



## Talent Management Trends in the Banking Industry 2017-2018

The development of technology, changing demographics and the fluctuating economic and political situation, have all affected talent and employment. The banking sector is facing certain talent management challenges in the Middle East and further afield. The traditional way in which Dubai has been banking is changing, and financial institutions that want to stay ahead of the curve must be aware of these trends.

Banking jobs are no longer the 'for-life' jobs they used to be. The EU's cap on bonuses, regulatory changes, cultural changes and more are posing concerns to financial institutions in the EU and around the world in terms of their ability to attract, manage and retain the talent that will be best for their organisation.

So what's changing and what is set to change in the future?

Organisational hierarchy, which has historically been important in the Middle East banking industry, is and will be less important. Rank and status in the company carry a lot of weight, with the president and CIO carrying the most influence both internally and externally. But times are changing, collaboration is increasingly becoming more important to the future workforce than authority and rank. To accommodate this changing mindset, many companies are moving towards flatter structures. These structures offer greater responsibility to employees and require leaders to rethink ways of communicating and influencing.

At the same time, employees will have to rethink their career goals. Offering talent a purpose bigger than their needs is essential. In this sector's talent management process, experts have found that an EVP (Employee Value Proposition) focusing on financial rewards is not enough any more. Banks are recalibrating what they can offer talent, and there is a greater focus on emotional fulfilment. For example, there is a need to rethink EVP for those who prioritise opportunities for a challenge over financial rewards, or those who value a workplace that offers development and learning opportunities.

Flexible work arrangements continue to evolve across industries and around the world. This year has seen a redefinition of “work”. Millennials are moving much faster towards flexible working arrangements, this means organisations are no longer able to have a linear relationship with their employees, and this in turn affects the hiring process.

International organisations such as ANZ Bank and the Commonwealth Bank in Australia and the Great Western Bank in the US are some examples where recruiters work together with talent to find a work schedule that allows for flexible arrangements.

This includes allowing talent to choose work locations, providing internal candidates devices to work remotely, and more. Of course, flexible schedules are not suitable for every department in a financial institution, which is required to run 24/7. Leaders are therefore empowering managers to make flexible work decisions with their teams to decide what works best for the company as well as for the individual.

Cultural diversity is important, not only in the Middle East but across the rest of the world. Talent management teams now are focusing more and more on bringing about cultural diversity and eradicating monoculture.

For global companies and those of us based in the cultural melting pot of the UAE, it is important to bring in and welcome people who have different cultural backgrounds and experiences. As a result, talent management processes are increasingly geared towards bringing in talented people, regardless of their backgrounds, to fill positions and be ready to progress to senior roles.

There has been a tendency in the Middle East to import talent from elsewhere. Instead, the focus of future changes in talent management in this region may be more on regional talent, as opposed to relying on imports from overseas.

These are only a few of the challenges, trends and forecasts for the banking sector in 2017-2018. It has never been tougher to recruit the best and brightest in banking in this region or elsewhere.

The best talent wants to work for innovative companies that offer learning opportunities and financial institutions must win the talent war in order to succeed in their efforts to recruit and retain individuals most suited for their organization. This flexible and focused workforce will help build an organization that is digitally savvy and flexible enough to adapt to current and future changes.

To this end, having leaders and recruiters with experience in transformational change is essential.