or others), respect other employees, communicate clearly, cooperate with team members and share information," he says.

Producing quality work has an impact on the organization and on you as an employee. According to Dr Al Kuwari, quality work for an organization is important in achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty, increasing productivity, eliminating waste, reducing costs and meeting regulatory requirements.

"For the employee, producing quality work can increase motivation and job satisfaction, and is usually recognized by management during the employee performance appraisal, which may ultimately result in career development and career growth," he says.



## Here are some practical ways that can help you improve your quality of work:

### SLEEP, EXERCISE AND EAT WELL

Do you wake up with a jump or do you struggle out of bed? If you feel lethargic and unable to focus at work, then lack of sleep could be the culprit. An adult body needs about eight hours of sleep a night. That's what it



takes for our bodies to feel well-rested and ready to tackle the challenges the next day has to offer. If you have trouble sleeping, then get into the habit of exercising. Anything between half an hour to an hour a day will help reduce your blood pressure, improve your general health, and correct poor sleeping patterns. If you find yourself making excuses at the end of the day, bite the bullet and try exercising first thing in the morning. Morning

exercises are particularly invigorating as they help boost energy levels and wake you up.

Also look into your food intake. What you eat has a massive influence on how you think and feel. Your concentration levels will improve and you will feel the difference in how you feel once you swap your break time junk food for nuts, seeds and lots of water. Also, take your breaks seriously – short intermittent breaks are great if you're struggling to solve a problem or come up with an idea.

### TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR WORKSPACE

There are lots of things at your workplace that could impede the quality of your work, so take control of it. If you're spending a lot of time on your phone, put it on silent or switch it off, so it doesn't break your focus. Stop wasting your time looking at Facebook and Instagram feeds – these distractions are not going to help you meet your deadlines.



If you find it a challenge staying on top of things at work, consider investing in an online app, such as Awesome Note or Letterspace that will help you manage and complete your tasks. It will take some getting used to, but in the long run, it will increase your efficiency and productivity. Another simple way to improve your quality of work and beat procrastination is to do all the jobs you don't want to do first, and leave the best until last. Once the boring tasks that you do not enjoy are out of the way, you can focus on your favorite jobs.

### DON'T MULTITASK

Here's what happens when you try to do two or more things at once - your productivity and quality of work drops. What does this mean? Just that putting all your attention on one task at a time will improve your overall efficiency.



## DELIVERING QUALITY AS A NEWBIE

### Here are some additional tips from Dr. Al Kuwari:

- 1 Learn enough about the organization's culture and values before and after you join. This will help you understand how things work and what is the quality culture of the organization.
- 2 Understand from your supervisor what is expected of you in terms of objectives, tasks and behaviors. This will help you meet the requirements and perform with high quality.
- 3 Focus on continuous learning. A degree alone is not enough. Learning new things on the job is one of the most effective ways to progress.
- 4 Take ownership of your development and career. While it is useful to get help and support from your supervisor or more experienced colleagues, you need to drive the process yourself.



# REAL THE SECRET TO WORK-LIFE BALANCE

There's a reason why there are so many reluctant employees – they are not in jobs that suit them best!

The use of career guidance tools and systems is a relatively mature concept, but one that is recognized as a key element in gaining work-life balance. Many countries across the globe have adopted some form of it as part of their educational systems, enabling students, among other things, to link their academic learning to a career and eventually get into a profession that is well-suited.

In schools and universities, these tools and systems assist students in exploring their strengths, skills, interests and passions to make effective academic decisions that have both personal meaning, and the

potential to maximize their future career opportunities.

While it may seem that only students stand to gain the most out of these career guidance tools, the good news is that they can also be of great use at all stages of an individual's professional career.

One element of a career guidance tool, for example, is the use of psychometric assessments, which are gaining popularity in the hiring process. The importance of the job interview, while still crucial, is decreasing. As such, tests like



psychometric assessments are increasingly used by companies to find out more about a person's personality, skills, and abilities.

## THE MODULES IN QCDC'S CAREER ADVISING SYSTEM

There are six main areas that are related to how best to develop a career plan, implement it, and evaluate it.

### STEP 1

The registration process that gets you in the Career Advising System (CAS).

career options are provided, along with a detailed description of these careers and the qualifications required for these occupations.

### STEP 2

The self-assessment stage that offers psychometric tests related to your interests and values.

### STEP 4

The educational exploration section provides you with details of the kinds of qualifications needed to pursue the career that suits you best. This section also supplies information on the institutions that provide the required educational program. Program details are also provided, with links directing you to the website, along with course duration and fees. Information on scholarships also falls under this section.

### STEP 3

The occupational exploration section provides you with options on what careers might fit you best, based on the results of your psychometric assessment. Details of three to four

### STEP 5

This section is about preparing you for employment. So while you develop your plan of studies, you can simultaneously prepare yourself for employment by learning how to write a CV, acing at job interviews, where to look for job opportunities, etc.

### STEP 6

Finally, you develop an online portfolio for yourself, which you can progressively edit as you move along the process. All your information and searches are recorded and stored here for you to use as and when needed.

These tests allow employers to get to know the person behind the CV and how they'll really fit into the organization. The result, of course, is a match made in heaven: a happy employee who does what he loves for a living, and a satisfied employer who gets the results they need.

Speaking on the use and benefits of career guidance tools, Dr Tajalsir Kardaman, Career Programs and Services Manager at Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC), said that the match between a person's interests, values and personality need to be consistent against the demands of a job in order to achieve a good quality of work life.

"At the end of the day, it is about attaining work-life balance. When people are satisfied with their jobs, performance improves, and both the organization and the employee benefit. If your quality of work life is to be improved, you need to be in the right career," he says.

In Qatar, psychometric assessments are now offered in public secondary schools as part of QCDC's Career Advising System (CAS), which is a comprehensive career assessing and planning solution that assists students in choosing education and career paths that best match their skills and interests.

The integration of CAS into the national education framework was a result of a Memorandum of Understanding between QCDC and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The move is a milestone achievement for QCDC in its mission of promoting national capacity-building, and supporting Qatari youth to choose the career path that best fits their potential and future labor market needs. This initiative is the first of its kind in the Middle East.

Ahmad Nasir Ibrahim Al Balam, Academic Counseling Expert from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, said that the implementation of CAS in public schools is a step in the right direction. "There is no doubt that such an assessment is important to measure a student's interest

and help them understand their needs, as well as know the careers that best suit them and their abilities. This certainly reduces or eliminates confusion that many students experience when they have to choose a specialization or a particular academic or professional track," he says.

Speaking on the role of academic and career guidance at the secondary school level, Al Balam said that it is needed to prepare students to get them ready for university and the labor market. "Once a student is in secondary school, he or she undergoes an awareness program about the post-secondary education opportunities that are available, including the various available disciplines and professions, university requirements and the relevant skills needed to make a decision about the career or specialization that best suits them," he says.

CAS has been implemented in all secondary schools under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, for both boys and girls. A total of 9,625 10th grade students in 59 schools already have access to this system. Initial results are expected to be seen next year when students choose their academic path within the school, based on the options given to them by CAS. Long-term results will bear fruit once these students graduate from high school and delve into their chosen academic fields, thereafter embracing a career of their choice.

CAS was developed in cooperation with Kuder Inc., a world leader in career planning services. However, what makes it unique is that the system provides a tailor-made solution that factors in Qatar's social and economic conditions while meeting the requirements of its educational environment. As a result, CAS features diverse and innovative components as well as psychometric and personality assessment tools to help students identify the most appropriate academic and career paths in line with the future needs of Qatar.



## LIFE SKILLS MADE MANDATORY

The recent requirement of Life Skills as a mandatory subject in schools across Qatar has been viewed as a much-needed measure by many senior school personnel, including Hassan Mohammed Al Baker, principal of Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Thani Secondary School for Boys. He speaks about his views here:

### WHAT'S YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE INTRODUCTION OF LIFE SKILLS AS A MANDATORY SUBJECT IN SCHOOLS?

With this subject in schools, students will learn about patterns of thinking and mental skills, along with personal and academic skills. To obtain these skills, students need to be involved in activities both inside and outside the school, along with learning from the Life Skills curriculum developed for them.

### HAVE THERE BEEN ANY IMPROVEMENTS SINCE THE SUBJECT WAS INTRODUCED IN SCHOOLS?

It's too early to say. We need several years before seeing the results. But I have already seen improvements, and expect many more improvements at the level of public schools.

### WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES YOU THINK SCHOOLS WILL FACE?

First, we need well-qualified people to teach this subject. We need qualified people who know how to deal with this approach and apply it professionally, because the teacher of this subject must be enthusiastic and young. I also feel that the subject of Life Skills should be applied at all stages – from primary to secondary. It should not be limited to just a curriculum being taught, but also to practical training that involves active interaction between the teacher and the student.

### WHAT ELSE WILL ADD VALUE TO THIS SUBJECT IN SCHOOL?

The biggest role is the one played by the teacher. He or she has to be seen adopting these values as an example to the students. If a teacher prevents a student from cheating, then the teacher is expected to take extra care and not show any aspects that might be interpreted as cheating. Laws and rules should remain applicable to everyone, so as we come to consolidate values, students will respect these values and try to apply them, because they have interacted with the school administration. School management should always be careful and set a good example in applying these values.



# FROM INTERN TO EMPLOYEE

Graduates know that internships are crucial to launching their careers. So how do you get the most out of one and land a job offer?

There is a ton of information out there about how to apply for internships and why they are important. But do you know what to do once you're there, or how to turn it into a job?

According to Dr Tajalsir Kardaman, Career Programs and Services Manager at Qatar Career Development Center, for an internship to be truly effective, it needs to be approached holistically. "Internships must be systematically envisioned. There must be a well-articulated framework for it to be successful. This means it needs clear objectives, outcomes, tasks and a clear evaluation process that is handled by the academic

## Ask for Work

Yes, really! If you find yourself sitting around with nothing to do as a new intern, then ask how you may be of service. This will not only show your employers that you have initiative and drive, but will give you valuable work experience which you can add to your resume. The more work you get to do, the better, so don't be picky. When you're an intern, any chance to do any kind of work will serve you in the long run, even if that means spending the day at the photocopier machine. Don't underestimate the value of a task this menial – it all goes toward building the right attitude, and it won't be long before your willingness to work will lead you to bigger and more important tasks.

## Make Yourself Indispensable

The key to securing a full-time job is to get everyone in your office to feel like they wouldn't know what to do without you. Start by offering to take on a small project on your own, or to fill a gap that is under-represented in the company. An example could be offering to take on the management of the company's social media platform. If you manage to do a good job and prove your skills, you'll be seen as a star! Another way to come across as indispensable is to become the office 'go-to' person. Do this by offering to help your colleagues with anything, even if it is outside your official intern job scope. Remember that the idea here is to show your employers that there's no one else who could do a better job.



advisor and the company representative or coach of the student on the job," he says.

"Additionally, I feel that the internship needs to be substantiated or complemented with a volunteering stint – maybe even in the same company, which could progress to a temporary position, and which could consequently lead to a permanent job. If a student shows initiative and proves his or her capabilities, then they can almost be sure of a permanent position," he adds.

Here are some more tips to help you get your foot in the door and make the most of your internship experience while you are at it.

## Play the Part

As you start your internship, think about what it would be like if you were already working in the company. With this in mind, start playing the part. Be professional and remember that you aren't hanging out with your friends anymore. Treat your colleagues with respect and be friendly – create a good impression for yourself! While you're at work, pay attention to what is needed of you and show initiative in completing your tasks. Guess who the company will think of once a position opens up?

## Meet and Mingle

You just never know where socializing with your colleagues can take you one day. Get to know them, and make an effort to find out more about the company and its culture. Networking will give you the opportunity to meet people and make great contacts that could open doors for you down the line. Once you form ties with these colleagues, you can request to use them as referees in your resume. If you've made a good impression on them, it's likely that they'd be happy to oblige.



35 percent of higher education students and graduates participated in internships or work experience.



Search



# The Do's and Don'ts of LinkedIn

Getting noticed and making full use of this top social media recruitment platform.



Do treat LinkedIn for what it is: a way to make job connections. If you find someone that could be helpful in advancing your career or recommending a job, but you don't have a first-degree connection to them, find a mutual friend and ask them to write an introduction for you. This is an acceptable practice on LinkedIn.

Do be professional and respond to your messages accordingly.

Do maintain your visibility. Post something up a few times a week, and respond to what other people post as well. When you get a notification that someone has been promoted, congratulate them, likewise, thank people when they congratulate you.

Do send personalized connection requests. The extra effort to customize all your messages will set you apart from the rest. People are also more likely to respond to requests for recommendations and endorsements if you send a personalized message rather than the generic message.



Don't treat LinkedIn as you would treat your Facebook account. These two platforms are not the same. While you won't be so quick to befriend someone on Facebook right after meeting them, with LinkedIn, it's better to add a connection immediately while you're still fresh in someone's mind.

Don't ignore people, even if you don't know who they are, or think they can't help advance your career. If you are approached for a job you are not interested in, simply thank the person and recommend the job to someone else. Likewise, if someone you don't know very well asks for a recommendation, tell them that you prefer to only write recommendations for people you've worked with personally. They will appreciate the honesty and this ups your integrity as well.

Don't go overboard with your posts. Over posting can become annoying, and can potentially hinder your prospects. Posting once a day is enough to allow you to maintain visibility without irritating your contacts.

Don't leave below average recommendations on your profile – it is better to hide it from your page. A substandard recommendation is not going to do you any favors.

## Why LinkedIn?

### 1 IT'S A PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

LinkedIn has a worldwide network of more than 450 million professional users, with two users signing up every second! One in three professional globally are LinkedIn users.

a corporate hiring solution because it is easy to post and distribute job openings. Additionally, individuals can directly apply for a job using the "Apply with LinkedIn" button.

groups related to your industry or business. LinkedIn has three times better group conversation rate as compared to Facebook and Twitter.

### 2 APPLYING FOR JOBS IS EASY

The main benefit of LinkedIn is that it helps uncover potential job opportunities and offers the best way to find top talent. Companies use LinkedIn as

### 3 IT HAS MORE THAN 2 MILLION GROUPS

LinkedIn also offers many professional learning and social groups around the world, a platform to connect and start conversations, allowing you to easily join

### 4 FOLLOW COMPANIES EASILY

LinkedIn is a great place to follow companies you are interested in to explore potential opportunities with. It is easy to check detailed statistical information on the company's business page and find professionals with the skills you need.

# KEEN ON STARTING A BUSINESS?

Here's what you need to consider before stepping into the world of entrepreneurship.

Life at university is full of potential and possibilities. While some students may look forward to venturing into a career that is in line with their chosen field of study, others may be looking at becoming entrepreneurs.

Starting out on your own is not exactly a straightforward decision, especially if you're wondering whether or not your ideas are of any good, but according to Hayfa Abdulrahman Ahmed, Innovation Director at Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), budding entrepreneurs should never be afraid of sharing their ideas.

"Sharing ideas will help them evolve into something great; thanks to useful input. So reach out to people who have gone through the same experience, seek their advice and approach supporting organizations for help and guidance," she says.

According to Hayfa, programs such as QSTP XLR8, an accelerator program, help aspiring entrepreneurs at the idea stage to determine the commercial potential of their business ideas. "This three-month program provides intensive mentoring and training



to develop a tech-based idea, and prepare the team for incubation," she says.

Besides wondering on the feasibility of your idea, there are lots of other things to consider if the entrepreneurship route is for you, and you can start by asking yourself these questions:

## Is there a gap in the market for what you want to offer?

You may feel that you specialize in something unique, but it's still worth taking the time to make an assessment of the market. It won't make any business sense to enter a saturated market, so spending some time on research will give you a chance to take a step back and make an evaluation on your approach. Don't be disheartened though, because this could open up possibilities for you to create a unique product or service that others are not currently offering. And you will only know this by doing some research.

## Are you familiar with the law?

There are a ton of things you will need to consider legally before setting up an office. Everything from obtaining a license to establishing an office space needs to be thought about and adhered to accordingly.

Get familiar with what is required before you finalize your plan. There are a few organizations in Qatar that can help you in this area, and more (see next page).

## Do you need expert help?

Consider the type of experts you will need to help you run your business. An accountant, a lawyer and a business administrator are just some examples of skilled manpower that you will probably need to look into.

## Do you have a goal?

Create clear business goals for your venture if you haven't already thought about it. You may create a plan that illustrates where you want to be and what goals you need to achieve and by when. These are important for measuring growth and keeping your new company focused.

Entrepreneurship is a lifestyle. It is challenging our perception of things and status quo. It is mainly about freedom in thinking, actions and accepting failure and allowing for learning. It is about solving a problem that adds value to people in unconventional ways. This ends up to be a professional career for those who tend to build a legacy."

Nayef M. Al-Ibrahim,  
Founding Partner and CEO of ibTECHar



## Where to go from here?

### 1. Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP)

QSTP, which is part of Qatar Foundation Research, Development and Innovation (QF RDI), is a Free Zone, accelerator and incubator hub for tech-product development in Qatar.

The QSTP Innovation Center is a technology-focused incubation program that assists with the establishment and growth of promising tech startups. Its offerings include:

#### Innovation Mindset Programs (Education):

Students get to learn about entrepreneurship, make contacts and build networks by visiting the world leading innovation companies and new tech startup ventures during the Silicon Valley Spring Break Trip. University students can also learn through real life experience how to establish a startup and take it to the market within 15 days at the European Innovation Academy (EIA) summer entrepreneurship program or within 10 days at the Arab Innovation Academy (AIA) winter bootcamp.

#### Accelerators:

- QSTP XLR8: An intensive three-month accelerator program providing training and mentorship. Its core modules, Product-Market Fit and Customer Traction, enable participants to determine whether their tech-based idea has commercial potential and transform this idea into a validated prototype.
- Doha/MENA Dojo: A growth accelerator, in cooperation with 500 startups, exclusive to regional startups. Its methodology focuses on: Customer Acquisition, Growth Hacking, Distribution, Referral Marketing and Retargeting, Content Marketing and SEO, UX and Conversion Optimization and pitching to investors.
- Research to Startup: A QSTP initiative designed to facilitate the creation, acceleration and scaling of startups that leverage QF-developed technologies.

#### Incubation:

- Tech-focused 12-months incubation program to help local startups focus on developing a product or service, acquiring early customers and raising funds.
- Collaborative co-working space, business facilitation and support services.
- Quick and affordable incorporation in the QSTP Free Zone.
- One year of 100% subsidized co-working space and business support services. Access to training, workshops and networking events, as well as access to prototyping facilities, QSTP funding programs, mentors network and QSTP's tenant network of high tech companies and RDI centers.

For more information, go to [www.qstp.org.qa](http://www.qstp.org.qa)

### 2. Qatar Business Incubation Center (QBIC)

QBIC is a business incubation center founded by two leading entrepreneurship institutes in Qatar – Qatar Development Bank (QDB) and the Social Development Center (NAMA). QBIC provides support services to help entrepreneurs and companies who either have an idea to start a business or want to grow an existing business. Its offerings include:

- A ten-week practical course (LeanStartup) on how to turn ideas into real businesses. At the end of the program, entrepreneurs pitch their businesses to judges and if successful, will qualify for incubation at QBIC.
- Support services that follow your lifecycle as an entrepreneur from start to finish.
- Space for incubatees to establish themselves and grow. It has a purpose-built factory that can accommodate office space of 150 businesses as well as 12 industrial workshops.
- Advice and opportunities for financing that are available at various points throughout the incubation process. Equity financing for startups are up to QAR 300,000.
- Loans for scaleups, via QDB's Al Dhameen initiative, up to the value of QAR 4 million.
- Mentoring and coaching support throughout the various stages of incubation, from activation through acceleration, scaling, graduation and beyond.

For more information, go to [www.qbic.qa](http://www.qbic.qa)

### 3. Qatar Development Bank (QDB)

QDB provides entrepreneurs and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) with a wide range of financial and advisory products under one roof. The bank offers, among others:

- Consultancy services at the concept stage (i.e. feasibility studies), start-up phase (i.e. contracts, patents and agreements), growth and development stage (i.e. auditing) and restructuring stage.
- Attractive financing services covering all sectors except real estate, trading and hydrocarbon projects that range from direct loans and guarantee programs (Al Dhameen) to equity programs for SMEs.
- Financial and banking solutions for export financing and insurance to take your business further.

For more information, go to [www.qdb.qa](http://www.qdb.qa)



Among university students and graduates, 35 percent were interested in owning their own businesses.



# NEW-AGE LIBRARY SHINES THE LIGHT ON QATAR

**Qatar's current pride and joy – the Qatar National Library (QNL) – is a sign of things to come for the state as it moves toward a self-sustaining economy.**

QNL's dazzling concrete and glass structure in the heart of Education City is a symbol of Qatar's new identity as a nation relentlessly moving away from its reliance on natural resources to one that thrives through science, information and research.

Breaking conventional ideas of what a library should be, QNL embraces the 21st century and does away with archaic ideas. "Old restrictions in national libraries do not make sense in the 21st century. In this age of information, we wanted to build a library fit for the age – one that avails all its resources to help the nation grow and learn," says QNL's executive director, Dr Sohair Wastawy.

And new age it is. Designed by the Office of Metropolitan Architecture, led by world-renowned Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, QNL brings new meaning to the concept of a library. From tiered marble bookcases, reflective ceilings, a sunken archeological-like center space and a diamond-shaped exterior, this is the library of the future.

Architectural genius aside, the list of other unconventionalities is long: it houses an innovation station that offers everything from classes, to the use of a music studio and video

and photography rooms; it offers a plethora of electronic resources and giant interactive touchscreens; it provides exclusive spaces for children and young adults; it houses a center stage for public events and lecture series; and interestingly, in keeping with the times, QNL is a non-silent library.

"Today's libraries are seen as products of people, their relationships, and interactions – social spaces that transform people and embody new pedagogies, including collaborative and interactive learning modalities," says Dr Wastawy. "While we have rooms for those who seek to work in quiet places, QNL's open design is also for those who pursue learning together and individually," she adds.

As a public space that brings communities together, Dr Wastawy says that the library enables visitors to benefit from one another and from its resources. "QNL gives Qatar's public something it has lacked: a welcoming, inspirational place where individuals and families can come to learn together and have fun," she says. The library has already welcomed more than 270,000 visitors, and to date, more than 424,000 books have been checked out.

Of course, at the heart of QNL are its books – more than a million of them, that includes the Heritage Library, a collection of Qatar's most important texts and manuscripts on Arab-Islamic civilization. In an interesting effort to blend the old and new, QNL also offers more than 350,000 e-books, along with an impressive range of other online resources.

According to Dr Wastawy, electronic books are a great benefit to libraries and library users, as they eliminate the challenge of physical restrictions. "Our members have access to thousands of e-books, along with dozens of online databases, which include magazine and newspaper articles, encyclopedias, books, videos, audiobooks, music and research articles. This blend of new and old means that QNL members have a world of knowledge at their fingertips," she says.

The move from Qatar's national and public libraries to the concept that is QNL today is a major shift on so many levels. While its state-of-the-art technology may seem daunting, Dr Wastawy assures that it is a place in which everyone, regardless of age, will be comfortable.

"The complexity of the systems is on the backend. The library's interface system is easy to use – most of our users need no assistance. But if they do need assistance, we have a dedicated staff of librarians who are always happy to help visitors find what they need," she says.

Here's what else Dr Wastawy had to say about QNL:



### What does QNL offer that can further foster a reading culture among Qataris?

One of our most important missions – perhaps our most important – is to promote literacy among children and set them on a path of lifelong learning. We have story time events, family reading classes, book-related arts and crafts workshops and much more. For young adults, we have events specially designed to help them with their academic careers, along with social gatherings that blend learning and fun. For adults, we host book clubs, as well as offering quiet reading gatherings for those who want time with a good book without being distracted by everyday life.

### With so much reading material available online, what is QNL's main appeal?

There is a lot of information available online, but not the majority of what this library offers. Copyright restrictions make most of these books unavailable except for purchase in a digital format. QNL's physical collection offers a variety of subjects free of charge. This is complemented by an array of digital books and databases that are also available for free browsing.

### What impact will a library of this scale make on the community?

QNL's wide range of resources and learning opportunities give everyone, from the youngest child to the most accomplished scholar, the prospect to keep on learning regardless of the learning style they prefer. We offer the opportunity to learn by reading, hearing, seeing, interacting and making. Through our various activities and offerings, we are assisting the community on a path of lifelong learning that will benefit all for years to come. It is an honor to provide our community a place to pursue their passions.

### What are the accessibility features of QNL?

QNL has worked closely with several institutions in Qatar and internationally to make our resources accessible to visitors with disabilities. The dedicated assistive technology area features the latest equipment and software for special-needs users, and we are continually growing our collection of audio books and Braille books for visually impaired and literacy impaired users. As an example, the recently launched Book Club for the Blind provides a supportive social environment for the visually impaired.

## 4 little known facts about the library...

In addition to books in English and Arabic, QNL has titles in French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu, Tagalog, Sinhalese, Malayalam, Bengali, Korean and Chinese, reflecting Qatar's multinational population.

The library's one millionth book was placed in the collection by His Highness the Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani on April 16, 2018.

The Heritage Library collection includes two 19th-century travelers' medicine chests complete with their pharmaceutical contents, as well as a surgical kit with many specialized blades and saws used in performing amputations.

The QNL building resembles two pieces of paper that are pulled apart and folded diagonally at the corners to create a shell-like structure, a monument to the enduring value of the book.

### What does the library offer specifically for students?

The Young Adults Section offers books, magazines, computer labs, interactive learning tools and events specifically tailored to this age group (13-17). It also includes school curriculum and college preparation textbooks. In addition, we have numerous classes and events to help young students on their academic careers, such as a daily homework club and SAT preparation courses. Students of all ages are also free to use the library for research, collaborating on group projects, and pursuing extracurricular hobbies and learning.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The oldest item in the Heritage Library is a Qur'anic manuscript that dates back to the 7th century CE.





# CAREER GUIDANCE: KEY TO A NATION'S GREATNESS

On the road to transforming Qatar's career guidance landscape into a well-developed, productive system.

Among the many steps that go toward building a self-sufficient and independent nation is the investment in human capital development. For Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC), this involves getting to the very root of the issue— identifying the shortcomings of Qatar's current career guidance system and improving it so that it will ultimately help future generations discover, develop and use their talents to satisfy their aspirations and the future needs of the country.

QCDC has recognized the need for a more systematic and consolidated career guidance system in Qatar for

years. Unfortunately, there has not been a system in place that unifies this practice. According to Dr Tajalsir Kardaman, Career Programs and Services Manager at QCDC, several different entities in Qatar implement some semblance of career guidance in their programs, but there is no systemized, unified consistency in the practice of career guidance.

"We don't have a nationally approved body responsible for career guidance at the national level yet. No organization has the authority with a mandate to regulate, to receive and to develop career guidance in the state of Qatar," he says. "As

a result, although there are some good practices around, they are however disjointed, unaligned and not following a particular systemized pattern," he adds.

On this front, QCDC has organized the Career Guidance Stakeholders Platform 2018, under the patronage of Her Highness



Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF), and in partnership with the UNESCO Doha Office and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar. The forum actively engages stakeholders through a series of workshops, panel discussions and roundtable discussions. In their capacity and unified mission, the stakeholders will be able to contribute toward developing a well-integrated career guidance system.

The 2018 platform is not the first to address this concern. In fact, it follows from the 2016 platform, which addressed the need of embedding career guidance within Qatar's socio-economic culture. Having identified areas of concern, this year's platform was themed "Moving Operationally to Strategically Enhance Career Guidance in the State of Qatar."

In addressing the challenges that Qatar faces on this front, QCDC sought the expertise of Dr Raimo Vuorinen, Associate Professor at the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, and Vice-President of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG). He said that the implementation of an effective career guidance system in Qatar is a shared responsibility of several ministries.

"Dr Raimo has extensive experience in creating successful changes to the education and employment sectors in Europe, and with his expertise and experience, coupled with what we know about the current landscape of Qatar, we can help address the existing situation and consequently reshape and design a well-integrated career guidance system at a national level," says Dr Taj.



## THE 2018 PLATFORM

The overall objective of this year's platform was to build on the results of its previous editions through mobilizing cross-sectorial collaboration in order to:

Consolidate the platform as a viable national networking and synergy-building mechanism for strategic and operational enhancement of career guidance in Qatar.

Develop foundational work needed to realistically address operational and strategic issues and concerns related to the process of developing a career guidance system responsive to the needs of Qatari youth and the Qatari economy.

Engage a selected set of stakeholder institutions in the effective implementation of the career guidance component of the Education and Training Sector Strategy, which is part of Qatar's National Development Strategy (2018-2022).

Present and discuss examples of successful career guidance practices in Qatar to disseminate them and widen their overall impact.

Provide career guidance-related learning and development opportunities for school principals, counselors, students and their parents.

Develop a post-platform action plan based on operational moves for the strategic enhancement of career guidance in Qatar.



65 percent of Qatari students sought career advice from their parents, 13 percent from the internet and 5 percent from independent career development consultants.





In Dr Raimo's opinion, there are few present examples of good practices and initiatives (of career guidance-related measures) in Qatar. However, for greater synergy and transparency between government sectors in career guidance systems and policy development in Qatar, a joint ministerial committee with designated representatives should be established.

"The current concept of academic advising could be integrated into more comprehensive career guidance programs. This would provide a continuum across all stages of pre-university education curricula in a standardized and targeted manner," says Dr Raimo.

"In Qatar, like in many other countries, the provision of career guidance is a public interest that transcends education, training,

employment and social inclusion policies at national and regional levels. This implies that career guidance is a shared policy responsibility of several ministries," he adds.

According to him, there is an even greater need for career guidance in Qatar. While the current economic condition is generating a lot of change and opportunities for the country, there are gaps in services. "A well-integrated system would help support citizens in building their skills for greater job market mobility. Career guidance is important in relation to the legacy of the country – how to maintain the (country's) prosperity by best matching the skills of young people with the new emerging skills needed in the diversifying economy," he says.

There were three observations

from the Platform's Focus Groups: the various career development projects and programs by QCDC, the public and international education institutes could be compiled into a national career guidance framework; there is a need to improve the usability of current labor market information and forecasts for all sectors; the quality of the services could be enhanced with an academic stream for career practitioners.

"As a whole, it would be helpful to maintain and enhance the current momentum for career guidance systems and policy development by organizing biennial Career Guidance Stakeholder Engagement Platforms in the future and ensuring a sustainable representative structure to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations between the Platforms," says Dr Raimo.



41 percent of higher education students and graduates sought career advice from their peers and friends.



## The Finnish Example

Focus group moderator, Heli Piikkilä, Guidance Counsellor at the Finnish International School of Tampere and the former President of the Finnish National Association of Guidance Counsellors, shared her views on the career guidance system currently in place in Finland.

### What's the Finnish career guidance system like?

In Finland, career information, guidance and counselling services are provided mainly by two established public systems. Schools are responsible for guidance and counselling, while Employment and Economic Offices offer services for adults and clients outside education and training institutions. Career education (guidance and counselling) is a compulsory element in the curriculum of basic education.

### Which countries have adopted a system similar to this?

Kosovo, Norway and South Korea have adopted something similar to the Finnish system as a sustainable part of their curriculum.

### Why is it important for a country to adopt a well-integrated career guidance system similar to the Finnish one?

It is mainly for continuum. Children can have guidance and counseling services from the beginning of their school years, right through to their adult working life. With a good system, career advisors and counselors know their students individually, which is an opportunity to prevent social exclusion and high dropout rates.

### What would it take to set up such a system?

Among many other things, one is the training of guidance counselors so that they are competent and qualified. Another is to develop a national framework for career management skills.

## RESOURCES FOR CAREER PRACTITIONERS

If you are seeking to gain more knowledge about the industry:

**The tools developed by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network**

<http://elgpn.eu/publications>

provide reference points on issues that have recently emerged in the field. Also, the ICCDPP website

<http://www.iccdpp.org>

provides impartial examples of promising practices in developing national systems and policies.

**To keep up-to-date with the latest developments in the field:**

The annual conferences of international organizations (e.g. IAEVG, APCDA, NCDA, and CDAA) provide opportunities to share the latest experiences, good practices and research. The biennial International Symposia for Career Development and Public Policy by the ICCDPP is a relevant platform for mutual policy learning.



# FOSTERING A CAREER-DRIVEN CULTURE AMONG QATARIS

Nation-wide study identifies concrete steps toward cultivating human and professional development in Qatar through career guidance.



Qatar has long embarked on a journey of investing in its people and workforce. In support of this vision, there have been numerous studies about human capital development among Qatari youth. However, little has been done to keep track of the progress of career guidance, planning and development front.

In its attempts to conduct a more comprehensive study and build on the existing body of research, Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC) undertook a 12-month research initiative entitled 'Careering Towards A Sustainable Qatari Economy', focusing exclusively on the Qatari population. Among other

research techniques, the research comprised of a survey sample of over 1,000 students, graduates and parents, as well as respondents from various senior stakeholders across the government and private sectors.

The 'role of career guidance in aligning the aspirations and skills of Qatar's youth with the needs of the Qatari economy' was the main theme behind the research. The study evaluated the perceptions and attitude toward career awareness and development in Qatar. Its purpose: to expand on the existing body of research by focusing on career culture and how it can be inculcated considering the vital need to diversify the

economy beyond the traditional oil and gas resource sector.

The research covered areas of concern such as: career awareness and motivation, educational preferences, career development behaviors and needs, as well as challenges that Qatar faces.

The findings and interpretations of this study are intended to guide the formulation and implementation of career development and guidance-related programs, initiatives and activities nationwide. The results of the report outlines how career guidance can further contribute to the advancement of Qatar through a greater understanding of

labor market dynamics and the need for the development of a qualified and skilled workforce.

This research ultimately intends to support the creation of an integrated, coordinated career development body that supports, monitors and regulates career guidance and development in Qatar. As a result, it will not only assist QCDC in fine tuning its career guidance strategies, but will also serve as a reference document for other stakeholders across the public and private sectors with a commitment to promoting human and professional development in Qatar.





## Research Objectives

To evaluate the extent of Qatari stakeholders' understanding of the 'Career/ Career Guidance' concept, of the 'Career vs. Job' comparison and of the objectives, purpose, role, benefits and opportunities that these activities bring to Qatari citizens.

To evaluate the contribution and usefulness of career development in Qatar toward replacing a public 'job-oriented' culture with a 'career-oriented' culture.

To evaluate and describe current challenges that the career development system in Qatar faces in achieving the vision, as set out in the human capital development pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

To evaluate current perceptions and attitudes toward career awareness and development initiatives among key stakeholder groups.

To evaluate the need to create a standardized, centralized, coordinated body for career development that meets the needs of the students, parents, labor market and training and education institutions.

To understand what important services, activities or features should be introduced in the future toward implementing a national career development framework.

## Research Findings

The outcome of the research led to the development of five major themes:

### Theme 1: Career Awareness

It was evident that there is a need at a national level to improve strategies that support students and parents develop their knowledge of alternative career paths and job opportunities available in Qatar, such as nursing, teaching, human resources, information technology and marketing. As such, a more synergized connection is required between career development and education that exposes young students to a variety of career paths.

### Theme 2: Social Influence

The research examined the extent to which social influences play a role in shaping student career choices in Qatar. In order to avail better opportunities and a better way of life, a clear match between

the needs of the country and that of young Qatari graduates is required. Choosing the most appropriate career path is becoming critical for young Qataris if they are going to create a prosperous and sustainable Qatar and contribute to meeting the aspirations of the Qatar National Vision.

### Theme 3: Skills Gap

There are careers today that did not exist generations ago and will cease to exist in the mid to long-term future. Qatar has already explored the growing skills gap as a major challenge that threatens economic growth. As a result, better collaboration is needed between the private sector and higher education to ensure that appropriately educated and skilled graduates enter the economy.

### Theme 4: Career Guidance

Through effective career guidance initiatives, Qatar can help nationals acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and experience needed to participate in a modern, global economy that improves knowledge-based services. Therefore, this study covers the existing career guidance and counseling programs and services, trying to provide a better understanding as to their potency.

### Theme 5: Qatarization

The Qatarization initiative was designed to attract, employ, develop and retain a competent Qatari workforce of males and females in the government and private sectors, contributing to the human capital development pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030. Qatarization aims to provide more than 50 percent of Qatari citizens with meaningful permanent employment. As such, the effectiveness of this initiative is also part of what this study attempts to scrutinize.

## Recommendations

The recommendations that came out as a result of this research provide practical guidelines and identify priority areas. They aim to inform policymakers on the areas of career development, education and training requirements. They also aim to encourage all stakeholders in career development to examine their operating models, systems, practices, standards and relationships to deliver greater collaboration. Here are some recommendations in brief:

- Develop a national career service/strategy**  
 A national career development body that is centralized, integrated and coordinated should be established. This entity should deliver strategies, policies, services and programs that will enable students and graduates to make effective career decisions that have an impact both on their future, and the future of Qatar.
- Provide career awareness**  
 The depth and quality of career information needs to be elevated to enable students and parents to make more informed career decisions.
- Encourage female graduate workforce participation**  
 The high rate of female graduate unemployment needs to be addressed by supporting the needs, aspirations and participation of female graduates in the national workforce.
- Promote the private sector**  
 A specific strategy should be developed to establish the private sector as a viable and alternative career choice as opposed to more traditional roles in the government or in oil and gas.
- Develop the right skills**  
 A national skills development policy should be developed to improve the quality and quantity of relevant skills needed in the labor market.
- Provide labor market information**  
 Additional research should be conducted to obtain a deeper understanding of the labor market and to identify the necessary future skills that Qatar needs to be a globally competitive economy.
- Create a career service governance framework**  
 This framework will provide governance and controls for the career development service to foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Equipping the workforce with diverse skills that can support the current and future needs of an economy is essential to the long-term sustainability of any nation."

Abdulla Al-Mansoori  
 Director, Qatar Career Development Center



Male students are slightly more likely to show interest in studying science/medicine and mathematics/science and female students are more likely than males to consider Islamic studies, sociology, art/design and teaching.

# CAPTAIN OF THE FIELD

**Qatar's football champion speaks about his life as a professional player.**

At just 28 years old, Hassan Khalid Hassan Al-Hydos can already boast of 20 years of experience on the football field. However, having started playing the game as a young eight-year-old, he experienced some challenges.

"My parents initially objected to my involvement in the sport, at least until I completed my studies, but I convinced them that I could balance both sports and my studies," he says.

The years of training have paid off for the young star, both personally and professionally. He attributes a lot of his personal traits and passion for football to his early days playing at Al Sadd Sports Club.

"I spent a large part of my childhood at Al Sadd Sports Club, and my upbringing is a result of what I learned there. My interactions at the Club not only provided me with a lot



of life lessons, but they also kept me away from problems and undesirable things. I feel that I gained a lot from my childhood experience compared to most people," he says.

The striker, who belongs to Al Sadd Sports Club as well as Qatar's national football team—in which he serves as captain—came upon the sport by chance. "I was initially really keen on tennis. When some members of my tennis team invited me to play football one day, I decided to give it a go. One thing led to another, and my skills in football kept improving," he says.

It has been a life changing experience for Al-Hydos.

He made his international career debut in the 2008 Summer Olympic Qualifiers, scoring a number of impressive goals against Japan, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam. He also played a prominent role at the 2012 Summer Olympic Qualifiers, which gave Qatar a chance to qualify for the Olympics. That year's Man of The Match award went to him.

On the club front, Al-Hydos is best remembered for his penalty shootout in the 2011 AFC Champions League that ultimately earned Al Sadd Sports Club a place in the FIFA Club World Cup as the representative for Asia.

His many accolades include: Best Qatari Player (2014), Most Promising Player (2008) and Player of the Year (2015).

"I am very proud of these achievements, especially the Player of the Year award in 2015. This award means a lot to me, because everyone in the team played a role in it. I am very pleased to be the second Qatari player to receive this award," he says.

Al-Hydos spends his days doting on his daughter and training on the field. "My day is very ordinary. I take my daughter to school, then spend time with my wife. I'm a typical family man, except that when the sun sets, I'm off for training at the Club with other team members," he says.

Al-Hydos is a firm believer in the transformational power of sports, and he says that his desire to represent Qatar and strive for personal achievement is what keeps him going.

"I believe that sports in general, contributes a lot to a person's life. It helps distance a person from what harms him, yet brings him closer to what benefits him. Sports improves the health of both the mind and body," says Al-Hydos.

To aspiring football players, Al-Hydos has this to say: "Do not let anyone discourage you, and be determined to overcome all obstacles. Set a goal in life, and try to reach it, always balancing between studies and sports."