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“Dancing on the Heads of Snakes”: Managing HR in Yemen during a Turmoil Period

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Abstract

There are moments where personal choices in most HR Leader’s career-path are critical in bringing about either success or failure in implementing new HR initiatives and dealing with employees by maintaining industrial peace, mainly in a multicultural organization. This paper presents a success story of an Indonesian HR expatriate in restructuring organization levelling, reformatting HR information system, redefining rewards and remuneration structures, promoting more females on board in a male-dominated culture, dealing with local managers and employees to accept the changes. In leading such initiatives in Yemen LNG Company, a natural gas liquefaction plant located in southern end of the Arabian Peninsula with US\$ 4.5 billion investment to produce and export 6.7 million metric tonnes of LNG per annum (mmtpa), shows tricks to being successful by identifying each of these situations and in doing so, maximize the positive and reduce the negative aspects. The milestones of each initiative show moments when having impacts of leadership power, dealing with dilemmas, or facing a wrong choice. The key word of such efforts is identifying critical moments and doing the right thing when it counts – even in complex security and political contexts. The result proves an interesting consensus with theoretical predictions by Cross, John, et al (2013) demonstrates the best practices of leadership moments that can change the course of business and employee relations.

Keywords: business, HR, leadership, LNG, Yemen