

Equipping high potentials as catalysts of future change at the Abu Dhabi School of Government



Client need

The Abu Dhabi School of Government, established to develop the city's civil servants, needed to cultivate the right mindsets and capabilities in its mid-career, high-potential employees. These high potentials would lead the Abu Dhabi government into the future as part of an economic development plan that would create a solid succession pipeline across all government entities.

ADSG partnered with BTS to launch the first learning journey designed to achieve this goal, which was called **The Leader Program**.



The solution...

The Leader Program (TLP) aimed to accelerate the leadership abilities and expand the knowledge of over 100 high potential Abu Dhabi government employees. TLP built participants' abilities to lead through three modules: **Leading Self, Leading Others, and Leading the Nation through Innovation**.

The program incorporated a unique "ecosystem" that enabled participants to experience leadership development as a continuous way of life, and consisted of six elements:

In-class training

Three, approximately five-day-long, modules featuring experiential learning sessions, either virtual or in person, and **moments-based** leadership simulations.

Virtual coaching

A four- to five-session one-on-one flexible coaching journey, during which BTS coaches guided participants on the specific mindset shifts that would nurture their growth and eventually benefit society.

Conferences and events

BTS arranged for access to local and international conferences where participants could build stronger networks.

Individual projects

Leaders were assigned pre- and post-work tasks for each module, including: seven Go-Do's (action items to be completed within the flow of work), **iLeads** (self-paced simulations), **self-assessments**, **online courses**, and a **Personal Development Plan**.

Meetings with government leaders

At least once every three months, BTS arranged for participants to meet with various high-ranking government leaders to gain perspective through active dialogue.

Job rotation

Leaders were placed at an organization of their choice in the public or private sector and completed a job rotation over a period of two months.

To wrap up the yearlong journey, participants:

- Prepared, implemented, and tracked a final **innovation project** that addressed a real-life government challenge.
- Completed an **assessment module** by presenting the journey's quantitative and qualitative impact as well as their learnings about leading themselves, their teams, and their nation.



How it works

In summary, facilitators assessed leaders' progress through:

- Daily surveys tracking knowledge obtained from in-class sessions.
- An "Overall Impact Measurement Survey" tracking concept application.
- Post-module assignments that reinforced concepts.
- Post-module virtual simulations that gauged knowledge retention.
- A job-rotation project measuring the level of learning implementation.
- A "Final Innovation Project" and assessment module designed to ascertain overall learning impact and ROI.



Results

In the following three years after the program, participants' progress included:

99% Go-Do completion

94% job rotation project completion

29 innovation projects (83% of all) implemented across diverse government entities, yielding:

- **94%** Anticipated improvement in environmental impact
- **97%** Anticipated improvement in long-term citizen happiness

Additionally, TLP won a Gold Brandon Hall Award for **"Best Unique or Innovative Leadership Development Program."** A new cohort of 100 leaders are expected to complete the program in the near future.



[The] leadership development program has really supported me, and has been one of the most gratifying developmental experiences of my career.

– Participant from the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism

[The program had a positive impact on wider society] by developing future leaders who are also parents [and] will transfer knowledge not only to their colleagues, but also to their children, who will impact future generations.

– Participant from the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency

