



SUSTAINING GOVERNMENT EXPERTISE: GUIDELINES MANUAL

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“Developing a human being is different from any other normal development process as he is the main cornerstone for the comprehensive social and economic evolution and he has the responsibility for developing the nation”

H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
The President of the UAE, and the Ruler of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi



"Maintaining leadership as well as sustaining growth and prosperity require heading to the era of knowledge economy as soon as possible"

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and the Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai



“The real treasure and the actual gain for the homeland are its youth, who is equipped with science and knowledge as they are the means for building the country and strengthening it in all domains of giving and development”

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces

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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

"Sustaining Government Expertise: Guidelines Manual" aims at assisting the federal entities in identifying, selecting, and motivating Subject Matter Experts (SME's) so that they support the entities in achieving their strategic plans, ensuring business continuity, and contributing to the career development of their national talents.

The manual defines the "Subject Matter Expert" term and clarifies the benefits that the individual and entity reap as a result of carefully identifying and selecting experts. It also highlights the criteria which supports the SMEs' identification and selection, as well as provides a brief explanation concerning the similarities and differences between them and the trainers, so that readers can distinguish their roles. Moreover, the manual presents a mechanism for nominating and selecting SME's and for motivating them to ensure their effective participation. In addition, it states their technical work domains and the methods they may use to transfer knowledge and expertise to others. Operational and strategic key performance indicators which enable the entity to measure and evaluate the impact of the SMEs' participation are listed also in the manual.

The manual contains a number of sample templates which help entities when implementing the SMEs' initiative, and it lists references that may be utilized by readers for further reading on the subject.

DEFINITIONS

The Manual	:	Sustaining Government Expertise: Guidelines Manual
Country	:	The United Arab Emirates
Authority	:	Federal Authority for Government Human Resources
Subject Matter Expert	:	A person who possesses extensive knowledge and skills in a certain field, and who continuously seeks to acquire experience through work as well as through available learning and development opportunities.
Knowledge	:	The combination of information, personal experience, and perception which constitutes a person's knowledge and which differs from one person to another.
Learning Styles	:	<p>Learning styles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Visual learning: Learners focus on visuals (e.g. pictures, charts, etc.) and on observation; □ Auditory learning: Learners prefer to listen to information; □ Kinesthetic learning: Learners prefer manual work and practical experience.
Best Practices	:	High quality approaches, policies, processes / procedures, or methodologies which lead to exceptional achievements / results when implemented.
Skills-Based Volunteering Scheme	:	A scheme which is the first of its kind in the country. It encourages professionals (such as doctors, engineers, consultants, accountants, and others) to volunteer their time in order to provide their expertise to entities and organizations which require such technical expertise and skills.
Institutional Memory	:	The collective set of knowledge and expertise which is held by a group of employees and which is documented in order to be retrieved or circulated at any time as part of the entity's knowledge management process.
Performance Scores Calibration Committee	:	A committee which is formed in each ministry or federal entity to implement the federal government performance management system and which is responsible for the fair evaluation of the annual performance appraisal results.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, the secret behind the success and business continuity of entities lies in their ability to optimize the utilization of their employees' accumulative knowledge and experiences in order to increase productivity, maintain resources, and cope with the competitiveness of the business world, which is characterized by rapid technological development and constant change. Therefore, the "UAE Vision 2021" focuses on the importance of creating a competitive economy led by Emiratis who possess the knowledge and innovation required to achieve prosperity on the long-term. Moreover, the United Arab Emirates is committed to increase the number of "knowledge workers", who have advanced skills and who work in high-level professions, from the total number of workforce.

From this stance, the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources clarifies major concepts and presents strategic practices which foster the UAE's direction. It launched the "Skills Bank Initiative" to locate the federal government employees' skills using one electronic platform; thus, providing an easy reference to facilitate the process of searching for and retaining talents in the federal government. Moreover, it developed this manual to focus on the "Subject Matter Experts" as they provide an important source that supports the process of developing the career-related competencies of other employees through offering their knowledge and expertise; hence, supporting the achievement of the entity's strategic objectives.

To encourage entities to take care of their SME's, the Sheikh Khalifa Government Excellence Program, under the distinguished federal entity category, set criteria related to the knowledge management field which measure the entity's implementation of best practices and approaches relevant to managing knowledge and to motivating employees to give and spread their knowledge. In addition, one of the Prime Minister's medals is dedicated to "Specialized Employees" and aims at promoting performance, achievement, taking initiative, innovation, and continuous learning. It is worth mentioning that the Emirates Award for Human Resources in the Federal Government targets practices which are related to attracting and retaining national specialized talents and motivating them; thus, creating a positive workplace which encourages productivity.

2. SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SME'S)

It is important to identify the specialized employees in the workplace in order to easily reach them when there is a need to tackle certain issues and to find innovative solutions in specific fields within adequate timeframes, either through their individual contributions or through their effective participation among a team. It is also essential to motivate them and to put in place knowledge transfer plans to support other employees' learning and development, succession planning, and Emiratization efforts.

2.1 Definition

There are several definitions related to the term "Subject Matter Expert"; however, they all conclude that he/she is "A person who possesses extensive knowledge and skills in a certain field, and who continuously seeks to acquire experience through work as well as through available learning and development opportunities".

2.2 Identification of SME's

2.2.1 Benefits of Identifying SME's

Identifying the SME's in the entity has several benefits, such as:

Individual Level

- ☐ Encouragement to acquire new knowledge and skills;
- ☐ Fostering organizational loyalty;
- ☐ Achievement of higher levels of job satisfaction.

Entity Level

- ☐ Creation of a work environment which motivates employees to acquire and spread knowledge;
- ☐ Improvement of institutional memory;
- ☐ Provision of a clearer picture regarding the employees' knowledge and skills in the different business units across the entity;

- Reduction of the time utilized to locate a suitable expert for handling and solving a specific problem by using the database which includes the date of all experts in the entity;
- The ability to better identify business requirements and customers' needs in order to develop products and services of added value;
- Cost saving and optimal utilization of resources (especially the financial resources) through benefiting from the expert's guidance and instructions which are based on his accumulative knowledge and expertise;
- Putting into effect activities related to employees' engagement in the entity.

2.2.2 Subject Matter Experts' Identification Criteria

The identification of the Subject Matter Experts shall comply with the following criteria in order to ensure the attainment of desired objectives:

Sr. No.	Criterion
1.	<p>Relevance of specialization to the needs of the entity and the federal government</p> <p>The expert is specialized in a work domain which is closely relevant to the needs of the entity, in which he works, and to the needs of the federal government.</p> <p><u>Example:</u></p> <p>Financial Expert (Budgets)</p> <p>"A" works in the Ministry of Finance and he possesses extensive expertise and knowledge in preparing budgets, which serves the needs of the Ministry. He also assist other federal government entities in implementing the approved budget preparation methodology so that they can achieve their strategic goals.</p>

Sr. No.	Criterion
2.	<p>Relevance of Work Experience</p> <p>The Subject Matter Expert has a documented history of his work experience in the field of specialty (i.e. he possesses diversified and accumulative knowledge and a comprehensive understanding of relevant professional concepts and practices).</p> <p><u>Example:</u></p> <p>Human Resources Expert (Compensation and Benefits)</p> <p>Work Experiences: "B" has worked during the last seven years on several important projects related to the design and development of compensation and benefits schemes in his entity / federal government entities.</p>
3.	<p>Achievements and Appreciation Related to Specialization</p> <p>The Subject Matter Expert possesses a record of achievements in the field of specialization. He also is appreciated for his contributions inside and / or outside the entity (achievements may include for example published researches and studies, distinguished contributions, innovative solutions, and others).</p> <p><u>Example:</u></p> <p>I.T. Expert</p> <p>"C" obtained the Prime Minister's Medal for Technical Employee. He also got an appreciation certificate from the I.T. Manager for his bestowed efforts in implementing the "Enterprise Project Management (EPM)" system in the entity.</p>
4.	<p>Relevance of Educational Qualifications and Professional Certifications</p> <p>The Subject Matter Expert has relevant educational qualifications (PhD, Master's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Technical Diploma) and professional certifications.</p> <p><u>Example:</u></p> <p>Human Resources Expert</p> <p>Educational Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration or equivalent, Master's Degree in Human Resources Management.</p> <p>Professional Certifications: SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP), etc.</p>

Sr. No.	Criterion
5.	Benchmarking, spreading, and applying Best Practices
	<p>The Subject Matter Expert is exposed to best practices in the field of specialization (through attending relevant conferences and events, reading specialized journals and periodicals, participation in visits aimed at benchmarking best practices, and others) and he presents, spreads, and applies them in the entity.</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Customer Happiness Expert “A” visited a number of government entities in Singapore to benchmark distinguished customer service systems and practices. He presented the learned lessons to his management and then applied relevant initiatives which resulted in an increase in customer happiness and satisfaction.</p>
6.	Communication Skills
	<p>The Subject Matter Expert possesses an understanding of the different individual and team’s needs through effective communication which is characterized by openness and transparency. He also encourages discussion through asking questions and listening to responses. In addition, he has the ability to convince and influence others and he demonstrates enthusiasm and attention through his composure and behavior.</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Communication Expert “M” communicates effectively with others to ensure transferring knowledge and expertise. He speaks clearly and opens the door for asking questions and stating opinions, as well as for constructive discussions. His written style is clear and accurate; and his colleagues praise his ability to transfer knowledge smoothly during meetings or when making presentations.</p>

Sr. No.	Criterion
7.	Mentoring and Coaching of Others
	<p>The Subject Matter Expert dedicates a number of hours to mentor and coach other employees inside or outside his business unit within the entity; thus, ensuring the spread of explicit and tacit knowledge as well as sustaining institutional memory.</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Financial Expert (Budgets) "A" dedicates two hours on a weekly basis to transfer knowledge to the Finance Department employees in relation to setting, reviewing, and monitoring budgets according to set laws and legislations. In order to accomplish this, at times he meets them on an individual level, or conducts workshops, and at other times he participates in relevant joint projects.</p>
8.	Skill-Based Volunteering*
	<p>The Subject Matter Expert registers in the skill-based volunteering initiative, and he participates at least once annually in volunteering opportunities made available by the UAE's Volunteer Platform (voluteers.ae).</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Medical Expert "L" dedicates three (3) hours on a monthly basis to participate in volunteering opportunities, which are published on the UAE's Volunteer Platform and are relevant to medical tasks, such as provision of physiotherapy for the elderly who suffer from arthritis, back pain, and neck pain.</p> <p>*For further information about Volunteering, please refer to "Volunteering in the Federal Government Workplace: Guidelines Manual" which is issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources.</p>

2.2.2.1 SME's Vs. Trainers: Similarities and Differences

There are similarities in the knowledge and skills which both the Subject Matter Expert and trainer possess; however, there are also differences which distinguishes them. The trainer provides general solutions for broad issues, but the Subject Matter Expert provides detailed suggestions to solve a certain case. The following examples provide further explanation:

1. The Nature of Knowledge and Experiences	
Subject Matter Expert	Trainer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Possesses accumulative and diversified "Specialized and Practical" knowledge and experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Possesses "General" knowledge in the field (which might lack diversified practical experience).
2. Preparing and Delivering Training Content	
Subject Matter Expert	Trainer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Is able to identify performance gaps easily and accurately because of his understanding of the entity's business nature as well as its internal and external challenges;□ Is able to develop training materials which cover extensive technical information and practical examples that are relevant to the entity so that the employee benefits from them at work;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Bestows some effort to adequately understand the entity's business nature so that he can identify the learning needs and bridge relevant performance gaps (e.g. through meeting line managers; examining the entity's strategic plan, systems, policies, procedures; and others);□ Has the ability to develop generic training materials which contain clear training objectives and suitable content for the targeted audience;

Subject Matter Expert	Trainer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ His training contents and methods might require some improvements so that they are interactive and motivate others to learn (non-boring) and user-friendly; □ Might need time management skills to enable him manage the training session effectively so that the whole training material is covered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ His training methods are interactive and motivate others to learn; □ Is able to effectively manage the time of the training session.

3. Knowledge Transfer

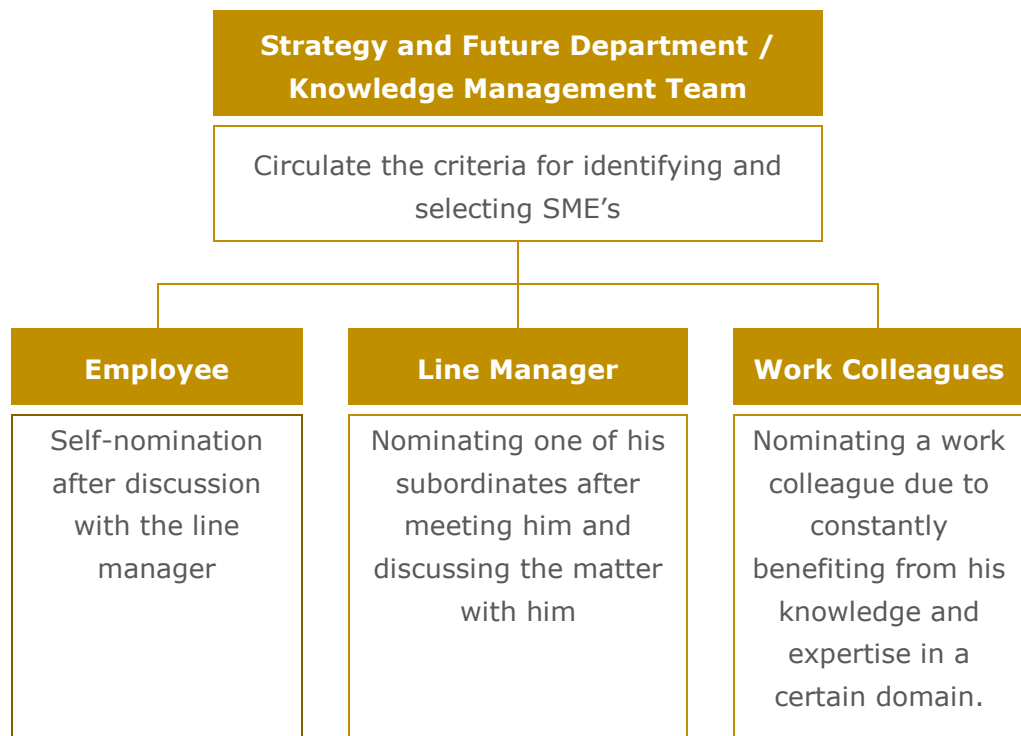
Subject Matter Expert	Trainer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Might not recognize that there are different learning styles (Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic) which requires him to bestow some effort when conveying knowledge and information to the targeted audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Recognizes that individuals have different learning styles; thus, utilizes diversified training methods to ensure that knowledge and information are conveyed to the targeted audience.

4. Mentoring and Coaching	
Subject Matter Expert	Trainer
<p>□ Has a longer timeframe to provide mentoring and coaching (e.g. throughout a specific project, throughout the year, etc.).</p> <p>It is worth mentioning that he needs to dedicate enough time to provide mentoring and coaching to others (through one-on-one sessions, telephone conversations, or e-mails).</p>	<p>□ Due to time restraints, provides limited mentoring and coaching during the training session through feedback and comments which support the learning and development process.</p>

2.3 Nominating, Selecting, and Accessing SME's

2.3.1 Nominating SME's

When Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (as applicable) circulates the criteria related to identifying and selecting SME's, experts can nominate themselves, or be nominated by their line managers or their work colleagues through the HR Information System "Bayanati", as follows:



1. Self-Nomination:

An employee, who meets the criteria, can submit a Self-Nomination Form to be a Subject Matter Expert, attaching all documents which proof his eligibility (e.g. educational qualifications, professional certificates, appreciation certificates, documented history of his experiences and participations in relevant projects, etc.). This shall take place after discussing the matter with the line manager to ensure his approval on dedicating enough time to fulfill the SME's role requirements without affecting work progress in the business unit and productivity levels.

2. Nomination by the Line Manager:

The line manager may nominate one of his subordinates, who meets the criteria, after discussing the matter with him.

3. Nomination by a Work Colleague:

Work colleagues may nominate a colleague who meets the criteria due to constantly benefiting from his extensive knowledge and experiences in the field or in a certain specialization.

Appendix “A” of this manual includes a table which illustrates the nomination fields and data

2.3.2 Selecting SME’s

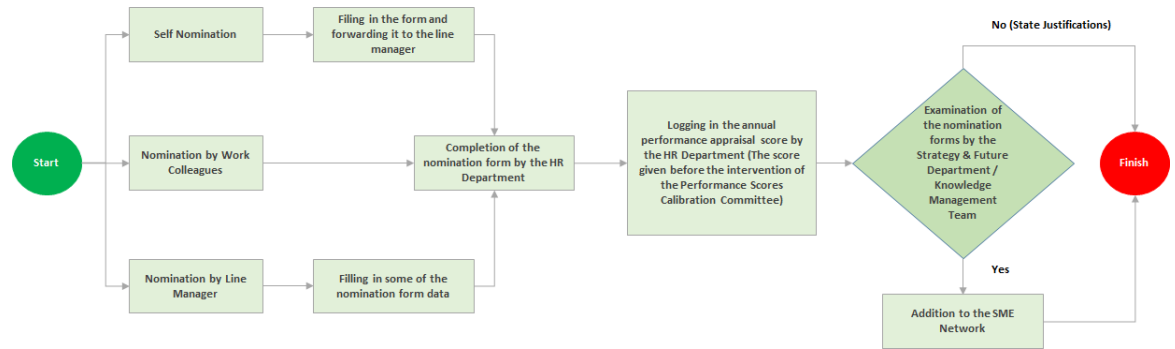


Figure 01: The SME’s Selection Mechanism

The Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (as applicable) examines the completed nomination forms based on the criteria stated under 2.2.2 of this manual. Also, they can benefit from the “Qudurat”^{*} initiative by which assessments are used to identify the employee’s characteristics that are related to knowledge, skills, capabilities, as well as personal qualities, preferences, interests, and motives. This takes place after finishing the nomination process and filling in the form; and after the Human Resources Department completes and examines data, as well as logs in the employee’s annual performance appraisal result (which should not be less than “Meets Expectations”). Then, the SME’s are announced and their information, specialization, and contact details are entered into the SME’s network.

^{*}For further information concerning the “Qudurat” initiative, please refer to “The General Framework for Measuring Federal Government Capabilities” which is issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources.

2.3.3 Announcing the List of SME's

The Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (as applicable) announces the approved list of SME's through the approved communication channels within the entity, such as:

- ☐ E-mails
- ☐ The entity's newsletter
- ☐ The intranet

Moreover, the SME's are invited and encouraged to register in the Skill-Based Volunteering Platform (*For further information in this regard, please refer to the "Volunteering in the Federal Government Workplace: Guidelines Manual"*).

2.3.4 Searching for and Accessing SME's (SMEs' Network)

To ensure a quick search for SME's in a certain field as well as ease of communication with them, the Business Unit Head at the concerned entity, which needs the expert's services, can log into the Human Resources Information System "Bayanati" and click on "Search for an SME" service. By doing so, the Business Unit Head can search for suitable experts through selecting the two search options, namely "Field" and "Federal Government Entity" in order for the experts' details to appear (such as years of experience, previous experiences according to project they worked on, etc.). Then, in liaison and coordination with the Human Resources Department, the Head can select the suitable expert and submit an official request to the entity in which he works asking for his support.

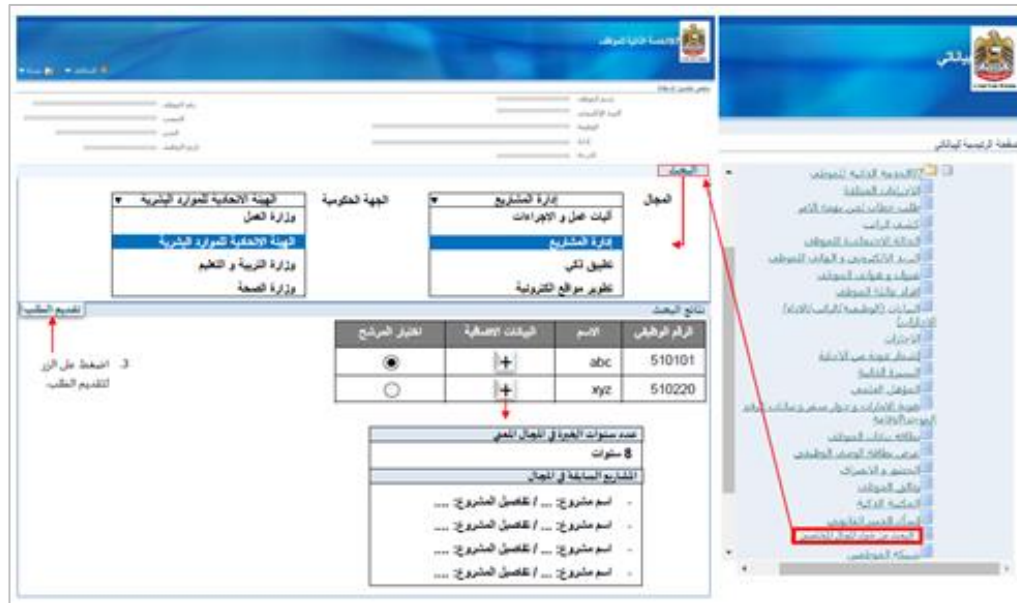


Figure (02): The "Search for an SME" service through the HR Information System "Bayanati"

The official request reaches the Human Resources Department of the entity in which the expert works. The Department forwards the request to the expert's line manager for examination and endorsement. In case the request is rejected, justifications shall be sent to the requesting entity. On the other hand, if accepted, the Human Resources Department notifies the requesting entity so that it enters the following details into the system to provide further clarification:

Field	Information
Date	Commencement date related to transfer of expertise
Duration	Required duration for the transfer of knowledge and expertise
Tasks	Tasks assigned to the expert during the stated period
Comments	A field to add any comments before the beginning of the task

After receiving this information, the entity in which the expert works finalizes the relevant procedures and coordinates with the requesting entity.

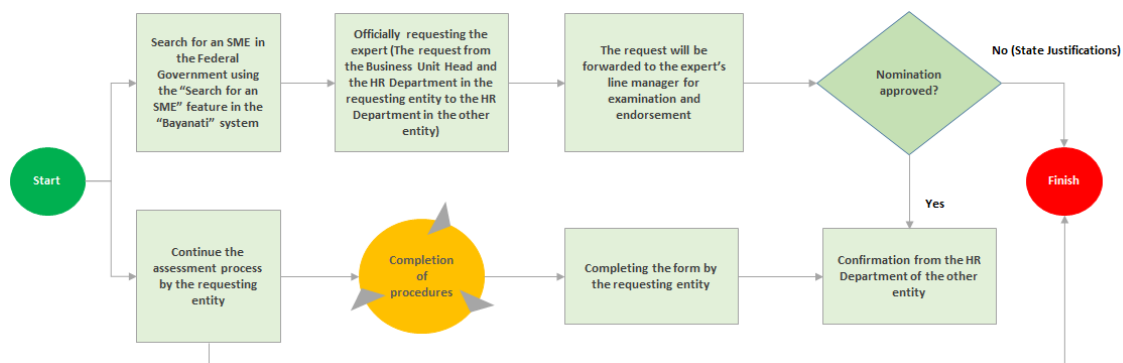


Figure (03): The Mechanism Related to Searching for and Accessing SME's

2.4 Assessing SME's Performance

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the SME's initiative, to foster the strengths of the SME's, and to take the necessary measures to enhance their developmental areas, the Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (as applicable) provides them with regular feedback based on the received comments from the concerned parties (whether employees or business units or other entities), as well as based on monitoring their participation in activities which target the optimal utilization of their expertise and knowledge.

It is worth mentioning that the Human Resources Information System "Bayanati" enables the requesting entity to assess the utilization of the SME's knowledge and expertise through the following fields:

Field	Information
Task Updates	<input type="checkbox"/> Entering updates related to the tasks / objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Assessing the tasks assigned to the SME during the specified period
Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> General comments which should be taken into consideration when selecting the required SME

2.5 Motivating SME's

It is necessary for the entity to encourage its Subject Matter Experts to share their knowledge and expertise with others. This could be achieved in many ways, such as, but not limited to:

- Utilizing the available communication channels to highlight the importance of the SME's role and to encourage employees to benefit from them in order to improve their work and to learn new skills;
- Providing opportunities for the SME to share his knowledge and expertise with others inside and outside the entity (e.g. nominating him to participate in internal knowledge forums, selecting him to represent the entity as a speaker in local and international conferences, etc.);
- Providing learning and development opportunities that support the SME's career development, including:
 - Attending local and international conferences
 - Attending specialized workshops
 - Participation in benchmarking visits
 - Subscription in specialized journals, magazines, and e-libraries
- Showcasing the SME's success stories and their contributions to the success of the entity and the development of its national talents;
- Tangible or intangible rewards and appreciation, through compensation and benefits and / or appreciation certificates, handed by the entity's senior management in line with the Rewards and Incentives System for Federal Government Employees and the entity's set policies and procedures.

Example:

“The Outstanding Employee Category”

This reward is awarded to the employee who bestows exceptional efforts which exceed his approved job-related objectives stated in the performance management system.

Eligibility Criteria and Conditions	Reward Amount
<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Exceptional efforts are related to improving and simplifying work processes and increasing productivity in the federal entity.□ Such efforts are not included in the employee’s planned work tasks and personal objectives according to the performance management system.□ Such efforts contribute to the achievement of the operational and strategic objectives and performance indicators of the Ministry or the federal entity’s.	The reward amount varies depending on the Ministry or the federal entity’s evaluation of the employee’s efforts; subject to the maximum limit not exceeding two basic salaries in a year.

3. SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS' WORK DOMAINS

The entity can benefit from Subject Matter Experts in the technical work domains which are suitable for its business nature and which contribute to achieving its strategic goals. Moreover, it can benefit from the competencies mentioned in the "Technical Competencies Framework" which was developed by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources to provide an inventory of knowledge, skills, and capabilities required to perform specific jobs. Such domains include, but is not limited to:

Technical Domains	
1. Human Resources	: Employees' performance management; Employees' relations; HR information management system; Learning and development; Strategic manpower planning; Management of compensation and benefits; Talent management; etc.
2. Information Technology	: Information security management; Databases; I.T. infrastructure; I.T. software and hardware; Maintenance of I.T. equipment and software; Big data; etc.
3. Accounting and Finance	: Budget preparation; Financial analysis and reporting; Financial information management system; Management of financial risks; Supply chain management; Investment and pension schemes; etc.
4. Organizational Development	: Operations management; Knowledge management; Organizational development systems; Total quality management; etc.
5. Auditing and Governance	: Compliance; Corporate governance; Risk management; etc.
6. Support Services	: Documentation and archiving; Office management; Translation; Warehouse and store management; etc.
7. Law / Justice	: Pleading; Management of legal affairs; Management of legal libraries; Local and international laws and legislations; Labor laws; Legal research and studies; etc.
8. Politics / Diplomacy	: Political analysis; Protocol and etiquette; Response to emergencies, crises, and disasters; Soft power; etc.
9. Religion	: Religious opinion; Management and investment of endowment; Religious research and studies; etc.

Technical Domains		
10. Social Development	:	Family counselling; Social care and protection; Social research and studies; Social security policies; etc.
11. Culture, Arts and Literature	:	Theatre management; Management of museums and monuments; Graphic design; Literary work and criticism; etc.
12. Media	:	Photography and montage; Journalism; Media content; T.V. and radio programs; Broadcasting, printing, and publishing laws and legislations; etc.
13. Program and Project Management	:	Program and project management; risk management; etc.
14. Labor	:	Judicial police; Labor inspection; UAE labor law and legislations; etc.
15. Health and Safety	:	Diagnosis of diseases; Documentation of medical data; Management of medical laboratory records; Management of medical epidemics and crises; Management of occupational health and safety; Management of dangerous waste; etc.
16. Environment and Water	:	Management of natural and environmental resources; Management and implementation of environmental systems and programs; Management of environmental risks, crises and disasters; Environmental monitoring and assessment; etc.
17. Natural Sciences	:	Scientific research and studies; Scientific experiments; etc.
18. Economy and Statistics	:	Statistical data analysis and processing; Statistical surveys; Economic analysis; Monitoring and inspection; etc.
19. Engineering	:	Design and management of buildings and facilities; Civil planning; Sustainability and renewable energy; etc.
20. Education	:	Professional leadership; Professional knowledge; Professional practices; etc.

4. SME'S KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE UTILIZATION PLAN

The Subject Matter Expert shall prepare a Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan in order to benefit others inside his entity or across the other federal government entities so that knowledge management efforts are sustained as well as explicit and tacit knowledge is maintained.

The SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan consists of four sections as follows:

1. Section One: Information about the SME

This section presents the SME's basic information such as the name, employee identification number, the business unit in which he works, the job title, telephone number, e-mail address, and area of specialization.

2. Section Two: The Plan

This section presents the SME's plan to transfer his knowledge including the knowledge transfer methods* which will be used, the time which will be dedicated, the targeted audience who will benefit from the knowledge, the required resources to assist the transfer of knowledge as required, and the key performance indicators which will be used to measure the success of implementation.

*For further information about the knowledge transfer methods, please refer to item 5: Knowledge Transfer Methods in this manual.

Example:

Knowledge Transfer Methods	Targeted Audience	Dedicated Time	Required Resources	Performance Indicators
Conduct a workshop on "Corporate Governance"	Procurement Department Employees	3 hours (2 nd week of September 2017)	<input type="checkbox"/> Coordination by the HR Department to conduct the workshop <input type="checkbox"/> Venue allocation to conduct the workshop	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of employees attending the workshop <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback from the attendees

3. Section Three: Line Manager's Endorsement

The third section is dedicated for the line manager's endorsement of the SME's plan after discussing it with him in order to ensure the smooth work progress in the business unit as well as the SME's ability to perform his tasks and duties in an acceptable manner.

4. Section Four: Approval of the Concerned Business Unit

The concerned business unit shall approve the SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan after ensuring the completion of all its parts and examining its contents to ascertain the achievement of targeted results.

Appendix "B" of this manual includes a sample of the SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan

5. METHODS OF TRANSFERRING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

There are several methods that SME's can use to transfer their knowledge in a suitable manner and in line with the available timeframe; thus, ensuring their effective participation. The methods include, but are not limited to:

5.1 Participation in Projects

The entities identify the projects which will achieve their long- and short-term strategic goals. The success of each project will depend mainly on the team which the entity forms, taking into consideration the knowledge and expertise of its employees and the employees of the federal government who can achieve the targeted outcomes within the set timeframe and budget. The Subject Matter Expert plays a vital role here in enriching the different project phases from the planning phase till the delivery of the required results by applying his technical knowledge and expertise as well as by transferring such knowledge and expertise to the other team members.

Example:

Entity "A" needs to work on a project related to identifying and developing career paths. Through searching the SMEs' Network, they found that Mrs. "F" possesses the knowledge and expertise which will contribute to the success of the project as she worked on similar projects for the last ten years. After obtaining the approval of entity "B", Mrs. "F" joined the internal team as well as she prepared the project plan and distributed the roles and responsibilities. Then, she started working with the team members on job classification and on the development of a career path for every job based on its job family and job category. In light of this, entity "A" was able to complete the project on time and its employees, who worked as team members, acquired new knowledge and skills through the knowledge transfer process.

5.2 Mentoring and Coaching

The mentoring and coaching process depends on an experienced employee who provides assistance, guidance, advice, and encouragement for another employee who needs to perform his job tasks effectively and to improve his career development inside the entity.

The Subject Matter Expert provides career guidance to support new employees and leadership development programs in an informal atmosphere which is characterized with mutual trust that helps them in understanding the different aspects of work problems, and assists them in reaching suitable solutions. Mentoring and coaching have many benefits for the Subject Matter Expert, for the other employees, and for the entity, such as:

Subject Matter Expert	Other Employees	Entity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Job satisfaction due to contributing to the development of others; □ Appreciation from colleagues for the role he plays; □ Acquiring new knowledge and skills during the mentoring and coaching process; □ Motivation gained because of taking responsibility and due to self-development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Acquiring self-confidence and better motivation to work; □ Better understanding of the formal and informal organizational culture; □ Having the opportunity to discuss ideas, work issues, and potential solutions before implementation; □ Ability to think of issues from new and different perspectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Higher levels of motivation to all concerned parties involved in the mentoring and coaching process; □ Improvement of communication across the entity; □ Increasing the creativity and innovation level in the entity which supports the continuous improvement efforts; □ Achieving the entity's strategic and operational goals.

There are several tools which the SME can use to ensure the success of the mentoring / coaching session; the most used one is the "GROW Model". This model was developed in the eighties of the last century by Graham Alexander, Alan Fine, and John Whitmore. "GROW" stands for:

- G: Goal
- R: Reality
- O: Obstacles / Options
- W: Way Forward



The Subject Matter Expert poses clarifying questions which help the employee in reaching the answers either individually or with the expert's support. During the mentoring / coaching session, the desired goal which the employee aims at is identified, then reality and available options are stated, taking into consideration consequences which might appear when implementing the different options. Finally, a suitable action plan is set to ensure commitment.

5.3 Responding to Enquiries

The Subject Matter Expert responds to technical enquiries and clarifications within a reasonable timeframe by e-mail or phone, or via the Intranet, or during employees' meetings.

Some entities establish an “Ask the Expert” initiative to connect the SME’s with the employees who require assistance (For further details, please refer to “Knowledge Management in the Federal Government: Guidelines Manual” which is issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources).

Example:

A Finance Department Manager sent the Human Resources Subject Matter Expert an enquiry regarding the grievance procedure which is related to the job performance appraisals.

Question: During the upcoming period, I am going to appraise the performance of my subordinates. Hence, I would like to know: What is the purpose of the grievance procedure which is related to the job performance appraisals? And, when does it take place?

Answer: The procedure aims at giving the chance to employees who score “Needs Development” to submit a grievance in relation to their score. Nevertheless, we encourage open communication and transparency among line managers and subordinates so that objections to the score are discussed before submitting an official grievance.



As for the timing, it takes place when the line manager informs his subordinates of their final performance appraisal results, based on the resolutions of the “Performance Scores Calibration Committee”.

For further information on the subject, please refer to the “Federal Government Performance Management System: Guidelines for the Employees of the Human Resources Departments” through visiting the website of the Federal Authority of Government Human Resources:

<https://www.fahr.gov.ae/Portal/Userfiles/Assets/Documents/a3608717.pdf>

5.4 Training

The Subject Matter Experts may conduct workshops / training courses in accordance with the “Procedures Related to the Training and Development System: Guidelines Manual” and the “Training and Development System for Employees of the Federal Government” which are issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources.



The workshops / trainings which are managed by the Subject Matter Expert are considered interactive communication means between him and those interested in exchanging knowledge, expertise, ideas, opinions, and new methods concerning work implementation, through brainstorming and discussion.

In addition, a Subject Matter Expert may conduct on-the-job training which aims at developing the skills, knowledge, and competencies of other employees in order for them to finish specific tasks using the tools, equipment, and documentation available in the normal work environment.

A Subject Matter Expert is an important source for on-the-job training because of his understanding of the entity's nature as well as its set policies, procedures, and systems, along with his technical knowledge and expertise in a certain domain. It is worth mentioning that such training contributes to:

- Cost reduction compared to external training;
- Possibility of implementing the training within a timeframe which suits the entity;
- Providing employees with opportunities for constructive discussions regarding work practices which results in developmental suggestions;
- Fostering collaboration and team work in order to achieve set goals.

5.5 Job Shadowing

The Federal Authority for Government Human Resources defined Job Shadowing as “A training form by which an employee accompanies a qualified, specialized, and highly competent employee as a shadow while performing his daily tasks in order to benefit from his experience at work”.

Job shadowing has several benefits to the employee who accompanies the SME which include:

- Understanding how individuals and teams perform assigned tasks and work;
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities allocated to employees and business units;
- Acquiring a comprehensive picture of the entity’s work nature;
- Examining the career options available for the employee, along with the required knowledge, skills, and time before officially accepting any of them.

For further information about the criteria, conditions, and procedures for joining a job shadowing program, please refer to the “**Training and Development System for Employees of the Federal Government**” and the “**Procedures Related to the Training and Development System: Guidelines Manual**” which are issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to implement the Subject Matter Experts' initiative, the concerned parties have the following roles and responsibilities:

1. Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (with regard to the initiative):

- In liaison with the Human Resources Department, select the SME's and prepare a list which contains their details for the senior management's approval;
- Open the door for nominating SME's on an annual basis through the internally approved communication channels;
- Examine and endorse the SMEs' nomination forms based on the approved criteria, as well as announcing them;
- Review the key performance indicators related to the SME's to ensure their accuracy and effectiveness, and closely monitor their performance.

2. Human Resources Department (with the regard to the initiative):

- Develop and review the internal policies and procedures which are related to motivating and retaining SME's;
- Identify SME's inside the entity based on the data available on the SME Network;
- Introduce the selected group of SME's, along with their areas of expertise, to the entity's employees through the several internally approved communication channels;
- Provide SME's with learning and development opportunities to support their career journey;
- Measure the increase in the number of SME's in the entity, as well as take relevant corrective and preventive measures in this regard, in liaison with the concerned business units, as and when required;
- Seek the support of SME's when implementing the annual training plans of the entity in which they work or the other federal government entities by inviting them to deliver workshops and training courses which are related to their areas of expertise (as necessary).

3. Subject Matter Experts:

- Submit self-nominations to the SME initiative after reading the relevant criteria and attaching all supporting documents;
- Prepare an “SME Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan” and commit to it in order to ensure conducting the relevant activities (e.g. mentoring and coaching, preparing and publishing articles or researches or studies, etc.) within set timeframes during the year;
- Demonstrate collaboration and commitment to providing knowledge and expertise to employees and business units in the entity and / or other federal government entities, as and when required;
- Commit to answering received enquiries and questions, through the internally approved communication channels, within the set timeframes;
- Notify the Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (as applicable) of any developmental activities he undergoes during the year in order to add them to his record (e.g. conferences, workshops, coaching programs, etc.);
- Send documents, studies, and researches related to his area of expertise to the Strategy and Future Department / Knowledge Management Team (as applicable) to publish what is deemed suitable;
- Create balance between his job requirements and his commitment towards his duties as a Subject Matter Expert through proper time management so that he maintains the expected productivity level.

4. The SME's Line Manager

- Nominate Subject Matter Experts from his business unit after reading the relevant criteria and discussing the matter with the nominated employee;
- Monitor the SME's work progress in order to ensure productivity and no negative effects on the business unit due to his commitment towards implementing the utilization plan;
- Encourage the SME, provide him with learning and development opportunities, and appreciate and acknowledge his efforts.

7. MEASURING AND EVALUATING THE SME'S PARTICIPATION

It is necessary to set appropriate key performance indicators in order to ensure the success of all bestowed efforts to identify and select SME's and to measure the impact of their contributions on the entity's performance. Setting and monitoring relevant indicators will lead to added value and the achievement of the entity's strategic goals.

Relevant key performance indicators are either strategic or operational as shown in the following table:

Type of Indicator	Example
Strategic Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ % Emiratisation in the SME's network□ SME's retention rate
Operational Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ % Commitment to the SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan□ Number of technical projects in which an SME participated vs. planned□ % Compliance with the set timeframes for answering received enquiries and questions□ Number of submitted suggestions or the improved procedures / processes based on the SME's input□ % Employees' satisfaction pertaining to the SME's performance□ % Customer satisfaction

8. CONCLUSION

Economic development is linked to the knowledge economy today; thus, entities are encouraged to increase their share of “knowledge workers”, including Subject Matter Experts, in order to achieve competitiveness and to ensure business continuity.

Identifying and selecting Subject Matter Experts require commitment to clear and specific criteria. In addition, there is a need to carefully study their nomination requests, and make announcements concerning them so that other employees can easily communicate with them. It is also necessary for an entity to optimize the benefits reaped from the SME’s knowledge and expertise by motivating them through, for example, highlighting the important role they play in achieving the entity’s goals and in enabling it to fulfill its main role according to the mandates, providing SME’s with learning and development opportunities which support their career progress, and appreciating their contributions whether in tangible and intangible manners. It is worth mentioning that there are several technical work domains to which SME’s can contribute and that they have to prepare a clear utilization plan which shows the methods they will use to transfer their knowledge and expertise.

Finally, we must remember the benefits that the entity will gain from implementing the SME’s initiative which include, but is not limited to, increasing job satisfaction, fostering team work, increasing creativity and innovation levels, cost reduction, and developing national talent at different job levels.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX "A":
Fields and Data of the e-Nomination Form**

Field	Information	Compulsory or Optional or Data Only	Procedures	Responsibility for Selection / Filling	Comments
Employees' Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/> Entity <input type="checkbox"/> Job Title <input type="checkbox"/> Total Years of Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate's Documents (e.g. educational certificates, training certificates, etc.)	Data only	<input type="checkbox"/> Data is automatically displayed from the system <input type="checkbox"/> The employee's documents can be seen by concerned parties in the entity only; not other entities.	System	
Experiences	<input type="checkbox"/> A list of available expertise	Compulsory	<input type="checkbox"/> The list contains "Others" as a field. When selected, an additional field is shown to add a non-available competency.	The person who nominates the employee	The nominated employee is permitted to amend the data entered in the fields in case of self-nomination only; not if nominated by his line manager or colleagues.
Competencies	<input type="checkbox"/> A list of behavioral competencies <input type="checkbox"/> A list of technical competencies	Compulsory	<input type="checkbox"/> More than one competency can be selected. The three most important competencies should be selected.	The system and the person who nominates the employee	
Reason for Nomination	<input type="checkbox"/> Comment box	Compulsory	<input type="checkbox"/> Unlimited field	The person who nominates the employee	
Relevant Projects / Tasks	<input type="checkbox"/> Data on relevant projects / tasks	Compulsory	<input type="checkbox"/> Unlimited field <input type="checkbox"/> The nominated employee will fill in this field when he receives a notification in this regard and will forward it to the line manager when done.	Nominated employee	The employee is permitted to fill in the project data only when the nomination is by the line manager or by a work colleague.
Approval / Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Reason for rejection	Compulsory	<input type="checkbox"/> In case of rejection, the nominated employee / his line manager should provide justifications	Nominated employee or the line manager, as deemed suitable.	

APPENDIX "B":
Sample SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan

SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan



Name of Nominated Employee: _____ Employee ID No.: _____ Job Title: _____
Business Unit: _____ Direct Tel. No.: _____ E-mail Address: _____
Approved Domain of Expertise: _____

Knowledge Transfer Methods	Targeted Audience	Dedicated Time	Required Resources	Performance Indicators

Line Manager's Comments and Endorsement

Line Manager's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Concerned Unit's Comments and Endorsement

The Business Unit Representative: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX "C": Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Who is a "Subject Matter Expert"?

A "Subject Matter Expert" is a person who possesses extensive knowledge and skills in a certain field, and who continuously seeks to acquire experience through work as well as through available learning and development opportunities.

Q2: What benefits do an individual and an entity reap as a result of identifying and selecting Subject Matter Experts?

There are several benefits that an individual and an entity reap as a result of identifying and selecting Subject Matter Experts. Some of them are:

- ☐ At the Individual Level: Encouragement to acquire new knowledge and skills; fostering organizational loyalty; and increasing the job satisfaction level.
- ☐ At the Entity's Level: Creation of a work environment which motivates employees to acquire and spread knowledge; improving institutional memory; reduction of time used to identify a suitable expert for handling and solving a certain problem; and provision of a clearer picture of the employees' knowledge and skills in the different business units across the entity.

Q3: What are the criteria for identifying and selecting Subject Matter Experts?

The criteria for identifying and selecting Subject Matter Experts:

1. Relevance of specialization to the needs of the entity and the federal government;
2. Relevance of work experience;
3. Achievements and appreciation related to specialization;
4. Relevance of educational qualifications and professional certifications;
5. Benchmarking, spreading, and applying of best practices;
6. Communication skills;
7. Mentoring and coaching others;
8. Skill-based volunteering.

APPENDIX "C": Frequently Asked Questions (Cont.)

Q4: How does nomination take place in to be part of the Subject Matter Experts' network?

Nomination to be a Subject Matter Expert could be through:

- ☐ Self-nomination;
- ☐ Nomination by the line manager;
- ☐ Nomination by work colleagues.

Q5: How can an entity motivate Subject Matter Experts?

An entity can motivate Subject Matter Experts through:

- ☐ Highlighting the important role that they play in the entity;
- ☐ Providing opportunities for them to share their knowledge and expertise with others inside the entity;
- ☐ Providing learning and development opportunities which support their career development;
- ☐ Showcasing their success stories and their contributions to the success of the entity and to developing the national talents;
- ☐ Tangible and intangible appreciation in line with the entity's set policies and procedures.

Q6: What are the work domains of Subject Matter Experts?

There are several technical work domains that the Subject Matter Experts can contribute to, such as:

- ☐ Environment and Water
- ☐ Finance and Accounting
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Social Development
- ☐ Human Resources
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Media
- ☐ Health and Safety

APPENDIX "C": Frequently Asked Questions (Cont.)

Q7: What are the components of the SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan?

An SME's Knowledge and Expertise Utilization Plan consists of the following sections:

- ☐ Section One: Information about the Subject Matter Expert
- ☐ Section Two: The plan which contains the knowledge transfer methods which will be used by the SME, the targeted audience who will benefit from the knowledge, the time which will be dedicated by the SME to transfer his knowledge, the required resources to assist the transfer of knowledge (as required), the key performance indicators which will be used to measure the success of implementation.
- ☐ Section Three: Line Manager's Endorsement
- ☐ Section Four: Approval of the Concerned Business Unit.

Q8: What methods can the SME use to transfer knowledge and expertise?

There are a number of methods that an SME can use to transfer knowledge and expertise, including:

- ☐ Participation in projects
- ☐ Mentoring and coaching
- ☐ Responding to enquiries
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Job Shadowing

Appendix “D”: References

□ Books / Booklets:

- ***EFQM Excellence Model Booklet***
(Published in 2009 by the European Foundation for Quality Management)
- ***Everything You Ever Needed to Know about Training***
(Published in 2007 by Kogan Page)
- ***Excellence in Coaching: The Industry Guide***
(Published in 2010 by Kogan Page)

□ Websites:

- <http://www.community-of-knowledge.de>
- <http://www.fahr.gov.ae>
- <http://www.mystarjob.com>
- <http://www.skgep.gov.ae>
- <http://www.techrepublic.com/article/how-to-choose-between-a-trainer-and-a-subject-matter-expert/>
- <http://www.thebalance.com>
- <http://www.vision2021.ae>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140421082247-6260457-sell-more-become-a-subject-matter-expert-in-five-steps>

Appendix "D": References (Cont.)

▢ Guidelines, Systems, and Decrees:

- Performance Management Systems for Employees of the Federal Government (Endorsed by the Cabinet Resolution No. 12 for the Year 2012).
- Training and Development System for Employees of the Federal Government (Issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources in 2012).
- Job Evaluation and Job Description System in the Federal Government (Endorsed by the Cabinet Resolution No. 28 for the Year 2013).
- Cabinet Resolution No. 18 of 2015 of 2015, endorsing the Rewards and Incentives System for Federal Government Employees.
- The General Framework for Measuring the Federal Government Capabilities "Qudurat" (Issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources in 2015).
- Technical Competencies Framework (Issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources in 2015).
- Procedures Related to the Training and Development System: Guidelines Manual (Issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources in 2014).
- Knowledge Management in the Federal Government: Guidelines Manual (Issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources in 2016).
- Volunteering in the Federal Government Workplace: Guidelines Manual (Issued by the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources in 2017).