



## Pearl Initiative

Event Report: Business Pledge Student Lecture



Event Report

## A more inclusive workplace with Du

*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:

- Du
- Aisha Rawert, Director - Organization Capabilities & Performance Management, Du
- American University of Sharjah
- Dr. Linzi Kemp, Associate Professor, American University of Sharjah
- American University of Sharjah 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 Sharjah

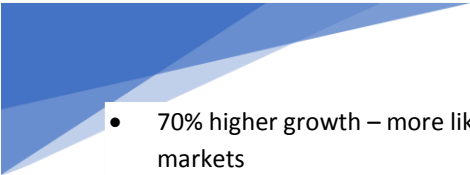
The Pearl Initiative held a collaborative event with the American University of Sharjah and Du on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020. This event was a Business Pledge session held as part of the Pearl Initiative's student engagement initiatives.

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. Aisha Rawert, Director - Organization Capabilities & Performance Management, Du on the topic of 'A more inclusive workplace'.

This interactive session began with a debate on the impact of having an inclusive workspace, students believed that with the presence of an inclusive workplace employees had:

- (i) Higher rates of job satisfaction;
- (ii) Increased tenures at an organisation (leading to a lower turnover for the organisation)
- (iii) Increased productivity and;
- (iv) Improved creativity.

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- 70% higher growth – more likely to capture new markets
  - 75% faster time to market – more likely to see ideas become productised
  - 33% better profitability – ethnically diverse executive teams are 33% more likely to outperform on profitability
  - 70% better innovation – more likely to drive innovate in diverse environments
  - 12% better customer retention – increase in customer retention is seen in gender balanced teams

Du's endeavours towards creating equal opportunities for its employees is one of its key objectives.

This is demonstrated by Du's internal statistics on key drivers of teams and business performance.

Du supports a gender balanced workforce and equal opportunities at all levels. It supports the organisation in promoting a vibrant workforce with diverse experiences, strengths and perspectives that help drive innovation and engagement across the organisation.

In 2018, Du launched the UAE telco sector's first Women's Council. The launch of this council put Du in a pivotal position towards empowering their female employees, which make up 29% of our workforce. This is complemented by that fact that that 40% of their new recruits are females.

Du



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Ms. Aisha concluded the session by discussing how Du incorporates 4 levels of Diversity and Inclusiveness in its organisation, the maturity curve includes;

Level 1: **Compliance** - In this level, diversity is seen as a problem to be managed

Level 2: **Programmatic** – This level looks at increasing the representation of specific demographic groups (eg. Women)

Level 3: **Leader-led** – Has a more sophisticated understanding of D&I and is linkable to business strategy. Between level 2 and 3 is the transition point, where mandate turns into movement

Level 4: **Integrated** – Workforce is demographically and cognitively diverse and has been integrated into all aspects of the organisation, e.g. behaviours, structures and systems