

MUSTAFA JAMA

MBA (Harvard) · FCIPD · SPHR · GPHR · SHRM-SCP

Chief Human Resources Officer | Chief People Officer | Chief Administration Officer

"I build organisations where people are the strategy — not the support function."

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 HR Icon MENA 2026 |  CHRO of the Year MENA 2025 |  Silver – L&D Excellence 2025 |  Silver – Digital HR 2025 |  ☆
Top 50 HR Leaders MENA 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enterprise transformation architect who has redesigned how organisations think, perform, and grow — three times, across three continents, at scale from 500 to 87,000 employees.

Transformational Harvard educated CHRO and People leader with 30+ years building and scaling group-wide HR functions across the GCC, MENA, and North America. Deep expertise in HR governance at holding-company level, organisational design, and aligning people, structure, and performance with long-term business vision. Proven partner to CEOs and Boards — driving culture, accountability, and workforce capability across multi-entity, multi-sector conglomerates.

Delivered AED 60M+ in cost optimisation, reduced attrition 18%→<12%, improved retention 70%→90%, and built succession pipelines covering 100% of critical C-suite roles across MENA and U.S. markets. One of fewer than 15% of CHROs globally with direct P&L and multi-function C-suite accountability — Finance, IT, Legal, Supply Chain, and Marketing. Pioneered AI-enabled people analytics platforms that reduced time-to-hire by 30% and improved 90-day retention outcomes. Authored board-level people risk and succession reports; advised NRC on compensation, talent risk, and governance. Winner — CHRO of the Year (MENA) 2025 and HR Icon (MENA) 2026.

CORE COMPETENCIES

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| ▪ Group HR Strategy & Governance | ▪ AI-Enabled HR, ERP & HRIS | ▪ Culture, Engagement & Wellbeing |
| ▪ Org Design & Operating Models | ▪ Talent Architecture & Succession | ▪ NRC Support & Board Governance |
| ▪ Total Rewards & Benchmarking | ▪ Leadership Development & L&D Academies | ▪ Workforce Planning & Nationalisation |
| ▪ Performance Management & KPIs | ▪ M&A Integration & Cost Optimisation | ▪ HR Transformation & Automation |
| ▪ C-Suite & Board Partnership | ▪ ESG, DEI & Inclusion Strategy | ▪ Compliance – MENA & US Labour Law |
| ▪ P&L Accountability & Multi-Function | ▪ Succession Planning & Pipeline | ▪ Future-of-Work & Reskilling Strategy |

SIGNATURE ACHIEVEMENTS

- AED 60M+ total workforce cost optimisation across Al Ghurair, AECOM, and AMF
 - Attrition reduced 18% → <12% across 26,000-employee conglomerate (Al Ghurair)
 - Retention improved 70% → 90% across MENA and U.S. markets
 - Succession pipeline built covering 100% of critical C-suite and senior leadership roles
 - Internal promotion rate increased from 40% → 65%, reducing external hire dependency
 - AI-powered talent analytics platform deployed — time-to-hire reduced 30%, 90-day retention improved 22%
 - Platinum Nitaqat Saudization status achieved and maintained (AECOM KSA)
 - Human Capital costs reduced AED 10M → AED 4.2M; L&D spend optimised AED 18M → AED 720K (AECOM)
 - Overtime costs cut AED 985K → AED 313K/month; CEO direct reports streamlined 11 → 8 (Al Ghurair)
 - Enterprise ERP/HRIS implemented for 500-person inter-governmental entity (AMF)
 - Recruited 800 professionals in 14 months — Greenfield HR function built from zero (Limitless)
 - Gender diversity improved 18% across leadership pipeline; inclusion index score +24 points (GA Holding)
 - 5 regional HR awards in 2025–2026 including CHRO of the Year MENA and HR Icon MENA
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief People Officer

Ghassan Aboud Holding (GA Holding) | Dubai, UAE | Nov 2024 – May 2026

Sector: Multi-sector Conglomerate (Media, Automotive, FMCG, Hospitality, Healthcare, Technology) | Headcount: 5,000+ FTEs | Budget: AED 35M+

- Defined and implemented group-wide HR strategy; established HR governance frameworks across all subsidiaries; standardised core HR policies with flexibility for each business unit.
- Deployed AI-powered talent analytics platform reducing time-to-hire by 30% and improving 90-day retention outcomes by 22% — first AI-enabled HR capability in the group's history.
- Built succession pipeline covering 100% of critical C-suite and senior leadership roles; increased internal promotion rate from 40% → 65%, reducing external hire dependency.
- Institutionalised HR governance across budgeting, compliance, vendor management, and performance systems; set group HR KPIs for cost, quality, and productivity.
- Launched gender diversity and inclusion programme — improved female leadership representation by 18% and inclusion index score by 24 points within 12 months.
- Designed and deployed wellbeing strategy with measurable outcomes: employee engagement score improved from 62% → 81%; absenteeism reduced 15%.
- Refreshed total rewards, workforce forecasting, and nationalisation programmes, strengthening competitiveness and cost discipline.
- Recognised with 5 regional awards in 2025–2026 including CHRO of the Year MENA and HR Icon MENA.

Deputy CEO & EVP – Operations

Ayedh Dejem Group (Saudi-HQ Conglomerate) | Dubai, UAE | Apr 2023 – Oct 2024

Sector: Diversified Conglomerate (Construction, Real Estate, Services) | Headcount: 585 FTEs | Budget: AED 54M

- One of fewer than 15% of CHROs globally with direct P&L and multi-function C-suite accountability — led Finance, HR, IT, Supply Chain & Procurement, Admin, Marketing, and Legal & Governance.
- Drove group strategy deployment and KPI cadence, enhancing transparency and accountability; supported 15% YoY revenue growth across the Saudi-headquartered portfolio.
- Championed Vision 2030 workforce alignment, Saudization strategy, and Saudi labour law compliance across the group; partnered with Saudi ownership on people and governance priorities.
- Managed 16 direct leaders and AED 54M operating budget; delivered cost discipline and operational efficiency improvements across all functions.

Chief Administration Officer

Arab Monetary Fund / Arab Trade Financing Program | Abu Dhabi, UAE | Sep 2020 – Mar 2023

Sector: Regional Inter-Governmental / Sovereign Entity | Headcount: 500+ FTEs (22 HR/Admin staff) | Budget: US\$10M

- Owned HR, Finance, IT, Administration, and Procurement with a US\$10M operating budget supporting 500+ FTEs across 22 Arab member states.
- Authored quarterly Board people risk and succession reports; presented workforce risk, talent pipeline, and culture health to the NRC; advised Board on org design and governance.
- Implemented enterprise ERP/HRIS, modernising governance, reporting, and HR administration for Board-level consumption; ensured 100% regulatory compliance.
- Translated institutional mandates into structured performance management, L&D, and succession frameworks, elevating organisational capability and reducing critical role vacancy risk.
- Assisted CEO in all preparations for the Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC); advised on executive compensation benchmarking and talent risk.

VP HR / Head of HR

Al Ghurair Investment | Dubai, UAE | Jan 2017 – Mar 2020

Sector: Diversified Conglomerate (FMCG, Retail, Construction, Real Estate) | Headcount: 26,000 FTEs | Budget: AED 154M

- Partnered with CEO and Executive Committee to design and execute group-wide restructuring and operating model redesign across FMCG, Retail, Construction, and diversified sectors.
- Delivered AED 49M workforce cost optimisation (budget AED 154M → AED 105M); cut monthly overtime AED 985K → AED 313K; reduced attrition 18% → <12% across 26,000 employees.
- Built C-suite succession pipeline; reduced external hire dependency from 60% → 35%; launched EVP and employer brand strategy.
- Streamlined governance and executive reporting lines; reduced CEO direct reports 11 → 8 to improve execution speed and accountability.
- Launched DEI and wellbeing initiatives across the group; improved employee engagement scores and reduced absenteeism across key business units.

HR Director – MENA

AECOM | Abu Dhabi, UAE | May 2012 – Dec 2016

Sector: Engineering, Construction & Infrastructure | Headcount: 87,000 (Global) / 4,500 (MENA) | 15 Business Lines

- Led org design and integration across 15 international business lines; aligned US employment practices with MENA/UAE/Saudi labour law for an 87,000-employee global workforce.
- Achieved Platinum Nitaqat status for Saudi entities through structured Saudization programmes; managed Saudi-based workforce compliance and GOSI requirements.
- Reduced Human Capital costs AED 10M → AED 4.2M and Talent Development spend AED 18M → AED 720K through strategic rationalisation and digital transformation.
- Designed reskilling and upskilling programmes for 1,200+ engineers and project managers; improved internal mobility rate by 28%.

HR Transformation Lead (Consulting Engagement)

Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) | Abu Dhabi, UAE | May 2012 – Mar 2014

Concurrent with AECOM | Sector: Government / Regulatory Authority

- Led landmark HR transformation for EAD; primary client-side lead integrating Booz & Company, KPMG, Grant Thornton, Hays, and Abu Dhabi DoF.
- Designed new HR operating model and workforce transformation roadmap; coordinated Oracle ERP/HRIS implementation; established HR policies, governance, and performance scorecards.

Senior HR Consultant

ADNOC | Abu Dhabi, UAE | Jul 2010 – Apr 2012

Sector: Energy / Oil & Gas (Sovereign)

- Designed and implemented a 5-year HR strategy impacting 2,000+ employees in a major national energy organisation.
- Introduced a Balanced Scorecard linking HR programmes to business KPIs; reduced attrition by 5%, generating AED 3.25M in savings.

HR Director

Limitless | Dubai, UAE | Mar 2007 – Jun 2010

Sector: Real Estate Development (Government-Linked) | Greenfield HR Build

- Built the HR function from the ground up (Greenfield); recruited 800 professionals in 14 months across UAE and Saudi Arabia.
- Led HR operations for the Al Wasl Project, North Riyadh — one of KSA's largest mixed-use developments; managed Saudization compliance, local labour law, and full workforce mobilisation.
- Advised senior leadership on culture, capability, and org design during a period of significant expansion.

EARLIER CAREER — NORTH AMERICA

Role	Organisation	Location	Period
HR Manager / Senior HR Business Partner	Verizon Communications	New York, USA	2004–2007
HR Business Partner	Titan Corporation (US DoD Contractor)	Washington DC, USA	2001–2004
HR Generalist / Cluster Head of HR	Sheraton-Starwood Hotels & Resorts	USA	1995–2001

REGIONAL EXPERTISE

EMEA (Primary): UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, UK, Germany, France, Netherlands

North America: USA (New York, Washington DC, Virginia, Maryland) — Verizon, Titan Corporation, Sheraton-Starwood

APAC / International: Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Philippines, India — AECOM global integration and multi-region workforce alignment, Al Ghurair Investment, Ghassan About Holding

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & EXTERNAL PRESENCE

- Panelist: Minds & Machines — balancing human intuition with AI to build future-ready organisations (ETHR NexTech ME)
- Community Co-Leader: HR & Tech Future Makers Dubai — monthly, action-oriented forums on AI in HR, automation, capability building, and culture

- Author & Speaker: AI-powered HR operating models; ethical & inclusive AI; workforce flexibility and fractional talent; employee happiness & wellbeing; analytics-driven decisioning
 - Media & Community: Regional HR networks — HR digital transformation and L&D outcomes recognition
 - Advisory: Active contributor to MENA HR community forums on Future-of-Work, reskilling strategy, and AI-human workforce integration
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SELECT STRATEGIC PROJECTS

- Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (2012–2014): Coordinated Booz & Co, KPMG, Grant Thornton, Hays, and Abu Dhabi DoF; implemented Oracle ERP; phased change preserved BAU and improved efficiency, effectiveness, and customer satisfaction.
 - Bloom Holding (2015): Four-phase CEO/CXO build and onboarding; defined performance expectations and leadership development frameworks.
 - GA Holding AI Transformation (2024–2025): First-ever AI-enabled HR analytics deployment across the group; integrated predictive attrition modelling, talent acquisition AI, and executive people dashboards.
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EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

- MBA (2-year full time) | Harvard Business School, USA (Awarded Jun 1995 — Attested)
 - B.Sc. International Business | Strayer University
 - Strategy & Organisational Transformation | London Business School
 - Chartered Fellow, CIPD (FCIPD) | ID 15161360 (Active Jul 2025 – Jul 2026)
 - SPHR — Senior Professional in Human Resources | HRCI
 - GPHR — Global Professional in Human Resources | HRCI
 - SHRM-SCP — Senior Certified Professional | SHRM
 - Balanced Scorecard Professional | BSC Institute
 - Internal Controls Framework | COSO
 - Certified Risk Manager — Altor Risk
 - Emergency Management Professional | Emirates Foundation
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HR TECHNOLOGY

Oracle ERP/HCM · SAP ERP · Workday HRMS · Darwinbox · HR Analytics · AI-Enabled Insights · Predictive Attrition Modelling · Executive Dashboards · People Metrics

INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

Conglomerates (Holding Companies) · Engineering & Infrastructure · Energy & Oil & Gas · Real Estate & Development · FMCG & Retail · Financial Services & Banking · Inter-Governmental & Sovereign · Hospitality & Tourism · Media & Technology · Automotive · Construction · Telecommunications · Government & Regulatory · Defence & Security · Healthcare

LANGUAGES & PERSONAL

English (Fluent) | Arabic (Fluent) | Spanish (Conversational) | Nationality: USA | UAE Golden Visa Holder | Open to Relocation