GEORGE ABRAHAM

HR Director | HR Transformation | Digital HR & AI | Skills-Based Talent

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

HR transformation leader who turns people strategy into P&L outcomes. 20 years across the Middle East, India and the US, 14 with Deloitte; raised in Riyadh and UAE-based for 11 years. Led the end-to-end transformation of an 8,500+ person, 15-country firm's HR function: operating model, processes, people and technology, with AI embedded by design rather than bolted on. Delivered **$17M+ in cost savings and revenue impact over the last three to four years**, built a skills-based talent architecture, and created AI-enabled HR solutions from concept to firm-wide scale. SHRM-SCP.

$17M+ value delivered | **85+** HR areas transformed | **34** AI-enabled solutions | **1,700+** skills mapped | **3x** HR capacity

SIGNATURE TRANSFORMATIONS

- **HR operating model & change:** led Project Synergy across 100% of the HR function: 160+ HR professionals, 85+ HR sub-areas and 78 processes assessed; 63 activity areas centralised, standardised and automated in four waves across shared services, CoE and business HR; 50+ roles realigned, $1.5M+ saved to date and up to $6M cost avoidance modelled to FY28.
- **Digital & AI transformation:** designed DRIIVE, a 12-domain AI talent architecture; 34 firm-wide solutions built in-house on the Microsoft Power Platform, with generative AI built into the tools employees, candidates and leaders use every day, avoiding ~$7M against 19 vendor products. Automated HR transactions up ~6x, approval-to-live time halved, HR capacity released tripled to 21%.
- **Skills-based transformation:** built a skills ontology of 1,700+ skills, 300+ certifications, 250+ technologies and 400+ standards and frameworks, now the foundation for skills-based hiring, learning, workforce planning, change management and business development.
- **$17M+ value delivered** across HR operating model redesign, in-house digital HR, nationalisation, agency and referral strategy, campus and leadership hiring, AI-enabled assessment and HR technology contracts.
- **Talent attraction transformation:** agency share of hires cut from ~20% to ~1% (worth $2M+ a year); applications grew from ~43K to 350K+ a year for 3,000 hires; first-year retention 98% vs an 85–90% norm; women's share of hires up from 31% to 45%.
- **Nationalisation & business growth:** KSA national graduate programme delivered $2.5M+ salary savings and $18M+ revenue; national attrition cut from 55% to 20%. HR lead to a practice that grew from $17M to $120M at ~25% CAGR.

CORE EXPERTISE

HR Transformation & Operating Models · Change Management · Digital HR, Embedded AI & Generative AI · Skills-Based Talent Architecture & Skills Ontology · People Analytics & Workforce Planning · Talent Attraction & Employer Brand · HR Business Partnering · Total Rewards & Performance · Leadership Assessment & Capability Development · Nationalisation (Emiratisation, Saudisation) · Multi-country Labour Law & Governance

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Deloitte Middle East, Dubai

2015 – Present

HR Director, Talent Transformation & Attraction, Digital HR & Analytics (2021–Present)

Reports to the Managing Partner, People & Purpose, with skip-level reporting to the Middle East CEO. Sets firm-wide strategy for talent transformation, delivered as CoE services to the entire firm. Leads senior managers, managers, recruitment and digital leads; business and HR leaders are peers.

- Led Project Synergy, the HR transformation covering 100% of People & Purpose across 15 countries and 16 service lines: mapped every HR activity to the people performing it, then redesigned the target operating model and moved work to shared services, CoE or business HR.
- Architect of DRIIVE (Digital Reinvention through Innovation and Integration of the Value Ecosystem). Led a build-not-buy programme of 34 live solutions combining Power Apps, Power Automate, Power BI and SharePoint with generative AI embedded in the user experience, alongside NLP, machine-learning classification, intelligent matching and OCR; built and governed using an internal enterprise LLM. Flagship tools include ACE candidate evaluation, Referral Genie, JD Architect and the Partner Nomination System.
- Built the skills ontology framework (1,700+ skills, 300+ certifications, 250+ technologies, 400+ standards) that underpins skills-based attraction, learning and workforce planning.
- Rebuilt talent attraction as a firm-wide function after the legacy ATS was retired (Avature, LinkedIn Enterprise, AI assessment); functional leadership of a 60+ recruiter network serving 600+ hiring managers. Introduced SAP HXM as the firm's first people system of record.

- Negotiated the region's first LinkedIn enterprise agreement (~$1M saved); introduced AI assessment at ~90% lower unit cost; onboarding programme reached 6,000+ joiners.

HR Director, Risk Advisory (2019–2023, dual role with the above in 2021–23); Senior Manager (2015–2019)

- HR lead to the Risk Advisory Executive Committee through growth from $17M to $120M (headcount 180 to 800+), including restructuring of service offerings, regions and P&Ls.
- Designed a KSA national graduate programme and a regional assessment and development centre (200+ participants).
- Client advisory: HR transformation and leadership assessment for public-sector clients, engaging a central bank governor, a finance ministry chairman, and giga-project and education CEOs.

Deloitte US / India

2012 – 2015

HR Business Partner, Financial Advisory & Consulting

- Chief-of-staff support to a US practice CEO (5,000 employees); performance, rewards, workforce planning and organisational transformation.
- Helped establish an India delivery office that scaled from 10 to 5,000 people; scaled consulting hiring against a 10K+ order book.

ITC Ltd (British American Tobacco affiliate), India

2007 – 2012

HR Business Partner; Learning & Competency Development Manager

- HR business partner for a 3,000-person FMCG business; learning and competency lead for a 36,000-person workforce; designed selection boards, development centres and post-training effectiveness measurement.

FURTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACROSS THE CAREER

- **People analytics:** predictive attrition model, people ROI and retention ROI calculators, talent scorecards and KPI frameworks for business and recruiter performance.
- **Learning & capability:** assessment and development centres (PwC and SHL certified), recruiter certification (DRex), faculty programmes on business partnering, performance and leadership.
- **Rewards & engagement:** compensation scale revisions, reward and recognition schemes, Employee Happiness Index and engagement surveys.
- **Culture & inclusion:** women in leadership, generational and cultural studies; working across 100+ nationalities.
- **Talent intelligence:** competitor benchmarking and market mapping using talent-insight platforms.

HR TECHNOLOGY, DIGITAL & AI STACK

- **AI & generative AI:** generative AI embedded in end-user HR solutions, internal enterprise LLM for AI-assisted design and build, Microsoft Copilot and Copilot Studio, NLP, machine-learning classification and clustering, intelligent matching and scoring, OCR.
- **Microsoft 365 & Power Platform:** Power Apps, Power Automate, Power BI, SharePoint, Dataverse, Microsoft Forms.
- **Talent attraction & intelligence:** Avature (ATS, CRM, onboarding), LinkedIn Recruiter, LinkedIn Talent Insights, Bryq (AI assessment), Equus.
- **Core HR & enterprise platforms:** SAP SuccessFactors (HXM), Microsoft Dynamics 365, ServiceNow HR, Intapp, Staff IT, DocuSign.
- **Analytics & learning:** Tableau, Python, SQL, VBA; Cornerstone, LinkedIn Learning, Udemy, Coursera, Harvard ManageMentor, Qualtrics XM.

RECOGNITION & FACULTY

- Named among MENA's Top 100 HR Leaders (2025).
- Employee Happiness Awards UAE 2025 (Gold): Best Recruitment Strategy and HR Team of the Year; further external awards for HR strategy.
- Shortlisted, SHRM MENA STAR Awards 2026, Digital HR & AI.
- Faculty, Deloitte University EMEA; expert faculty, IWBD board-readiness programme.

CREDENTIALS & EDUCATION

- SHRM-SCP · PwC Certified Assessment & Development Centres · SHL Competency-Based Interviewing · Deloitte Faculty Excellence
- MBA, Human Resources, Loyola Institute of Business Administration, Chennai · B.Sc. Biochemistry, GRD College of Science, Coimbatore

Recommendations: available on LinkedIn · References available on request