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# Aon names Best Employers in the Middle East

The companies named by professional services firm **Aon** were found to excel in employee engagement, leading to improved business performance

Global professional services firm Aon has named Jumeirah, DHL Express, McDonald's, Novartis Pharma and Union Coop among the winners of its Best Employers Middle East study for 2018. The winners – which also include InterContinental Hotel Group, Marriott International, Sodexo Benefits & Rewards Services and Turkish Airlines – were found to excel in a number of indices such as organisational agility, engaging leadership and talent focus.

And for the first time this year, an additional two companies – Signify and Westcon-Comstor – were also awarded 'Honourable Mentions' in recognition of excelling in one of the four Best Employers indices.

The winners were all found to excel in employee engagement, with average scores of 84 percent compared to the market average of 67 percent. Additionally, they were found to have 3.5 times lower attrition rates, ranked 24 percentage points higher when it came to retaining talent, and reported 50 percent higher total shareholder return than the market average, reflecting the enormous impact of a highly engaged workforce on overall business performance.

"Stronger employee engagement provides the unique opportunity to significantly contribute towards the digital transformation of organisations. Our Best Employers study not only serves as a credible benchmark to effectively measure and track employee engagement, but we also provide the expertise to delve deeper into the results and help organisations maximize this data for success," said Christopher Page, CEO for talent, rewards and performance at Aon Middle East and Africa.

He added that: "The research proves that organisations with a more engaged, agile culture outperform others across business-critical areas including profit, talent retention and sales growth."

**JUMEIRAH GROUP**



## Jumeirah Group

▲ **Ellen Dubois du Bellay** – Chief Human Capital Officer at Jumeirah Group

"Being voted an Aon Best Employer for 2018, for the second consecutive year, is a proud distinction. It recognises our commitment to make Jumeirah 'Your Place to Shine in Hospitality' and the efforts we put into our people. Jumeirah is an exciting and dynamic work environment and we are immensely proud of what we have achieved in our ambitions to be an employer of choice.

"We recognise that our reputation for excellence, and our position as a leading luxury hotel company is built firmly upon our employees.

"Our colleagues consistently work hard and with unyielding dedication to deliver on our promise to create lasting memories and deliver a guest service which is beyond expectations. We thank them sincerely for their efforts every day."

**DHL**



## DHL

▲ **Henry Fares** – Vice President, Human Resources MENA at DHL Express

"DHL Express MENA has always had and will continue to provide a pioneering approach regarding the innovation and development of its people culture. Motivated people, listening to our customers and enhancing our capabilities is key to our success.

"We know at DHL that there is a strong correlation between highly motivated and engaged employees and high productivity which ultimately leads to a stronger business performance; helping to position DHL as a market leader both regionally and globally.

"The right people culture delivered consistently and with authenticity is a key competitive advantage, giving us a differentiator that is hard to match. In DHL Express we firmly believe it begins with the development, motivation and recognition of our employees achieved through the implementation of forward-thinking HR initiatives. We are extremely proud of our MENA employees whose ambassadorship has contributed to this truly outstanding achievement."

**2018**

**AON**  
Empower Results®

**BEST EMPLOYER**

**WINNERS**

*– What they had to say*

**McDonald's**



## McDonald's

▲ **Walid Fakih** – GM at McDonald's UAE

"McDonald's UAE is delighted and honoured to be recognised in the Aon Best Employers Middle East 2018 awards for the third consecutive year. The acknowledgment highlights the passion and determination of our management and HR teams as well as the exceptional staff we have the privilege of working with every day.

"Aon Best Employers Middle East continues to shine a spotlight on the importance of employee engagement and we're grateful to be held to its high standard. A big thank you to the McDonald's UAE team for their ongoing determination and contribution to an exceptional workplace environment."

**NOVARTIS**



## Novartis

▲ **Karim Harchaoui** – Country Manager at Novartis Pharma Algeria

"For Novartis Pharma Algeria, this award represents the consecration of continuous efforts and resilience from the whole team as well as the engagement of the entire organisation. Together, we decided to stand against adversity and play to win. Most importantly, we had to stay the course and transform our culture to feel inspired, empowered and curious, every day.

"This great achievement demonstrates the sustainability of Novartis' Algeria strategy in building an inspirational working environment. Together we will continue our work to profoundly impact human health. We remain resilient and keep focused on why we are here; ensuring a healthy working environment – to reimagine medicine, to improve and extend people's lives. Novartis is once again the place to be!"

**UNION COOP**



## Union Coop

▲ **H.E. Khalid Humaid Bin Diban Al Falasi** – CEO at Union Coop

"On behalf of the whole Union Coop family I would like to thank everyone associated with this award. This prestigious award is a recognition of our life-long commitment of a progressive and innovative working environment that is powered by 'happiness' for our employees.

"Being voted as an Aon Best Employer – UAE 2018 highlights the exceptional efforts our staff deploys on a regular basis to ensure we meet our customer expectations, create a long-term working relationship, and establish an intimate bond. Union Coop strives to be the 'Retail Pioneers' through a highly motivated work culture, regular employee happiness initiatives, highly progressive career map and lots of smiling customers, who have enabled us to push boundaries of expectations."

# AON BEST EMPLOYERS 2018

## HONOURABLE MENTIONS –

*What they had to say*



### Signify (Formerly Philips Lighting)

▲ **Joyce Hoornik** – Talent Acquisition Partner at Signify Middle East & Africa

“Attracting, retaining, and developing Gen Y talent is a fundamental enabler of our growth strategy. Recognition for engaging our Gen Y reinforces our unique employee value proposition and further helps us strengthen our employer brand both internally and externally. In short Gen Y talent is our passion!”



### Westcon-Comstor Middle East

▲ **Stephen R. Lockie** – Managing Director at Westcon-Comstor Middle East

“For Westcon-Comstor to receive an honourable mention for Engaging Leadership means a great deal in affirming that our strategy and direction incorporating highly engaged employees is truly recognised. We have witnessed significant business and structural transformation specifically over the last 3 years and continue to evolve as an organisation, retaining the best of our old-world practices and blending them into our new way of working. Leadership at all levels with an open and trusting business environment are essential aspects and through this we ensure that our employees are fully engaged in driving our business forward.”

## How do Best Employers enhance the employee experience?

Cultivating an engaging employee experience will reap benefits

BY KHALID YOUSSEF, ASSOCIATE PARTNER, AON, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA



▲ **AON Best Employers is the most comprehensive employer benchmarking programme in the region**

ORGANISATIONS TODAY realise the value of an engaged workforce in creating competitive advantage in a challenging business environment.

Companies that cultivate an agile working environment outperform other organisations in profit and revenue, talent retention and sales growth. This year, Aon Best Employers in the Middle East ranked 17 percentage points higher than the market average for their employee engagement score (84 percent versus 67 percent).

### Measuring success

With more than 70 percent of organisations surveyed indicating that they are planning to measure employee experience at all stages of the talent lifecycle, the appetite for measuring employee feedback continuously is growing significantly.

Progressive organisations are moving past annual surveys and embracing the flexible model of ‘continuous dialogue’. In this process, feedback is gathered at much more frequent intervals through the use of new technology. This enables deeper and faster insights combined with more impactful actions, which subsequently impacts the organisation’s business performance.

In fact, a study by Aon concluded that a five-point increase in employee engagement results in a three-point growth in revenue, and that companies with top quartile engagement experience achieve a four-point increase in incremental operating margin.

### Next steps to success

To ensure your continuous dialogue strategy delivers optimal business outcomes, there are a few things to keep in mind. For one, you need to deploy the right surveys that incorporate both the employee lifecycle and business events. Additionally, ensure that you are targeting the right workgroups, as ‘one size fits all’ surveys are limiting.

Other important facets include using the right content, and measuring what happens to achieve desired business outcomes, as well as deploying at the right time and investing in the right skills, such as refreshing manager expectations, capabilities and accountabilities.

Aon Best Employers are moving towards continuous dialogue strategies, giving them the agility to adjust based on employee feedback. From onboarding through to exit, they employ this strategy at every stage of the talent lifecycle, which helps them create sustained high engagement, leading to superior performance and longer tenure.

Organisations across the world must focus on implementing meaningful, continuous dialogue with their employees, so they can act on what really matters to enhance the employee experience.

The results speak for themselves. In this era of rapid digitalisation, the businesses with the foresight to build a continuous dialogue strategy will accelerate their people to the level of extraordinary, while those who fail to do so risk falling behind. **EB**