



## Pearl Initiative

Event Report: Business Pledge Student Lecture



Event Report

## A more inclusive workplace with P&G

*Business Pledge Student Lecture*



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The Pearl Initiative launched the Business Pledge to call upon senior business leaders across the Gulf Region to make a public commitment to adhere to principles of ethical and responsible conduct when carrying out business and interacting with society.

The Business Pledge allows business leaders the opportunity to showcase their best practices in ethical business conduct whilst bringing students and business leaders together to discuss the four pillars of the Pearl Initiative's Business Pledge programme, these being:



## Acknowledgements

The Pearl Initiative team would like to thank the following organisations and individuals for their valuable input, time, and engagement with our programme:

- Procter & Gamble
- Nihal Hashish, Senior Purchasing Manager, P&G
- American University of the Emirates
- Dr Mohamed Shamout, Professor, American University of the Emirates
- American University of the Emirates students

The Pearl Initiative team would also like to extend a special thank you to PepsiCo as supporters of the programme and the Business Pledge Initiative.





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### Event Summary

Event Location: American University of the Emirates

Proctor and Gamble (P&G) was founded over 180 years ago as a simple soap and candle company. Today, it is the world's largest consumer goods company and home to iconic, trusted brands that make life a little bit easier in small but meaningful ways.

Students at the American University in the Emirates had the opportunity to meet with the Senior Purchasing Manager of P&G and learn the importance and value of Collaborations and Partnerships towards creating a greater impact.

The Business Pledge is designed to connect students with business leaders, providing them with the opportunity to learn more about the practical aspects surrounding the implementation of sustainable best practices in business.

This session was delivered by Ms. Nihal Hashish, Senior Purchasing Manager, P&G on the topic of 'Collaborations and Partnerships'.

Ms. Hashish commenced this session by briefly introducing P&G as the leading consumer goods brand in the United Arab Emirates and touched upon their operations in the Middle East. Having set their footprint worldwide, P&G's objective is to create industry-leading value by maintaining and enhancing their strong corporate reputation. They achieve this through a strong ethics and compliance culture that supports conserving resources, protecting the environment, improving social conditions, respecting human and labour rights.

P&G's five priority areas are as follows;

- Ethics and Corporate Responsibility
- Community Impact
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Gender Equality
- Environmental Sustainability

"We are, and want to be known as, a company that is governed responsibly and behaves ethically, that is open and transparent in its business dealings, that supports good causes and protects the environment" – Nihal Hashish

In addition to embracing the organisation's purpose, values and principles, the purchasing team led by Ms. Hashish are guided by these global principles for strategic sourcing. P&G has set principles that establish a foundation for their discipline and serves as guidelines in their daily activities as they interact with external suppliers.

Among the 50,000 suppliers and agencies, P&G takes pride in recognising citizenship efforts and supplier diversity which support minority and women-owned suppliers. It is now evident that the business partnership has integrated into citizenship, where governance, sustainability and partnerships are important pillars of better synchronisation.

Ms. Hashish then discussed a real-life case with students where P&G's plant is supplied by two corrugated suppliers, namely 'Supplier A' and 'Supplier B' who have been their suppliers for over 15 years. The limelight turned to P&G when 'Supplier A' was found using child labour in its supply chain of paper. In such a case, what measures should P&G take to protect their reputation? After a thorough discussion, the students came to conclusion to cut ties with 'Supplier A' and continue all the activities with 'Supplier B' which were the exact actions taken by P&G at the time of this incident.



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Working with likeminded suppliers is important as P&G will not knowingly condone or contribute to adverse human rights impacts caused by the actions of their business partners. The risk-based approach leans on a network of strong buyers and supportive leadership to continually assess and improve the risk profile of their supply chains.

P&G believes that having a focused approach to collaborating with diverse suppliers helps to innovate their business, helps to grow their business partners and also helps communities to thrive.

P&G are committed to 'Supplier Diversity' as a driver for value creation and continuous innovation. Supplier diversity is highly regarded as an advocacy function for an organisation to ensure that development and procurement are readily available to all capable enterprises.

Ms. Hashish closed the session by providing a key takeaway for the future leaders, she mentioned that supplier diversity is an advocacy function within an organisation to ensure that development and procurement opportunities are available to all capable business enterprises regardless of the business owner's gender, ethnicity and other factors which traditionally or historically may have been exclusionary.