

Towell Group generates \$1.6 million in business value through applied learning



Industry
Industrial &
Manufacturing



Location
Oman and
United Arab Emirates



Size
5,000–15,000 employees



At the start, success meant proving that a 160-year-old family conglomerate could weaponize a digital learning platform—not just to distribute content, but to solve business problems, fast-track national talent, and build a single capability bloodstream across a portfolio of radically different industries. The Coursera partnership was the scaffolding for that ambition.



Hani Al Khusaibi

Chief Human Resources and
Support Services Officer

Overview

Towell Group is one of the Middle East's most diversified business groups, spanning automotive, engineering, medical equipment, consumer goods, real estate, and services. As digital technologies, AI, and changing customer expectations reshaped its markets, the organization recognized that future competitiveness would depend on building new capabilities across its workforce.

Rather than treating learning as a standalone training initiative, Towell Group sought to create a strategic capability engine that connected workforce development directly to business priorities, internal mobility, and Oman Vision 2040.

Snapshot

61 %

internal fill rate for digital and future-ready roles, up from 34%

127

promotions achieved within 18 months by participating learners

\$1.6 million

in finance-audited business value generated through learner-led projects



I want our next century's legacy to be the talent we build, not just the assets we own.



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Through its partnership with Coursera, the company launched **Masar Al-Towell**, a group-wide learning initiative designed to build digital fluency, strengthen commercial acumen, and accelerate leadership readiness across its talent pipeline. The result was a scalable learning ecosystem that connected skills development to measurable organizational outcomes.

The challenge

Towell Group faced what its leaders described as a “twin disruption.” Externally, digital transformation and AI were rapidly changing customer expectations, operating models, and competitive dynamics. Internally, expertise was dispersed across more than 40 operating companies, making it difficult to develop a shared capability framework across the enterprise.

A comprehensive skills assessment revealed three critical challenges. First, only 12% of project managers and functional leaders demonstrated proficiency in digital and data-related capabilities. Second, many technical specialists were making significant business decisions without formal training in strategy, finance, or negotiation. Third, Towell Group sought to accelerate the development of Omani talent by creating clearer pathways to leadership and internal mobility.

The organization needed more than access to learning content. It needed a scalable system capable of translating strategic priorities into measurable workforce capabilities while supporting business growth, succession planning, and long-term competitiveness.

The solution

Towell Group partnered with Coursera to create **Masar Al-Towell**, a comprehensive capability-building initiative designed to connect learning directly to organizational outcomes.

The rollout began with a targeted pilot involving high-potential managers and business leaders. Following early success, the program expanded through role-based learning pathways across Finance, HR, IT, Supply Chain, and other critical functions before eventually opening access to employees across the organization.

Using Coursera's Skills Dashboard, Towell Group established a live view of workforce capabilities and aligned learning investments to strategic business priorities. Program Builder, Skills Tracks, Professional Certificates, and Path Builder enabled the organization to create structured, role-specific development experiences while maintaining flexibility for individual career goals. AI-powered features such as Coursera Coach, Role Play, AI-assisted assessments, Labs, and GenAI Playgrounds helped learners move beyond content consumption into practical application.

Crucially, every learning experience was tied to real business outcomes. Through a proprietary “Towell Application Layer,” learners were required to apply newly acquired skills to live organizational challenges before completing major programs. This ensured learning remained connected to operational priorities, innovation initiatives, and measurable business impact.

The results

Masar Al-Towell fundamentally changed how Towell Group develops talent, fills critical roles, and creates business value.

The initiative achieved a **91% learner activation rate**, with employees generating around **8,000 enrollments** across business, technology, and leadership programs. Learning also became a catalyst for employee collaboration.

The impact extended well beyond participation metrics. Towell Group increased its internal fill rate for digital and future-ready roles from **34% to 61%**, reducing dependence on external hiring while strengthening workforce agility. The organization also accelerated career progression, with **127 learners** earning promotions within 18 months of completing at least one specialization. For Omani professionals, the average time required to move from specialist to manager fell from **4.2 years to 2.1 years**, helping the organization advance both succession goals and national workforce priorities.

Applied learning generated measurable business value. Learner-led projects produced **\$1.6 million** in finance-audited impact, including cost savings, cost avoidance, operational improvements, and revenue-generating initiatives. Examples included an AI-powered warranty claim anomaly detector that generated **\$310,000** in cost avoidance, a predictive maintenance solution that reduced MRI downtime while lowering annual service costs by **\$120,000**, and a digital twin initiative that delivered **\$480,000** in energy savings.

The program also helped Towell Group respond more quickly to emerging opportunities. After identifying critical capability gaps tied to a major smart infrastructure bid, the organization rapidly assembled a targeted learning pathway, enabling engineers to develop and demonstrate digital twin capabilities during the proposal process. According to client feedback:

Today, Towell Group uses skills intelligence, applied learning, and globally recognized credentials to align workforce development with strategic priorities. As the organization continues to expand its capabilities, Masar Al-Towell provides a foundation for sustained growth, internal mobility, and innovation.

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Coursera's feature set didn't just host our initiative, it shaped its strategic feasibility. The combination of global credentials for employability, AI tools for scaling expert coaching, and programmatic features for mandatory rigor allowed us to build an ambitious, unified capability engine across five countries with a lean L&D team. The platform transformed planning strategies into live, measurable, and auditable realities for three strategic goals: digital fluency at scale, commercial acumen as a common language, and accelerated Omani career velocity.



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