
**Building the right
leadership team
for growth in
Saudi Arabia &
the UAE**



What matters when hiring senior leaders in the GCC

The more we work with businesses across Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the more one thing stands out: Finding a senior leader is not just about matching a CV to a job description. The region is changing quickly, businesses are expanding, and expectations from leadership are high than ever. Organizers need people who can understand the local market, work across cultures, lead teams, and still bring a strong international perspective.

Over the past few months, we've had the opportunity to support leadership hiring for businesses in the region, including appointments such as:

- **President** for a well-established chemical manufacturing business in Dammam, supporting its next phase of growth.
- **Technical Director** for a leading metal industry company in Riyadh, strengthening its technical and operational leadership.

Every search is different, but a few things consistently matter when hiring senior leaders in the GCC:



Experience matters, but relevance matters more.

A great career history doesn't always mean the person is right for the business. What matters is whether their experience fits the company's current situation and future plans.



Local understanding is important.

Leaders need to understand how business is done in the region while also being able to bring strong international practices and standards.



The best leaders create change.

Companies going through growth or transformation need leaders who can build teams, improve processes, develop people and make things happen.



Global experience and local knowledge can be a powerful combination.

For many businesses, the ideal leader is someone who understands the regional market but has also worked in international environments.



Expatriate talent can bring valuable experience.

As businesses across the GCC continue to grow and transform, there is often a need for specialised expertise that may not be readily available within the local talent pool. Experienced expatriate professionals can bring international knowledge, technical expertise, leadership experience and exposure to different markets.

But successful expatriate hiring is about more than finding someone with the right skills. Cultural fit, adaptability, understanding of the regional business environment and the ability to work effectively with local teams are equally important. And perhaps most importantly, we try to look beyond the CV.

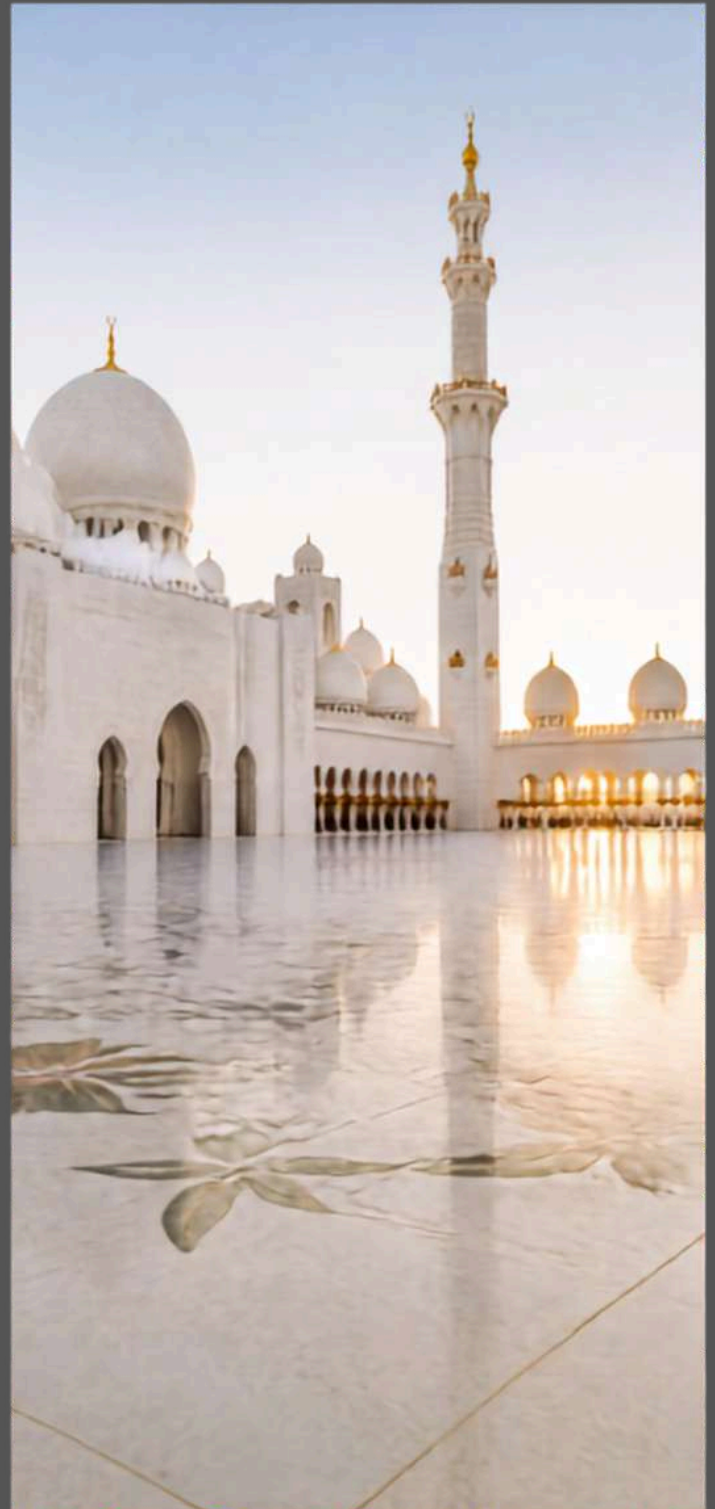
- **What did the person actually build?**
- **What changed while they were there?**
- **How did they handle difficult situations?**
- **What impact did they have on the business and the people around them?**

These are often the conversations that tell you much more about a leader than a list of titles ever can.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE are going through a remarkable period of growth and transformation. With that comes a growing need for leaders who are ready to build, adapt and lead through what comes next.

For us at CT Executive Search, that is what executive search is really about, not simply filling a position, but finding the person who can make a real difference to the business.

Reach out to us if you're looking for hire your next Leader.



The GCC is changing fast. Leadership needs to keep up.