



# CASE HUB

## To hire or not to hire? The case of talent acquisition for FIFA World Cup 2022

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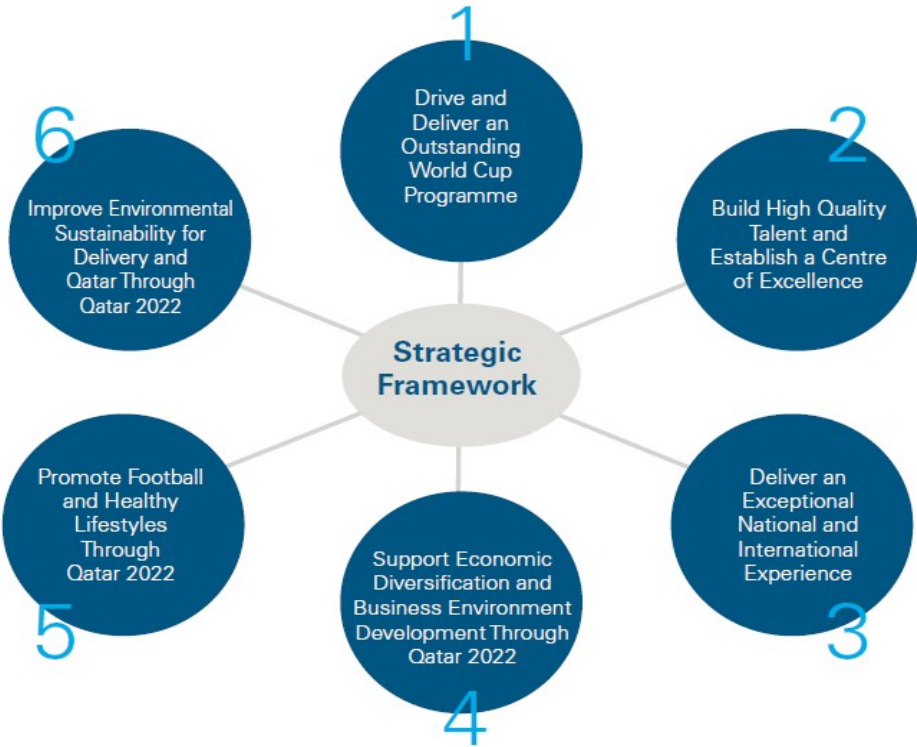
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The closing of 2013 was a significant time in the career of Laila Ahmed, Head of Local Engagement, at Institute of Sporting Events. Laila’s department was in charge of leading a marketing initiative, the *Jeeran* campaign, to support the implementation of the Institute’s strategic goal; promote football and healthy lifestyles (see Exhibit 1). She was tasked with overseeing the *Jeeran* campaign, an engagement program that would focus on creating awareness of the impact of FIFA World Cup 2022 amongst Qatar’s nationals and residents. Laila had previously worked in the Public Relations and Protocol departments and was acquainted with the Qatari culture for more than four years. She was aware of the underlying challenges she would face if her department were to conduct such a campaign starting from the logistical processes to the cultural and social customs; however, at this stage she was posed with the uncertainty of hiring or outsourcing the talent that she needed for managing this campaign. Which way should she go?

Exhibit 1: Strategic goals of the Institute of Sporting Events



Source: Organization

## Institute of Sporting Events

The institute was established by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the father Emir, through Emiri Decree No. 27 to organize and implement the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The Institute's vision, mission and goals are clearly aligned with Qatar's National Development Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030 (Exhibit 2).

### Exhibit 2: Pillars of Qatar National Vision 2030



By 2030, Qatar aims to be an advanced society capable of sustaining its development and providing a high standard of living for all of its people. Qatar's National Vision defines the long-term outcomes for the country and provides a framework within which national strategies and implementation plans can be developed.



#### **Economic Development**

Development of a competitive and diversified economy capable of meeting the needs of, and securing a high standard of living for, all its people both for the present and for the future



#### **Social Development**

Development of a just and caring society based on high moral standards, and capable of playing a significant role in global partnerships for development



#### **Human Development**

Development of all its people to enable them to sustain a prosperous society



#### **Environmental Development**

Management of the environment such that there is harmony between economic growth, social development and environmental protection

Source: General Secretariat for Development Planning

## The *Jeeran* campaign

*Jeeran* in Arabic means neighbors. In Islam, a neighbor is expected to bestow hospitable and generous behavior towards their guests. The aim of the campaign was to reinforce the religious concepts regarding hospitality and friendliness, preserve Qatar's heritage and culture and consequently, promote an active and sporting society. Laila believed that *Jeeran* campaign was not only an engagement program rather it needed to start off as an awareness campaign that promoted a healthy and active lifestyle across the Qatari community and created a lasting legacy of human and social development fulfilling the two of the four pillars of Qatar National Vision 2030.

While Laila was excited about the prospect of making an impact through implementing the *Jeeran* campaign, however, she was dreading the complexities involved due to the large-scale nature of this project and as such, was prepared to comprehensively plan the campaign.

## Planning the campaign

Laila, first, began with ensuring that she had sufficient resources at hand that were needed to implement this large-scale campaign. She discovered that she needed a more diverse pool of workers at her disposal. To this end, Laila had two options: should she hire or should she outsource?

### *Hiring the talent*

This approach would require Laila to collaborate with the Human Resources department and engage in a six to twelve month long recruitment process to hire twenty qualified candidates on the basis of their cultural and academic backgrounds. Laila would assess the candidate's readiness to do their job through their linguistic and communication skills as the campaign was supposed to be designed to suit the Qatari community which was majorly composed of a diverse expatriate group that included people from all walks of life.

However, if Laila were to engage in this time-consuming and cumbersome recruitment process, she soon hit the realization that she would also be expected to justify to her superiors the inherent logistical and legal requirements pertaining to sponsoring and employing the candidates that would cost the Institute a whopping QAR 6 million annually. Then, there were the non-financial costs that Laila and her department would have to deal with; restructuring the department's organizational chart. However, Laila, thought to herself, "It is not all bad! Once the employees are well-trained on the Institute's respective goals and strategies, they would be marketing ambassadors for stimulating community engagement towards an active and healthy lifestyle." There will be a learning curve involved and it would require Laila to advocate the hiring of employees to the board of members and make them see what she sees: harboring local talent that will work towards advancing and growing the department and Institute and work towards the Institute's another strategic goal of building high quality talent. Further, Laila strongly believed that in directly supervising her hired candidates, she can easily control the quality and efficiency of their work output through periodical training and management.

### *Outsourcing the talent*

The IMG group, a multi-national corporation specializing in marketing and talent management of sports, fashion, and entertainment, crossed Laila's mind. They were currently working as an operations consultant for the Institute. So, they were already familiar with the Institute's vision, mission, and goals, but Laila wondered if IMG could meet the *Jeeran* campaign's objectives? After all, they were an international firm and were unaware of the local culture and the diverse market. Yet, IMG boasted a long-standing history with a diverse and wide area of expertise. They did have a long career in conducting campaigns and organizing events with important sports organizations and revealed a high level of efficiency and quality in their operations.

For Laila, this meant much less arduous work, lower participation, and instead higher involvement in overseeing other facets of the campaign planning such as defining the target market, designing the campaign message, developing an action plan and so on<sup>1</sup>. IMG would take over the task of providing qualified and experienced employees with an ease of hiring staff for trial periods. Laila would be able to push forward the planning phase of the campaign and implement it at a comparatively faster pace than if she were to hire employees. Moreover, she estimated that outsourcing the hiring

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Marketing\\_Campaign\\_Plan\\_Template.pdf](https://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Marketing_Campaign_Plan_Template.pdf)

task to IMG would come at the cost of approximately QR 3 million to QR 4 million per year. Lastly, considering IMG's expertise, Laila could even deploy their services for community and event management.

The planning of the campaign had just begun and Laila was already facing the conundrum that every manager faces in their life: should she grow talent in-house or leave it to the specialists and outsource it? Or is there a middle ground that Laila could tap into?