

REGIONAL REPORT - UAE



The Emerging of a Professional Association for Project Management in the UAE

By Mounir Ajam

The long wait for a professional association advocating professional project management in the UAE might be coming to a close soon with the strong support of a leading organization.

Professionals and volunteers advocating the dynamic and emerging profession of project management have been pursuing the possibility of setting up a chapter for the Project Management Institute (PMI®) in the UAE dedicated for the UAE professional community. These volunteers have approached PMI® but due to the freeze on new components and other factors the realization of this important goal has not been achieved yet. The recent petition/survey of professionals in the community has attracted the support of Dubai Knowledge Village to put its weight behind this highly important initiative.



Dubai Knowledge Village (DKV), the world's only Free Zone totally dedicated and focused on human resource development, has offered PMI® to collaborate on promoting professional project management in the UAE via the establishment of a PMI® chapter in the UAE. At this point in time, there is no dedicated PMI® chapter in the UAE or any of its cities even though there are more than 1,100 members and more than 800 Project Management Professionals (PMP) here.

DKV has the Mandate from the government of Dubai to license companies and organizations in the Technology and Media Free Zone that is based in Dubai and consists of Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City, Dubai Knowledge Village, among other "clusters". The mandate for this free zone

from His Highness Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President/Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, is to promote and help Dubai converts into a knowledge economy.

The importance of this initiative is that "Project Management is the key to meeting a wide range of strategic objectives," says Dr. Ayoub Kazim, Executive Director of Dubai Knowledge Village. "The importance of project management comes from its focus on achieving objectives that might be overlooked in the carrying out of routine ongoing operational tasks of any organization. It is important also because it better ensures the achievement of set objectives. We see Project Management practices as a strategic competency and mandatory for companies to succeed and that's why we welcome to the Knowledge Village community this association which promotes professional project management."



Another factor behind this initiative is the high interest in a professional association among the community members. A recent survey of project management stakeholders in the Region and the UAE has shown a strong interest in this initiative. Hundreds of professionals at all levels (up to executive levels) responded to this survey and 95% of the respondents from the UAE clearly indicated the need for a PMI® Chapter for the UAE. In addition, the respondents also indicated, with a ratio of 2 to 1, their strong interest in establishing a UAE or an Arab Project Management Association, independent of PMI® if PMI® is not ready to proceed with a UAE Chapter at this time.

Hasan Makansi, Partner Development Manager, Dubai Knowledge Village, said "Project management is becoming more important in Dubai and the region especially with all the innovative, unique and large projects taking place. Since project management practices are emerging rapidly in this region, we feel the necessity of supporting body to develop and promote the project management industry and professionals."

The level of interest is so strong where volunteers, senior managers, and executives have already been writing letters to PMI® endorsing such a chapter and many letters have already been sent to PMI®.

About Dubai Knowledge Village



Dubai Knowledge Village (DKV), launched in 2003, places the Middle East on the map as a destination for training

& learning excellence. Its 1 KM long picturesque campus provides a ready environment for a variety of knowledge-based entities including training centres and learning support entities.

This thriving knowledge community was founded as part of a long-term economic strategy to develop the region's talent pool and accelerate its move into a knowledge-based economy. Benefits for Dubai Knowledge Village partners include 100% foreign ownership, 100% freedom from taxes, 100% repatriation of assets and profits and effortless visa issuance procedures. DKV has over 350 partners which include training centres, professional centres, consultancies and HR companies. DKV also enjoys the distinction of being the world's only Free Zone totally focused on professional training and learning support services.



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