

Success in Saudi: Survive or Thrive?

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Overview

- Wintec- who we are
- Saudi Arabia – a few quick facts
- Managing & teaching in Saudi
- Lessons learned
- Surviving or thriving?

Who am I?

Officially:

- Strategic & High Risk projects
- Project planning
- Coaching & training

Our Project Development Manager has a 007 rating, so any little problems are taken care of, in a rather *permanent* way.

She seemed like such a *nice* woman when we hired her.

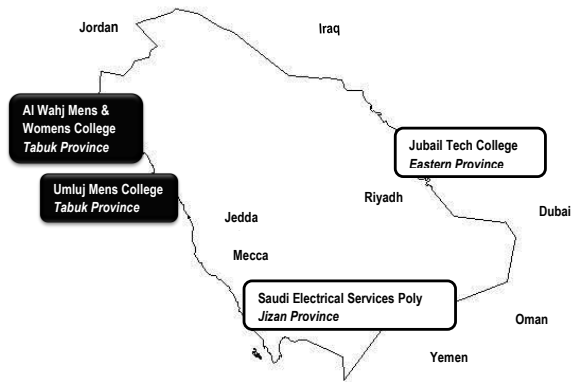





Wintec

- Institute of Technology (90 years old)
- 6000 EFT students; 350 FTE academic staff; 330 FTE professional staff
- Pre trade to Masters programmes
- Based in Hamilton, NZ - 7 campuses
- 3 campuses in Saudi; partnership with Mondragon Educacion Internacional (MEI)

Mondragon University

- part of MEI - an educational co-operative corporation from the Basque region in Spain
- Very successful organisation; 7th biggest Spanish company
- Already managing offshore campuses, including Saudi



-  Current Partnerships
-  Potential Partnerships Under Discussion
-  Completed Contracts

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Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- Highly conservative Islamist country
- King Abdullah 2005 – (90 years old)
- Some 115 children (allegedly); over 30 wives (no more than 4 at once); 37 full brothers
- No obvious successor

Kingdom

- Half the population under 25
- High youth unemployment
- Very little employment available for women, even graduates
- Major infrastructure run by expatriates
- Private business sector quite small

Women: Saudi or International

- May not drive
- Very limited employment & no work in contact with men
- May not go anywhere without being accompanied by a male relative
- Must wear a full length black gown and headscarf at all times outside the house

Issues for KSA

- When the oil runs out...
- Professional & technical areas; now run by international operators, will have to be run by Saudis
- Large pool of young unemployed & unskilled a major social risk
- Large investment in vocational training

Drivers for Us

- Governments increasingly want students educated in country, not at overseas institutions
- Our domestic student numbers are not enough to enable us to grow & we need offshore alternative/additional income
- It's a global workforce – our students need international experience

Potential

- Construction of at least 40 new “Colleges of Excellence” in vocational education
- To be managed by international operators, taught in English by (mostly) international staff, using own curriculum (Saudi-ised)
- with development plans for Saudi nationals on staff



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Really? Consider These

- Substantial process to be considered for contract – costly & time consuming
- Thousands of potential students -
- English only compulsory at school since 2011
- Very different educational model; not well prepared (in our terms) in numeracy, science, work or tertiary study skills

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Viewers are Warned

that there are scenes ahead which may distress those of a nervous disposition

Walk, don't run, to the nearest exit
or

Keep calm and carry on

What's it Really Like?

- New means new
- First vocational college in the area?
- First international staff the local people have seen?
- Recruiting staff who haven't taught in Saudi before?
-

Expect This in New Colleges?



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This is What You Start With



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Newbie or Been There Before?

“Love is lovelier
The second time around.
Just as wonderful
With both feet on the ground.”

With thanks to Frank Sinatra

Wintec's Experience

- Vocational teaching qualification and train the trainer for Jubail Polytechnic in 2010 - 2012
- Developing curriculum for qualification
- Delivering face to face (block course) and online, plus Skype

Saudi Electrical Services Poly

- Initially a subcontract to the main contract to develop & operate a joint venture polytechnic (Saudi Electrical Corporation & Vocational Education arm, TVTC, of the Saudi government);
- The contractor decided to refocus on its consultancy business & Wintec finished the subcontract directly with SESP

Wintec's Role

- Project ran 2012 – mid 2014 when Wintec contract completed
- developed curriculum & teaching materials;
- advised on equipment purchase and use;
- Substantial commitment to curriculum development required

Colleges of Excellence

- We are newbies
- In partnership with Mondragon to manage 3 new vocational Colleges
- Recruiting & appointing managerial & teaching staff
- Developing curriculum & teaching material
- Assisting with facilities management; procurement

Opportunities Go Both Ways

A great time to

- harness the skills & expertise you have for mutual benefit;
- make a real difference to students & their future
- And thrive on the interaction with a different culture

But wait, there's more...

Also a great time to

- Misunderstand a very different world view
- Spend a lot of money you don't get back
- Damage your reputation
- Barely survive the experience
- Develop resilience & confidence

Key Challenges to Thrive: Spot the Differences



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Why Are We Working Here?

- Western educational models value critical thinking, initiative, questioning
- Some students return home to quite different values
- What are we trying to achieve in teaching in a different culture? Do our staff understand or agree with this?

Key Challenges: Recruitment



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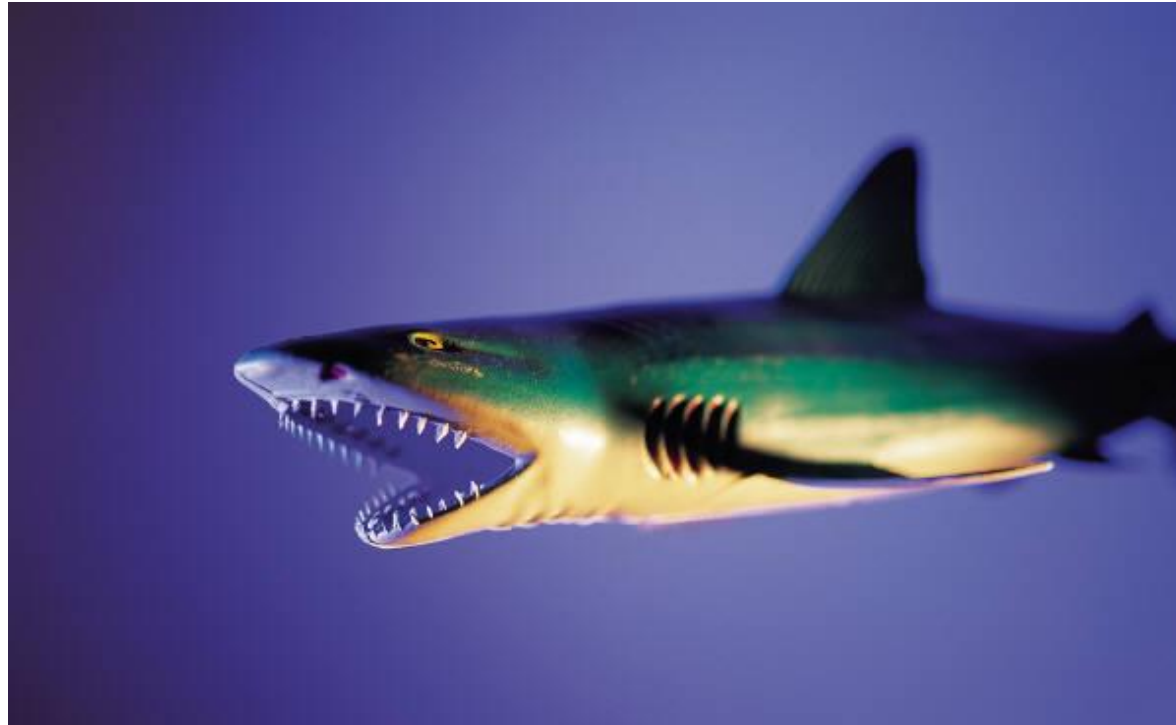
Thrive

- Recruit the best management team you can, with experience in the region & base them locally
- Recruit teaching staff with experience or interest in your teaching philosophy/ methodology
- ***There is no substitute for experience***

Survive

- It's a tough market; plenty of employers recruiting & you may need people willing to go to places outside the main cities
- If you are forced to take what you can get (or pay for) there may be considerable risk to your strategic goals
- ***Are they doing what you want, the way you want?***

Culture eats strategy for breakfast



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Contracts - Thrive

- ***You know what you have agreed to and what you are delivering***
- Transparency
- Capacity
- Capability
- Experience

Contracts – Survive

- ***You think you know what you have agreed to and what you are delivering***
- ***But you aren't sure***
- ***and local contract management is a world away from the contract/legal world we know***
- Transparency
- Capacity
- Capability
- Experience

Strategic Goals



What are you bringing to the offshore venture?

What must you leave with?

Strategic Fit

Thrive

Agreed value for the work

Ownership of the IP you created

Alignment with your strengths

Survive

You would like to be paid for the extra work

Someone else owns your IP

You're working outside the subject areas you know

The Client is Always Right

Thrive

- Agree the quality standard before you start work
- Agree what is & isn't included
- You will always get requests to do better

Survive

- Agree that quality is to the client's satisfaction
- The client is never satisfied
- Trying to meet this will be a risk to your financial survival

Our Can-Do Attitude is a Risk

Thrive

- We respond positively to requests to do more work and we agree the contract variation, so we might be paid

Survive

- The staff have gone ahead & already done it & given it to the client
- We value our can-do attitude & so does our client but it costs us - can we afford it?

Communicate, Communicate

Thrive

You have someone on the ground in Saudi at all times

There is no substitute for face to face (or Skype)

Survive

You send people (other than teaching staff) when you can

Who is looking after your customer relationships?

Time Zones



Number of hours where
work hours in NZ and
Saudi match?

0

What does this mean
for the success of your
work?

Time Zones

Thrive

Hire night owls

Holiday when the client holidays

Know you will have to work right through Xmas

Survive

It's either get to work early or go to bed late.

Work in our holidays because the client is working, and work during Ramadan & Eid as well

Assumptions

Our expectations



Client expectations



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WAIKATO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
New Zealand

Assumptions

Thrive

Discuss them in the project relentlessly & when you are sick of it, do it again with different people on the team.

There is no substitute for this key risk management

Survive

Discuss them in the project relentlessly & when you are sick of it, do it again with different people on the team.

There is no substitute for this key risk management

How Have the New Colleges in Saudi Worked Out?

- Some Colleges that started teaching in Sept. 2013 found challenges in
- tight timelines
- lower than predicted student numbers & initial retention issues
- recruitment
- management issues
- We are still newbies at this

What Now?

- Saudi government looking for organisations willing to manage groups of Colleges
- Also to provide training on managing Colleges to current providers
- TVTC has realised rolling out 20-25 new Colleges every year for 3 years is too ambitious & scaled back
- Watch this space....

Questions?

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