

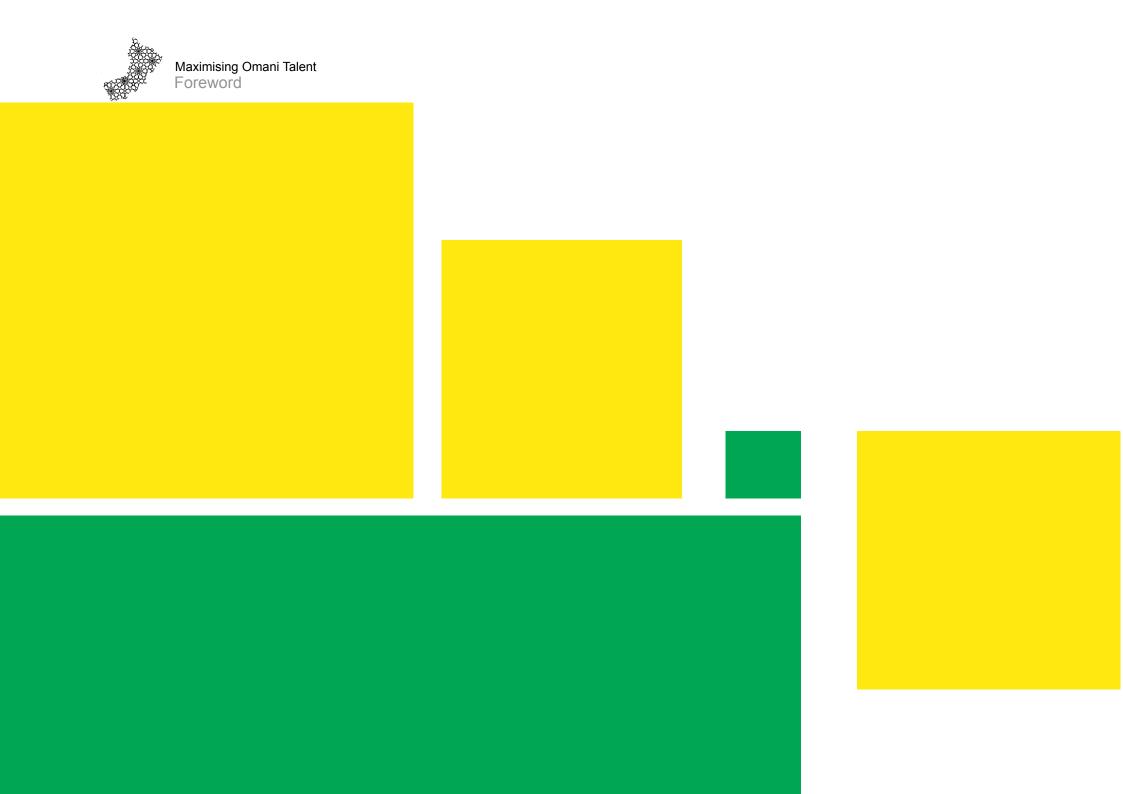






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Foreword

Dave Campbell, Chief Operating Officer, BP Oman

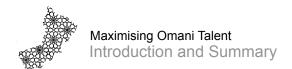
or a large multinational company that has a big presence in the Middle East, it is important that BP attracts and retains employees with the right skill set and experience. We also understand how important it is for Oman to develop local talent and we are keen to support these goals.

BP is proud to be delivering the Khazzan gas development which is important to BP and also for Oman's future economic and social development as it will one day supply approximately 30% of Oman's gas. There is enough gas in place for decades! Developing this field will depend on our ability to attract and retain the best local talent by creating exciting career opportunities. We want to nurture local talent because it has direct value for our business and because it is the right thing to do.

As a committed investor and partner, we need to learn about the most effective ways to attract and develop talent in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (what BP calls "STEM"

subjects). To this end, BP has supported this important research project with Oxford Strategic Consulting, to capture insights from young Omani individuals who might be interested in pursuing education in "STEM" subjects and might even be attracted to joining our company or the wider industry in the future. The research provides valuable lessons for ourselves in recruitment and human resource development and we hope the findings are helpful also for our host government, partners, the industry and our staff.





Introduction and Summary

Background and Summary

The development and employment of national talent is the major priority for all the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The region's rapid population growth, reliance on oil and gas production and fast-changing social and economic aspirations, especially those

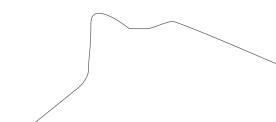
held by young nationals, have required GCC governments to develop new ways of addressing economic issues and meeting the demands of nationals seeking employment.

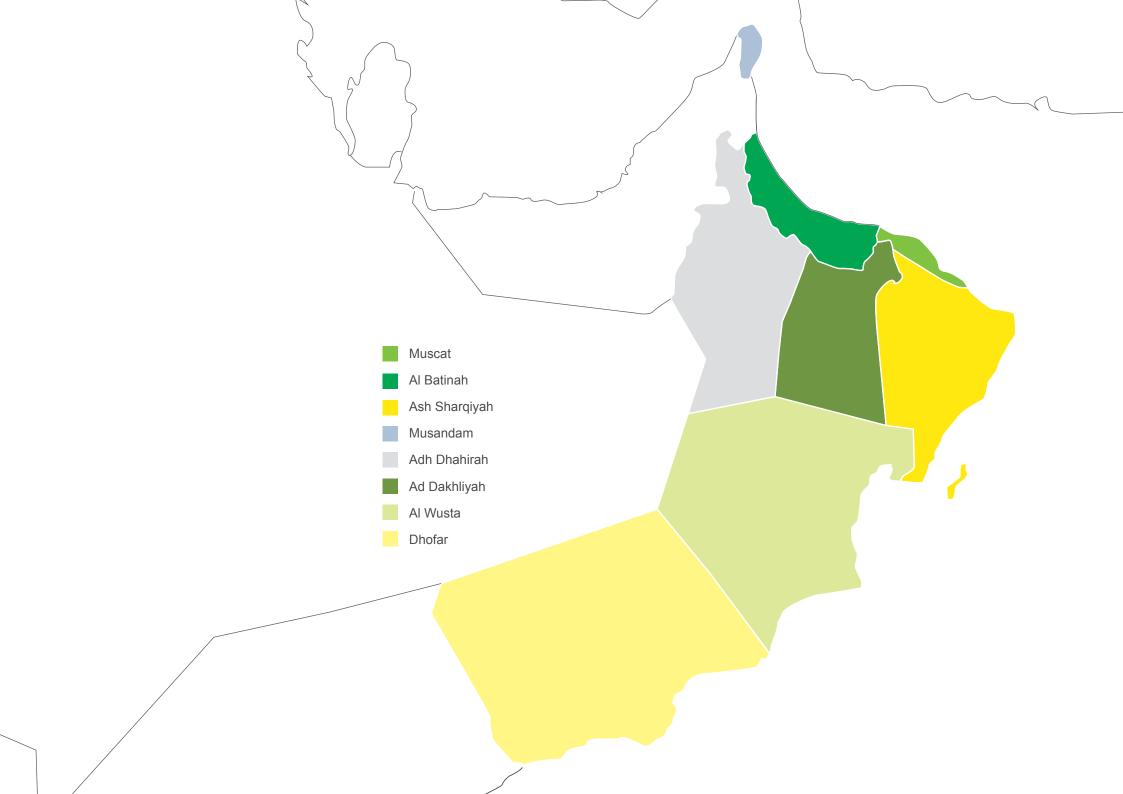
The Government of Oman has placed the employment and development of Omani

talent as a top priority and His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has underlined the growing need for unified efforts to boost Omanisation, saying he would personally follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations of the National Manpower Employment Forum.

BP, as a major employer in Oman's major industry sector, has a strong commitment to develop Omani talent, particularly in vital technical engineering and leadership roles. As part of this commitment, BP commissioned this research initiative, carried out by

Oxford Strategic Consulting, in order to help maximize the development of Omani talent in engineering, with a specific focus on the Oil and Gas sector.







Omanisation is delivering major benefits

The current rate of Omanisation should add approximately 25% or \$19.8bn to GDP by 2020. Reducing the estimated \$34.2bn of remittances sent 'home' by expatriates by 2020 will increase Omani wealth even further. Omanisation targets and accompanying incentives (including access to government contracts) are helping to maintain a stable unemployment rate and providing new career options for the growing number of educated and skilled Omanis.



But more is needed to build the skills the nation needs

The current rate of Omanisation should prevent the unemployment rate from increasing. But, as in most GCC countries, most current national employment is in the public sector and this is the preferred sector for most Omanis. According to IMF estimates, job creation in the private sector needs to double if the Omani employment rate is to be reduced significantly. It is therefore of some concern that between 2010-2013 the growth rate of Omanis employed in the private sector actually contracted slightly.

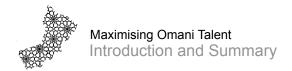
Meanwhile, the recent introduction of a minimum

wage for Omani private sector workers has helped somewhat to realign the incentives mismatch that previously existed owing to higher public sector pay (but also making it more expensive for the private sector to employ Omanis). However, there is still an 'attraction mismatch' - public sector jobs are perceived, particularly by younger Omanis, as more secure, less demanding and more desirable whilst companies in the private sector perceive that expatriate resources are cheaper, more committed and easier to manage. The private sector will continue to struggle in attracting Omani talent

and will continue to favour expatriate resources whilst this 'attraction gap' exists.

In addition, many expatriates continue to occupy roles that are deemed strategic, including positions of leadership and critical knowledge. In order to reduce the reliance on expatriates, it is essential that Omani nationals can acquire these strategic capabilities. However, this requires extensive preparation, with appropriate training and development from an early age. For Oman, as for many GCC countries, oil and gas engineering is one such critical capability area.





There are clear factors limiting the numbers of Omani oil and gas engineers

Our research found that, although many oil and gas companies are putting a great deal of effort into Omanisation, there are several factors limiting young Omani interest in oil and gas engineering – particularly in the private sector. The main reasons can be summarised as follows:

Perceptions and aspiration –
Many young people believe
that oil and gas engineering
is dirty, hard work and
dangerous. They believe
that a government desk job
is the best career option.
There is little factual basis for
these beliefs, but employers
and educators are failing to
overturn these beliefs with
messages that young Omanis

can relate to. Employers believe that young nationals are only motivated by money and a 'big' job title, while in fact, making the family proud, contributing to national success and feeling important are deemed just as important by young Omanis themselves. Misperceptions on both sides are stopping private sector employers and young nationals from engaging effectively.

A skewed market —
Government jobs are very attractive for young Omanis, because they clearly contribute to national success and are seen as highly respectable by families (as well as financial advantages of course!).
Further, the private sector

does not do enough to validate the costs of hiring nationals against expatriates, or to explain to young nationals why they should not automatically seek employment in the public sector; widely perceived as easy and comfortable.

Collaboration – Companies tend to work in isolation to address an industry wide problem. Companies, academic institutions and government are not working closely enough together, a major contributor to the above two factors.

This situation *can* be changed, for the benefit of Omanis, the nation and the oil and gas companies themselves.





There is a clear case for investment

The IMF and other international institutions employ an established measure of 'human capital'. This measure indicates whether or not more investment in human capital including training, subsidies and business incubators will produce significant economic benefit.

Oman has a considerably greater prospect to enhance the levels of human capital per worker than, for example, the USA. This means that investment in human capital will continue to produce improvements in output per worker (and hence GDP) for a considerable time to come.

And of course this is only the 'hard' economic benefit. Investment in human capital delivers many 'soft' benefits such as self-respect, confidence, transferability of skills (which helps to build a flexible and resilient economy), feelings of self-value and consequent social stability (productive workers tend to be more content).

There is a need for coordinated initiatives

The report conducted by OSC in partnership with BP makes several key recommendations to maximize Omani engineering talent, especially in the private sector, complementing the many government-led and individual company initiatives already underway. It suggests that employers themselves can take more effective action and that this would have substantial business benefits. The report identifies major disconnects between

employers, young Omanis and educators on the motivations and aspirations of Omanis, on the best ways to attract and recruit and on the preferred work preferences of Omanis. These disconnects can be viewed as opportunities for more effective development of Omani talent to reduce national unemployment, to increase GDP and individual incomes and to ensure Oman's competitive position in the global economy.



The Research Methodology

mixed methodological approach was adopted for the research study that provided the data for the OSC-BP report, combining qualitative in-depth interviews with an extensive quantitative research survey (also by interview).

Qualitative, open and semistructured in-depth interviews were conducted with a number of leading employers and educators in Oman to obtain detailed feedback on a range of topics.

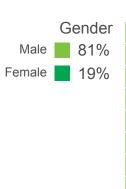
The quantitative stage consisted of surveys with three distinct sample groups. The first group were Omani students (attending high school or university/college), who were interviewed face-to-face. The second group were university educators, who

were sent an email inviting them to take part in an online survey. The third group were employers including business and HR leaders, who were interviewed over the phone.

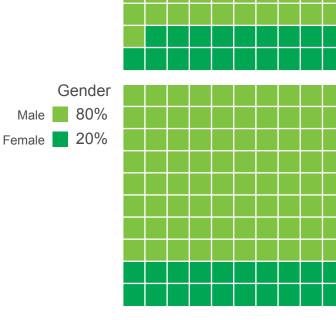
The surveys consisted of 20-30 fixed choice and openended questions covering a range of areas including skills development, motivations, career aspirations, barriers to employment, role models and perceptions of a career in engineering in the oil and gas industry.

Almost 150 respondents were interviewed in the quantitative stage of the study. The interviews were conducted in various locations and with a variety of respondents, allowing for demographic variations.

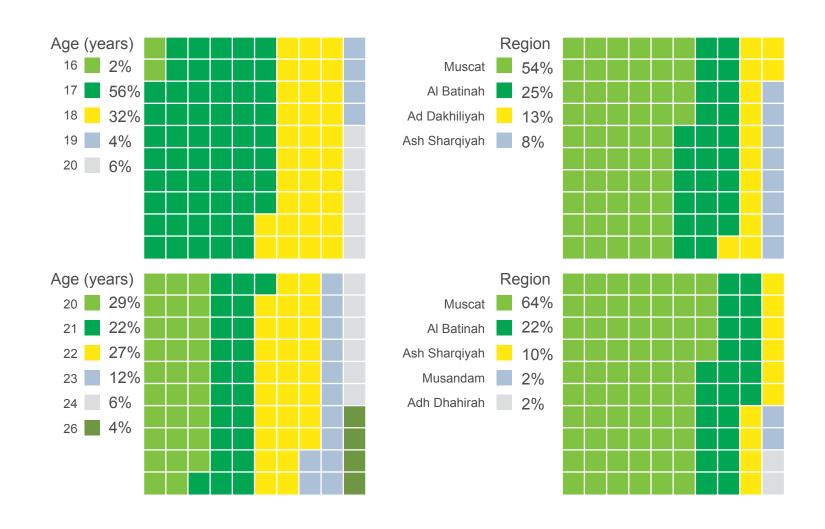
Demographics: High School Students



Demographics: University and College Students





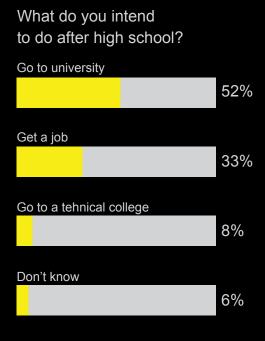


Findings

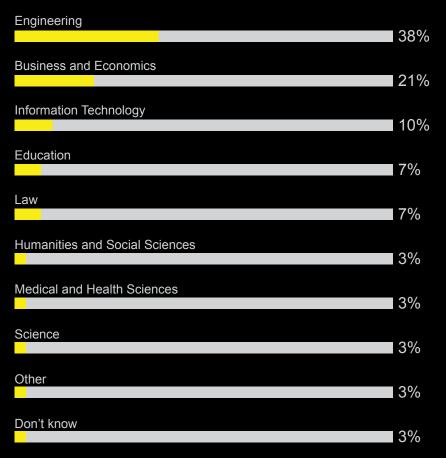
About young Omanis

Omani High School and University/College Students' intentions and subject areas

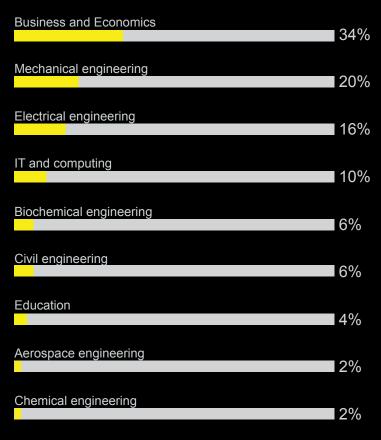
The majority of high school students planned to go to university after finishing high school, with engineering being the most popular subject to study at university or technical college.



Which of the followinng best describes the subject area you wish to study at university or technical college?



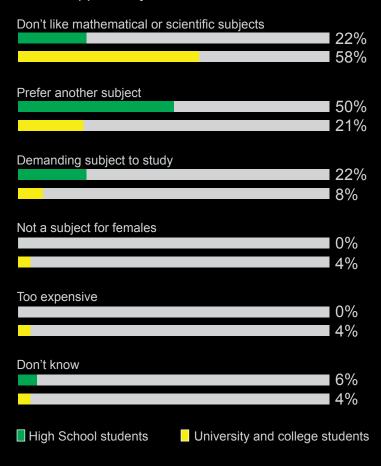
Which of the following best describes the subject area you are currently studying at your college/university?

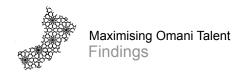


Engineering? Why not?

Students who were not studying engineering were asked why the subject did not appeal to them. High school students were most likely to say they did not like mathematical or scientific subjects (58%). University and college students were more likely to say they preferred another subject. Both groups also mentioned the demanding nature of the subject (22% and 8%)

Can you tell us why the field of engineering did not appeal to you.



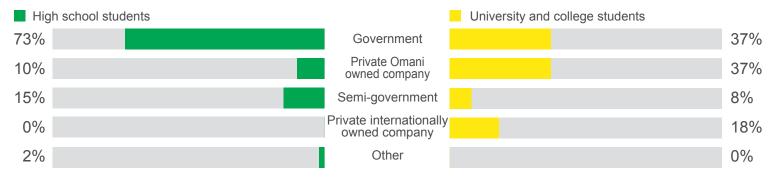


Students' preferred sector and organization

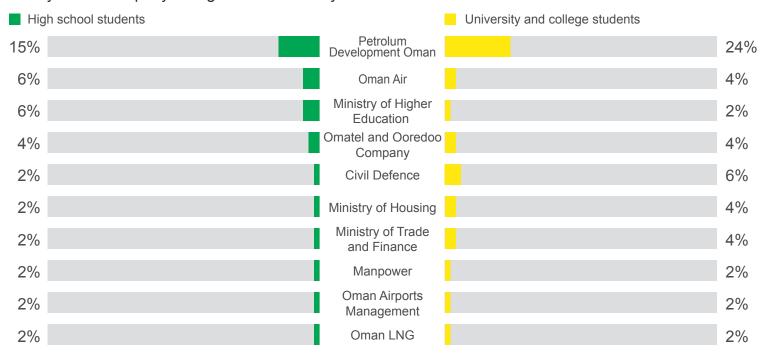
Almost three-quarters of high school students aspired to work for the government, against 37% of university and college students who were also keen to work in the public sector. University and college students displayed more of a willingness to work in the private sector than their high school counterparts – but even then, they preferred an Omani owned company.

Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) was considered as the most popular organisation to work for by all students, while government ministries and the national airline were also highly regarded.

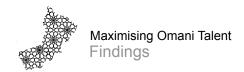
Which of the following sectors would you most like to work?



Ideally which company or organization would you like to work for in the future?







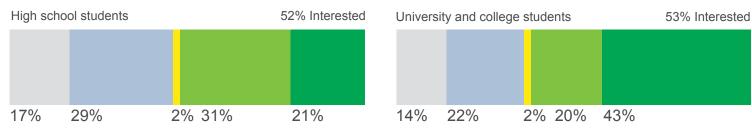
Students' interest in the Oil and Gas industry

The majority of all students at high school, college and university were somewhat interested or very interested in a career in the oil and gas industry.

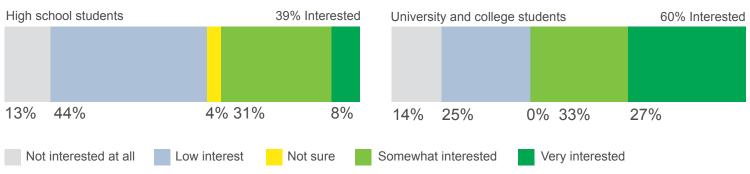
Students' interest in a career in engineering

About a third of high school students and the majority of university and college students were interested in an engineering career.

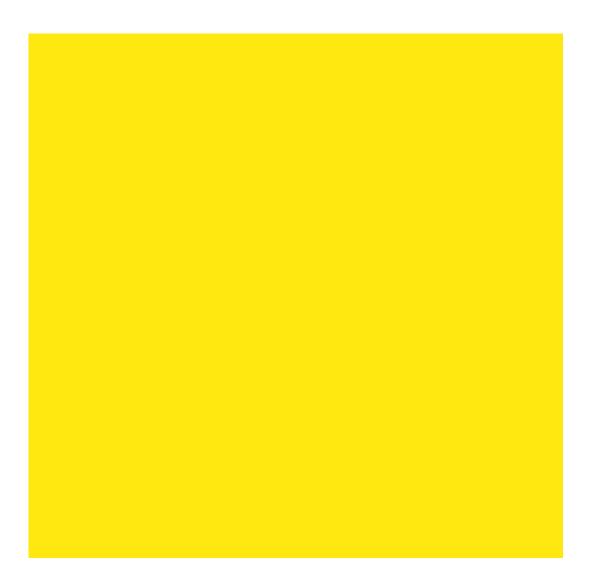
How interested are you in a career in the Oil & Gas industry?

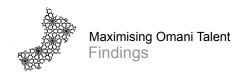


How interested are you in a career in Engineering?





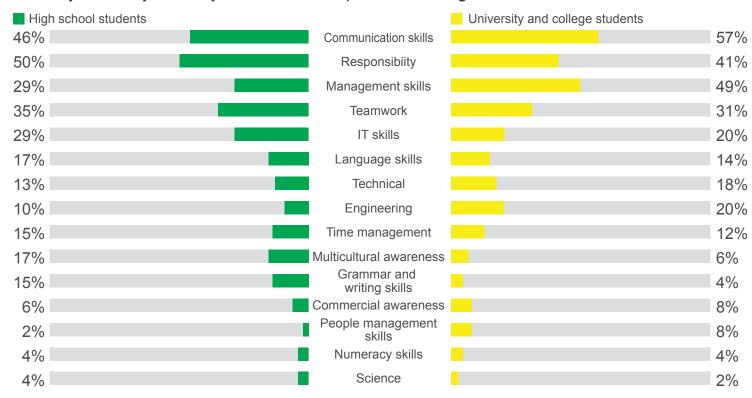




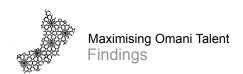
Development of (required) key skills for young Omanis

Omani students considered that the most important skills that they needed to develop before entering the workforce were communication and management skills, as well as acquiring a sense of responsibility.

What key skills do you think you need to develop before entering the workforce?







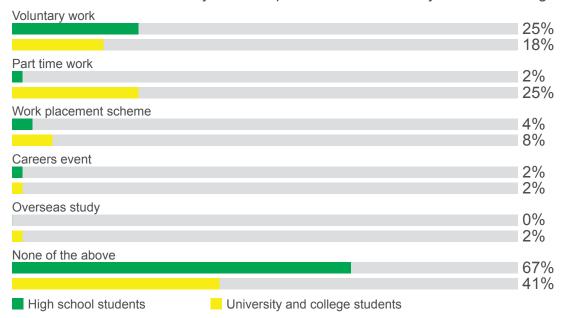
Comparing the views of young Omanis, educators and employers

Inaccurate impressions of the private sector and work

Students, educators and employers all felt that a lack of work experience was a major setback for young Omanis when trying to find a job after graduating from school, college or university. However, some two-thirds of high school students and 41% of university and college students had not actively attempted to gain work experience. Compounding the issue, few academic institutions offered work opportunities of any kind, while less than 10% of employers

offered mentor schemes, secondments or intern opportunities, that would help young Omanis get an accurate picture of working life and aid employee development. There was consensus that careers advisers could cooperate more effectively with employers and academic staff in order to create further work opportunities and provide the best possible career experiences and advice.

In the last 12 months have you taken part in or attended any of the following

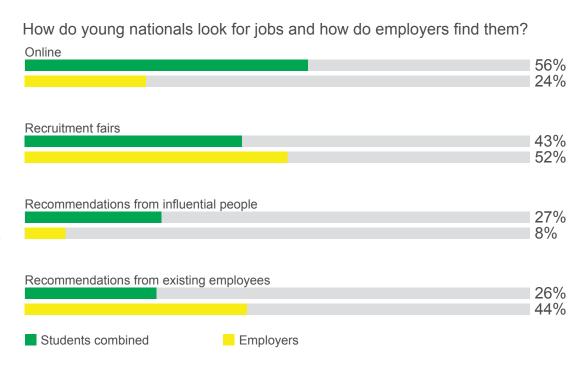




How do Young Omanis search for jobs? And how do employers find them?

Recruitment and job search processes are critical for any fast growing industry, sector or organisation. Omani students were most likely to search for job opportunities using online methods, though they were also likely to follow recommendations related to employment from people in their sphere of influence - family, friends or influential people. Meanwhile, employers tended to focus on finding suitable young nationals by attending recruitment affairs and by seeking recommendations

from existing employees. This misalignment between employers' methods of attracting nationals and jobseeking nationals' approaches to employment could be corrected. Employers could re-align their approaches to finding young Omani talent by utilising more online methods, including social media. As well as the traditional recruitment fairs, Employers could also utilise the extensive social networks of influential contacts which Omanis rely on. In some ways, this use of social networks is similar to executive search, where the recruiter spends time identifying and approaching key mutual contacts.







What motivates young Omanis? The contrasting views of employers and young Omanis.

For employers to recruit, develop and retain the best young Omanis, it is vitally important to understand, and appeal to, their motivations and aspirations. Employers and young Omanis both agree that money is an important motivator; however, employers believe that young people are also largely attracted to an 'easy life', described as 'not having too much to do'. Employers also deem 'excitement' and 'influence' as important motivating factors when, in fact, young Omanis are mostly

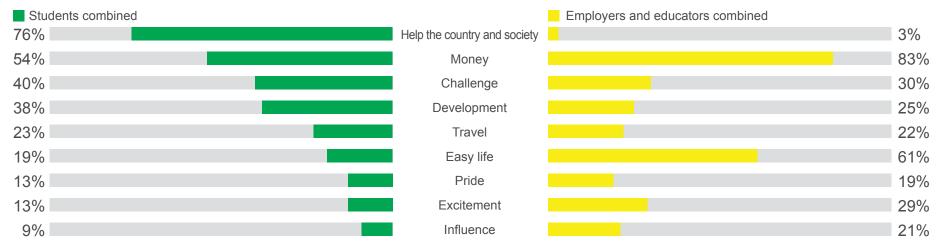
motivated by helping the country and society, challenge and self-development.

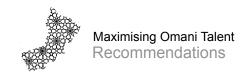
As a result of employers' perceptions, they felt that the best way to attract young Omanis was by offering higher salary and benefits packages, flexible hours and important job titles. On the contrary,

young Omanis were more likely to be attracted to employers that were considered to be helping the country/society as well as challenging and developing employees. Companies that supported further academic qualifications, training and professional development were also viewed favourably by young Omanis.

Competing over human resources by solely on financial concerns is both unsustainable and ineffective. Rather, employers must incorporate other motivating factors, such as 'helping the country', in their messages and employer branding when trying to attract young Omani talent.

Which of the following motivate young Omanis the most?





Recommendations

The research conducted on behalf of this report has identified some clear obstacles that are limiting the number of Omani nationals entering the oil and gas industry as engineers particularly in the private sector. These obstacles are simple to understand and can be tackled effectively using clear and implementable solutions.

We propose a number of recommended actions, most of which can be achieved by companies within the oil and gas sector, with only a few of the actions requiring government involvement and/or collaboration. The recommendations are considered to be realistic, achievable, supportive of national strategy, good for ROI, and aligned within the Omani culture and policy outlook.



The aforementioned recommendations are grouped into key areas required for maximising Omani talent effectively – they include:

Engage with National Strategy

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Demonstrate the Business Benefits

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Increase the Talent Pipeline

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Attract Omani Talent

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Develop Omani Talent

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Potential Government Actions

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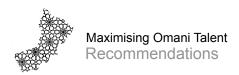
Engage with national strategy

It is vital that employers in the oil and gas industry demonstrably engage in the strategic issues and goals of the country that they operate in. Employers who make valuable contributions to a country can influence strategic goals and consequently create a positive public profile amongst government leaders and the society at large. In addition, for Oman in particular, being seen to help the country is a key factor in motivating and attracting young nationals. BP's support for this Omani research report is a prime example of actions that benefit the wider community, while also contributing to national strategy.

Companies can make strategic contributions:

- By engaging with relevant debates and initiatives, including taking part in forums or joint committees between the public and private sector.
- International companies, in particular, could share their best practices and wealth of experience in helping to tackle issues facing the country.
- International companies can also act as country consultants and advisors where appropriate.
- Companies can launch regular initiatives and associated PR on issues of interest to the country.
- Based on value-adding research and data, companies can become 'thought leaders' and as a result contribute real strategic value, thus demonstrating their commitment to all of the stakeholders in the country.







Many countries, including Oman, require that international companies bidding for national contracts demonstrate in-country value (ICV), a measure of the net financial contribution that the bidder will make to the country and its populace. An important area of ICV is the maximisation of human capital. OSC research shows that this is a very crude measure

but ICV, with amendments to the calculation method, can be used to encourage the development of more skilled, senior Omanis.
The ICV calculation could include longer-term impact, transferable skills and careerlong value.

Companies operating in Oman could embrace Omanisation and account for the value-

added business benefits rather than focus on the costs and obligations. Benefits include: knowledge of the business environment; contacts and networks; ability to act as role models; ability to lead/inspire other nationals; familiarity with culture and language; freedom of movement; government-related incentives and so forth.



Increase the talent pipeline

Research conducted for this report found that there was a weak overall pipeline of potential engineers, primarily as a result of: low perceptions of the private sector oil and gas industry, a shortage of schoolchildren choosing relevant subjects, and young Omanis students forming 'misinformed' opinions of the private sector, and engineering as a profession, through unclear impressions and hearsay.

It is important that private sector employers promote

the oil and gas industry as "the best career for me" to high school students, or even elementary school students, and their families if possible. Educational awareness campaigns could be designed for school age children. and their families, with the ultimate goal of developing a 10-year engineering talent pipeline, instead of relying on high school and university graduates. These campaigns could position employment in the oil and gas sector as exciting, important for the country's development and

a vital contribution to the modern history of the nation, as younger children may not appreciate the concept of 'career'. Engaging with social media is also essential vis a vis the proliferation of internet usage among Omani youth.

Employers can initiate collaborations between major oil producers and educational institutions and government bodies, in order to make a bigger impact in schools, colleges and universities. Working with parental role models from

within the existing workforce is an alternative method of forming positive attitudes about the oil and gas industry. Companies can also assess their potential for providing scholarships and awards for academic achievement in subjects related to oil and gas engineering. These approaches and strategies will contribute positively to developing a sustainable talent pipeline.



Attract Omani talent

Employers must demonstrate to young nationals that an engineering career is a challenging, exciting and safe environment - an example of displaying this would be to sponsor youth competitions to be hosted at offshore oil rigs or desert locations. Selected football teams and their families could be taken to facilities to compete in, and serve as spectators of, highly advertised matches. Young Omani students would be

attracted to these activities, and the experience would help quell any misguided opinions, concerning safety, comfort and hygiene, in the oil and gas industry.

Furthermore, companies could spend less time and efforts on advertising higher salaries and benefits packages, and instead focus on advertisements that are centred on the other Omani motivations like helping the country. Young Omanis

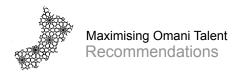
possess a favourable view of companies that are seen to help the country through creating jobs and producing revenues. Employers could also do more to highlight their sponsorship and support activities pertaining to further academic qualifications, training and professional development. Creating more work-ready Omani nationals is also an imperative feature of helping to attract Omani talent. Employers could engage with

education institutions and seek to provide work experience opportunities where students can develop skills necessary for the workplace.

Finally, companies in the private sector could differentiate their marketing message from that of the public sector with regards to employment. Instead of trying to compete with the public sector on short-term salaries, an 'easy life' and shorter working hours, private sector companies could emphasise job satisfaction, excitement, long-term career prospects and potential lifetime wealth, as well as a private sector's role in contributing to Omani society and the national goals. Employment 'differentiators' in the private sector, such as the potential to work abroad or away from the office (an uncommon feature in the public sector) can also be used to attract Omani talent.













Recruit Omani talent

Companies could attempt to align their recruitment approaches with the job search channels that young Omanis prefer, including online avenues and personal recommendations. Employers could design online recruitment campaigns that attract a larger number of young Omanis, which can include creating and sponsoring an online job fair. Young Omanis prefer to search for jobs online and employers tend to prefer

using recruitment fairs, hence an online job fair combines both approaches to create a virtual platform that connects job seekers and employers. As Omanis seek recommendations from relationships and influential figures, executive research at a more junior-level can be employed by companies to attract nationals. This can be done through careful identification of location and social communities of the most likely candidates; making

contacts through mutual contacts and approaching young nationals personally and pro-actively. Companies can also attract nationals by looking where nobody else is looking. For example, women working in the oil and gas industry is uncommon due to family pressure and social stigma, however, if companies in the industry were to provide more flexible working arrangements, this may open the doors to a large untapped 'national' resource.

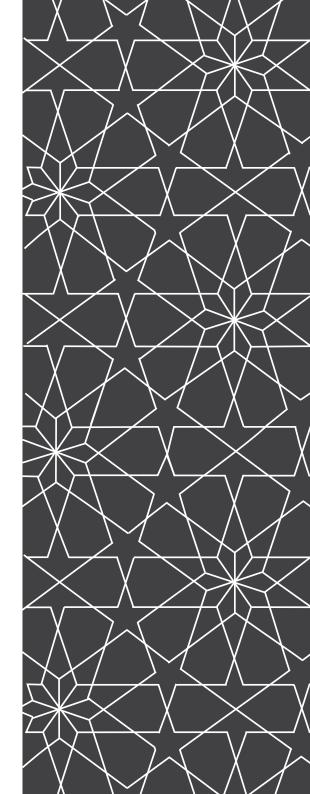


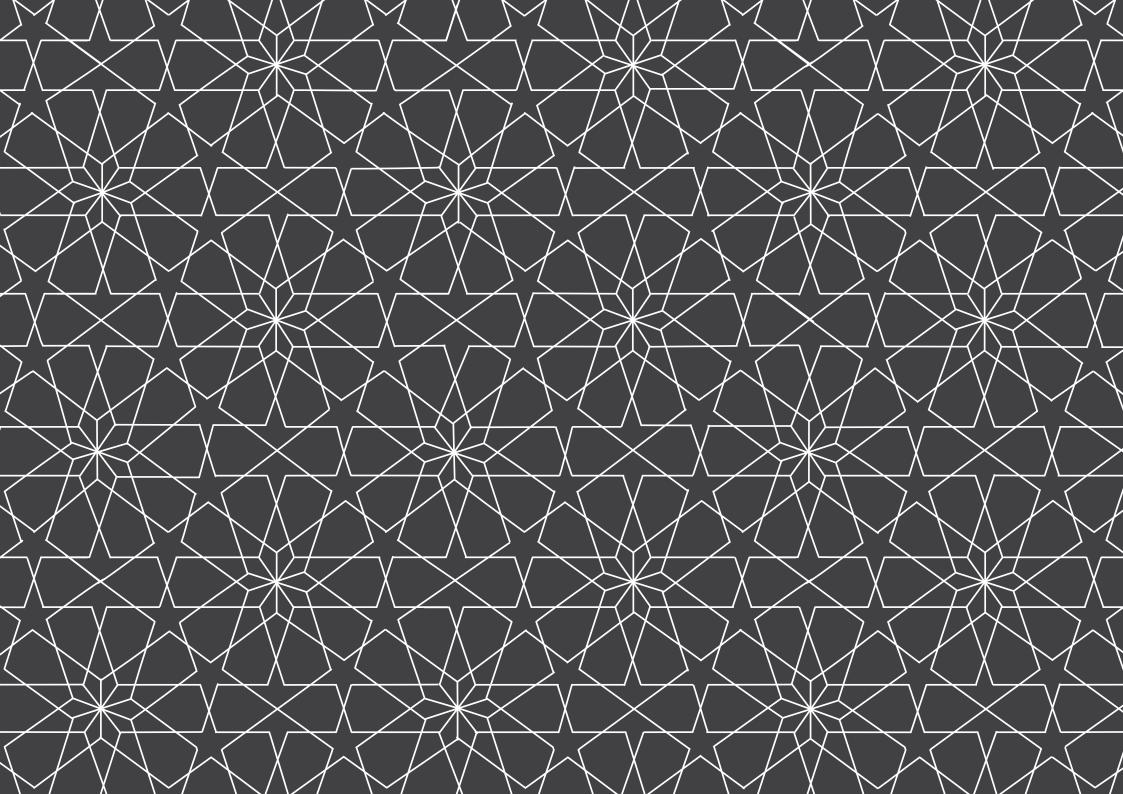


Develop Omani talent

The most effective way of building long-term human capital for a country is to develop leadership and leaders. International companies possess many fast-track programmes for developing individuals with potential and those that meet specific criteria. These programmes could be applied to assess and develop Omani nationals that are likely to benefit and thus add value to the firm and the nation at large. Obstacles to becoming an engineer in the oil and gas industry, cited

by young Omanis, included a lack of understanding of mathematical/scientific subjects and demanding studies. Companies could create study/tutoring centres in Omani schools, which focus solely on mathematical and scientific subjects. This would contribute to building the pipeline necessary for the industry workforce, establish CSR, display commitment to Oman, and it would also support the national strategy through the development of human capital.







Potential Government actions

Most GCC countries have offered their nationals highly attractive employment in the public sector, with salaries, working conditions and job security that are perceived as superior to that of the private sector. As a result, a preference for public sector jobs occurs in much of the region, with most young nationals drawn to government employment. The private sector is keen to employ nationals but faces quota pressure and faces difficulty recruiting nationals at a

comparable cost to equivalent expatriate talent.

One solution is that the
Omani government considers
seconding under-utilised
Omani employees to the
private sector, for a fixed
period, while subsidising wage
costs to allow employment
by companies in the private
sector at a comparable cost
to expatriate counterparts.
This would allow employers
to employ nationals at
an economic cost, while
also giving employers the

opportunity to demonstrate the advantages and dynamism of the private sector. These advantages include providing valuable work experience and knowledge transfer for Omanis, who can either return to the public sector with the newly acquired skills or remain in the private sector.

Another government action that could help provide a potential solution for driving Omani nationals into the private sector is a private sector experience requirement.

Omanis applying to the public sector would need a minimum amount of experience in the private sector before applying to the public sector.

Thirdly, to avoid an overmanned public sector, the government could act as a cost-effective service provider to the private sector. Whereas in many economies the demographics mean that government has to outsource functions to the private sector, in Oman, this service provision could be reversed.

So, for example, IT or HR or recruitment services could be provided at cost effective rates.

This would reform and energise the labour market, thus alleviating pressure on the government to create jobs, while giving private sector companies the opportunity to benefit from the Omani talent pipeline.







About BP and the Khazzan gas field, Oman

on 16th December, 2013, BP and the Government of the Sultanate of Oman signed a gas sales agreement and an amended production sharing agreement for the development of the Khazzan field, with BP as operator. The agreements were ratified in February 2014 in a Royal Decree issued by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said.

First gas is due in 2017 and eventually total gas produced from the field will deliver around a third of Oman's daily domestic gas supply, making a significant contribution to ensuring stable supplies from domestic sources.

BP has formed a joint venture with Oman Oil Company for exploration and production

where BP is the Operator of Block 61 and holds a 60% interest. The Oman Oil Company for Exploration and Production holds a 40% interest. The full field development will involve a drilling programme of around 300 wells over 15 years in a tight gas reservoir. This will deliver a plateau production of one billion cubic feet

(28.3 million cubic metres) of gas per day and 25,000 barrels per day of gas condensate.

BP is a major investor in Oman and one of the world's pioneers in tight gas production, bringing technology and experience to develop one of the Middle East's largest unconventional gas resources. We are

committed to investing and developing in Omani capability. Omani professionals currently make up more than 70% of the workforce and we are continuing to invest in hiring and training local talent to support our long term operations in the country.





About Oxford Strategic Consulting

SC is a British/GCC Consultancy with an enviable track record in helping to build human capital across the GCC and in Europe. It carries out advanced research and delivers exclusive consulting projects with major global private and government organisations to help them achieve their key strategic objectives, especially

regarding national talent, diversity and sustainability. OSC combines practical research findings with a deep understanding of strategic capabilities and how they can be created and developed. OSC's consultants work closely with HR teams and other parts of the organization, quickly building a sense of belongingness and partnership with client staff.

Websites

http://www.oxfordstrategicconsulting.com/ http://www.oxfordstrategicresourcing.com/

Our projects and research in the press and media http://www.oxfordstrategicconsulting.com/press-media/

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