



The Saudi Mining Capability Blueprint

How operators can combine international specialists, Saudi talent and structured knowledge transfer

Prepared by: TASC Outsourcing, KSA

The staffing and HR solutions specialists · People For Tomorrow

THE CAPABILITY QUESTION

Saudi Mining Is Building People As Fast As It Is Building Projects

Saudi Arabia is not starting from zero. A specialist mining training ecosystem already exists. Saudi technical talent is being developed across mining operations, exploration, maintenance and processing. But the scale and speed of the sector mean operators still need to decide where Saudi capability is ready today, where it needs structured development and where international depth remains necessary.



819

Graduates currently reported by Saudi Mining Polytechnic



357 +

Current trainees reported by the institute



9

Core mining and industrial training programmes



Months
3 To 5

On the job training used to prepare trainees for work in mines and factories



37+

Training experts supporting the institute

Saudi Mining Polytechnic currently trains across



Surface mining



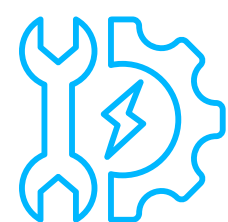
Underground mining



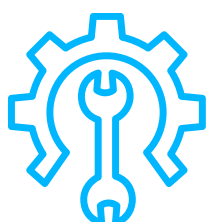
Plant operations



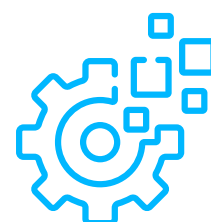
Mineral exploration



Electrical maintenance



Mechanical maintenance



Mining laboratory technology



Industrial security
Cement manufacturing technology

The institute says its mission is to train Saudi youth and localise technical mining jobs, while bringing global expertise into the training environment to transfer knowledge.

Saudi talent exists. The mistake is assuming every capability exists at every level of experience.

Stop Asking Which Roles Are Saudi Or International

The better question is: What level of capability does each role require today, and what should that capability look like three years from now? Not every role needs the same workforce strategy.

LOCALISE NOW

Roles where capable Saudi talent should be the default starting point when the required experience is available.

- Government Relations
- HR And People Operations
- Finance
- Procurement
- Logistics
- Administration
- Document Control
- Industrial Security
- Junior Technical Roles
- Plant Operator Roles
- Maintenance Technician Roles
- Laboratory Roles
- Field Support



HIRE SAUDI AND DEVELOP

Roles where the professional foundation may exist locally but mine specific depth must be built through experience.

- Mining Engineering
- Process Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Geology
- HSE
- Mine Planning
- Reliability
- Project Controls
- Technical Supervision

IMPORT THE DEPTH, BUILD THE SUCCESSOR

Roles where an operator may need deep international mining experience today, but should deliberately build Saudi capability underneath it.

- Mine Management
- Plant Management
- Principal Geology
- Resource Modelling
- Senior Mine Planning
- Metallurgical Leadership
- Processing Leadership
- Reliability Leadership
- Underground Mining Leadership
- Rock Engineering
- Commissioning Leadership
- Technical Operations Leadership



KEEP GLOBAL EXPERTISE ON CALL

Some expertise does not need to become a permanent Saudi position.

- Specialist Commissioning
- OEM Expertise
- Highly Specialised Geotechnical Reviews
- Rare Processing Problems
- Specific Technology Implementation
- Major Shutdown Expertise
- Specialist Design Assurance

OBJECTIVE Access the expertise when needed without building unnecessary permanent dependency.

Do not localise a job title. Localise the capability the operation needs to keep.

Every International Specialist Should Arrive With An Exit Logic

Saudi Arabia still needs global mining expertise. In fact, the Ministry of Human Resources has explicitly linked skilled international talent with bringing expertise and experience into the Saudi labour market. The mistake is using international specialists simply to fill permanent gaps.



Why are we bringing this person in?

What capability cannot currently be accessed at the required level in Saudi Arabia?

What exactly are they expected to transfer?

A broad instruction to train the team is not a transfer plan. Name the processes, decisions, systems and technical skills.

Who receives the capability?

Every critical international specialist should have one or more named Saudi counterparts where transfer is realistic.

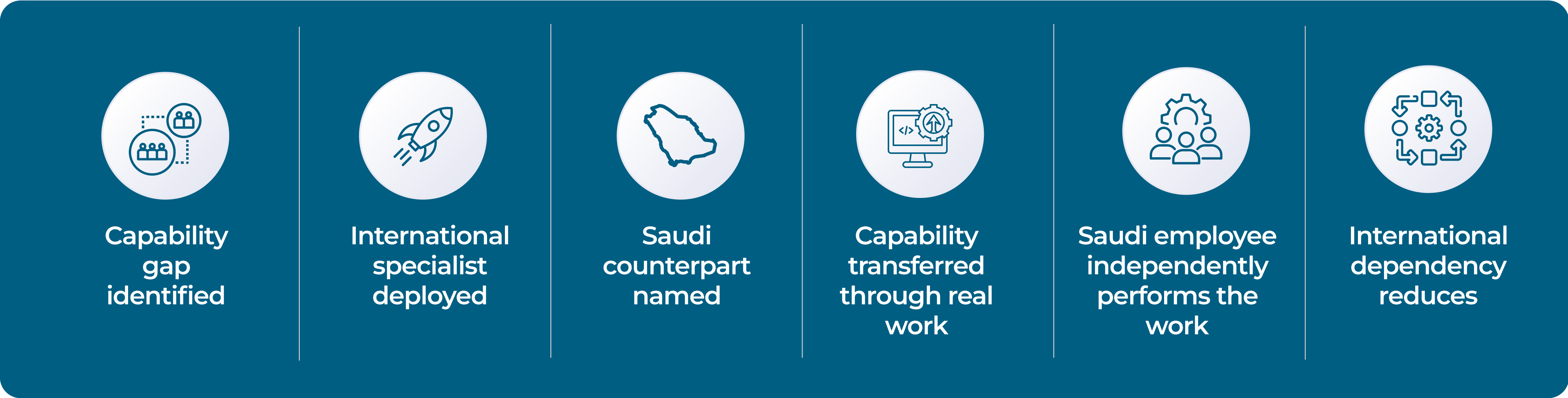
What proves the transfer happened?

Attendance at training is not proof. The Saudi employee should eventually demonstrate the capability independently.

What changes when the specialist leaves?

Decision rights, operating responsibility and technical ownership should move with the capability.

The Model



Which International Roles Should Have Saudi Successors?

Not every international employee needs a Saudi replacement. But every strategically important capability needs a long term owner.

MUST BUILD A SUCCESSOR	SHOULD BUILD A SUCCESSOR	CAN REMAIN SPECIALIST ACCESS
These capabilities become part of the long term operating organisation.	Capability is important, but the timing depends on project stage and available Saudi experience.	The expertise is episodic, rare or highly project specific.
✔ Mine management ✔ Plant management ✔ Operations leadership ✔ Maintenance and reliability leadership ✔ HSE leadership ✔ Mine planning ✔ Process engineering ✔ Resource geology ✔ Technical services ✔ Production supervision	✔ Senior project controls ✔ Metallurgical leadership ✔ Exploration leadership ✔ Geotechnical engineering ✔ Drill and blast leadership ✔ Environmental management ✔ Operational improvement ✔ Asset management ✔ Training leadership	✔ OEM technical specialists ✔ Major commissioning experts ✔ Specialist shaft or underground expertise ✔ Independent technical reviewers ✔ Niche processing experts ✔ Specific equipment experts ✔ Major shutdown specialists
WHY The operation will depend on these capabilities every year. Permanent international dependency creates concentration risk.	WHY The capability should increasingly sit inside the Saudi organisation, even where international experience remains useful.	WHY Building permanent internal capability for something used infrequently may cost more than maintaining access to global specialists.

If this person disappeared tomorrow, would the operation lose a capability it needs every week? If yes, succession should already be on the plan.



How Long Should An International Specialist Stay?

The wrong answer is a fixed number of years. A specialist should remain until the capability objective has been reached or until the project need ends.

SHORT TECHNICAL ASSIGNMENT

Typical planning window: 3 to 9 months

- Specific technical problem
- Equipment expertise
- Specialist assessment
- Short operating improvement
- Targeted training

EXIT TEST Has the specific technical outcome been delivered and documented?



EMBEDDED TECHNICAL LEAD

Typical planning window: 18 to 36 months

- Mine planning
- Processing
- Reliability
- Geology
- Technical services
- Operational improvement

EXIT TEST Has a Saudi counterpart demonstrated the required decisions and work independently?

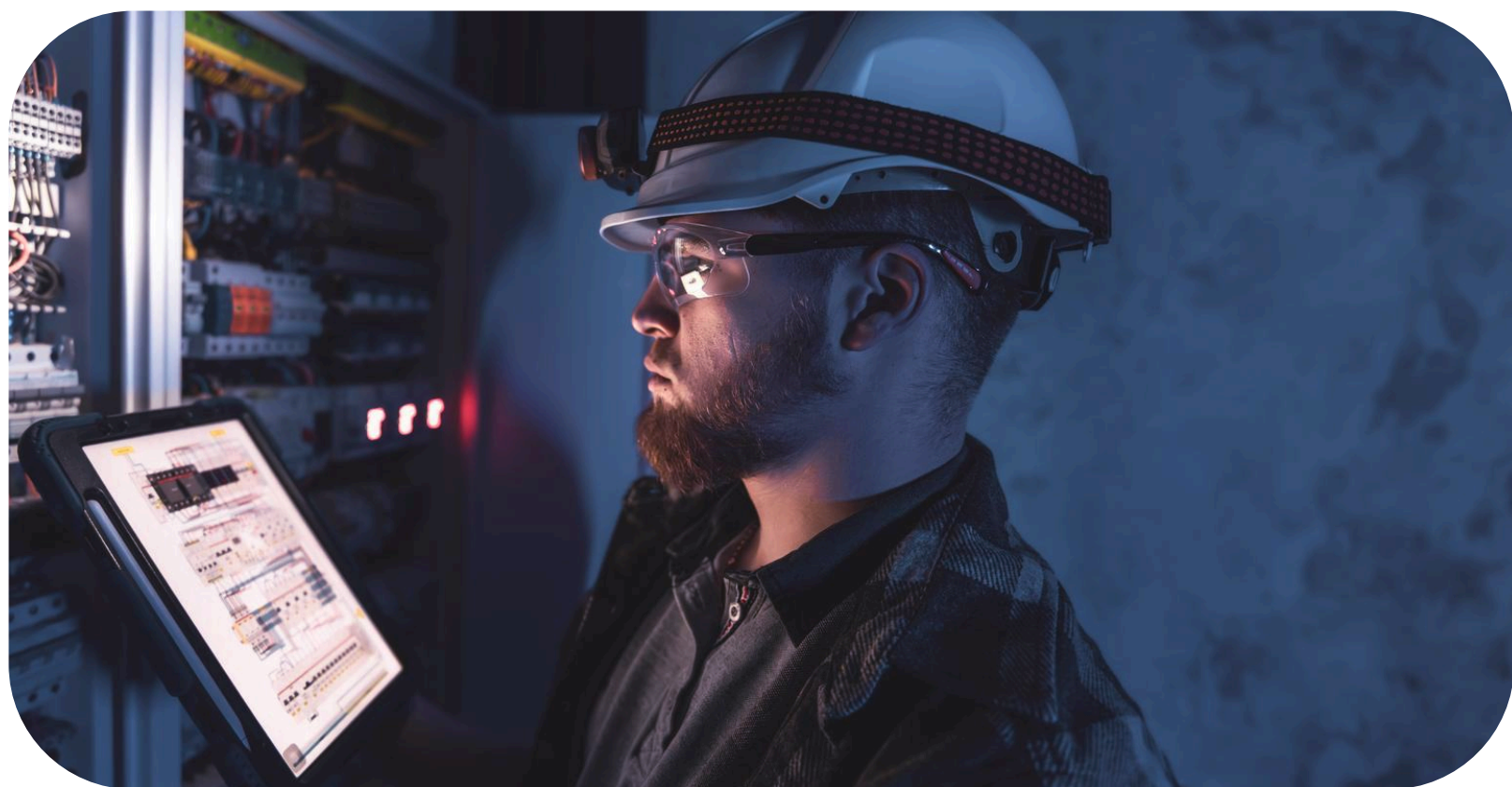


PROJECT OR COMMISSIONING SPECIALIST

Typical planning window: 6 to 18 months

- Plant commissioning
- Start up
- System implementation
- Major maintenance programme
- Project transition

EXIT TEST Can the local operating team run the system safely and reliably without daily specialist intervention?



OPERATING OR FUNCTIONAL LEADER

Typical planning window: 24 to 48 months

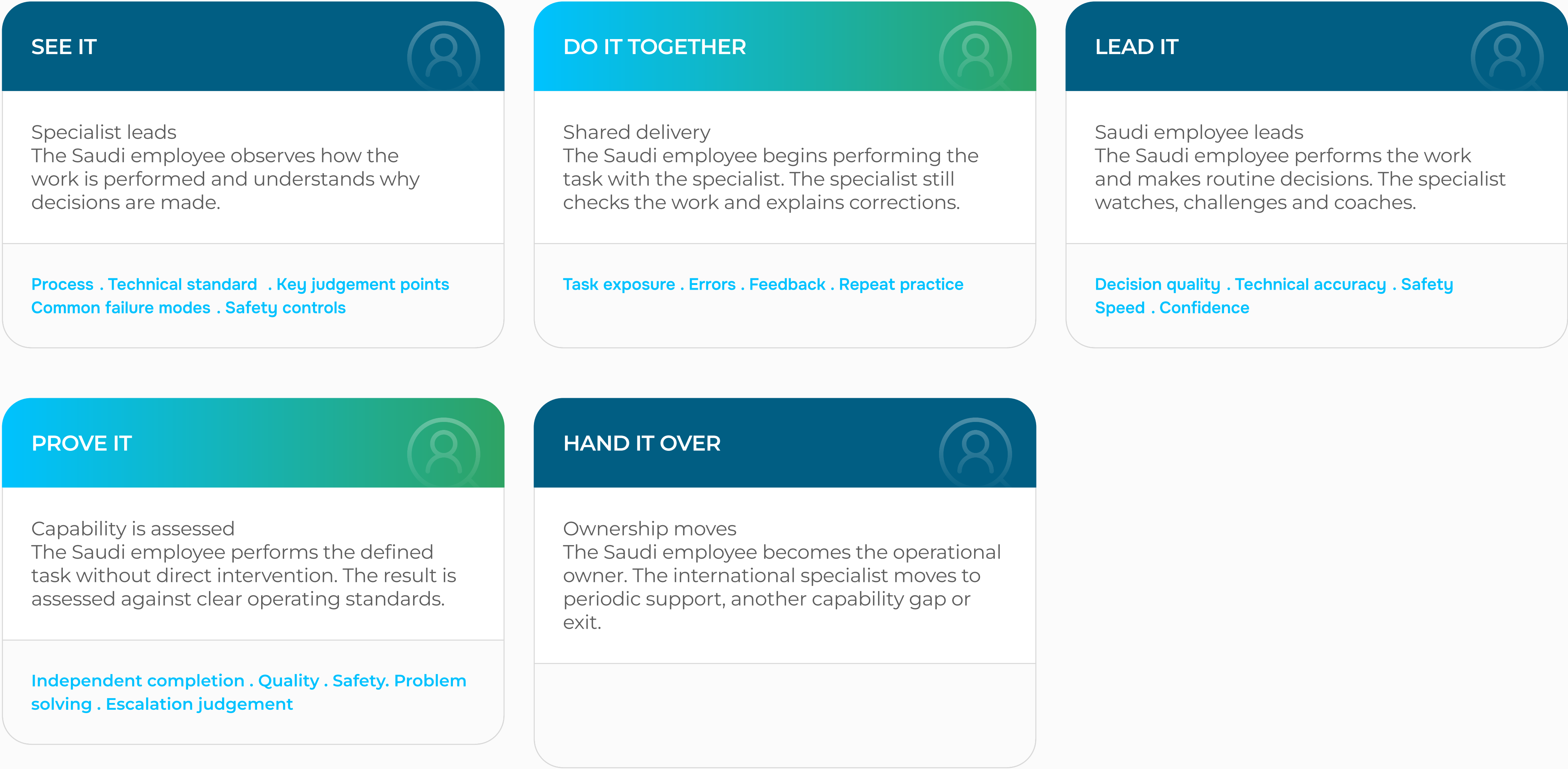
- Mine management
- Plant management
- Technical leadership
- Operations leadership

EXIT TEST Is there a credible Saudi succession pipeline, not simply a nominated name?

Do not manage the international specialist by time served.
Manage the role by capability transferred.

Shadowing The Specialist Is Not A Knowledge Transfer Plan

Putting a Saudi employee beside an experienced specialist does not automatically transfer expertise. The work needs structure.



If those stages cannot be seen, capability transfer is probably not happening.



Turn Knowledge Transfer Into A Work Schedule

A serious capability plan should be specific enough for an operations director to review. Develop the employee is not a plan.

01 Capability

What exactly must transfer?
Example: Weekly short interval mine planning

02 International owner

Who currently holds the capability?
Example: Senior Mine Planning Lead

03 Saudi successor

Who is being prepared to own it?
Example: Mining Engineer

04 Required exposure

What must the employee actually do?
Example: Prepare three production plans, run two planning meetings, resolve one live scheduling conflict

05 Evidence

What proves competence?
Example: Plan accepted without technical correction

06 Target handover

When should ownership change?
Example: Month 9

07 Status

How far has the transfer progressed?
Observing | Shared delivery | Leading with review | Independent | Signed off

LEADERSHIP SHOULD SEE

 Critical capabilities without a successor	 Successors without enough live exposure	 International roles with no transfer plan	 Capabilities behind schedule	 Roles ready for handover	 Areas where international dependency is increasing
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If capability transfer cannot be tracked, it cannot be managed.

Sometimes The Capability Is Easier To Reach Outside Saudi Arabia

Not every mining skill can be taught effectively in a classroom. A Saudi engineer may learn more from three months inside an operating mine, processing plant or global centre of expertise than from months of theory without real exposure.

Send Saudi Talent To The Capability. Then Bring The Capability Back.

BEFORE DEPARTURE

- The Saudi employee’s target role
- The capability gap
- Host location
- Host mentor
- Live tasks to be completed
- Assessment standard
- Duration
- Employment arrangements
- Payroll continuity
- Insurance
- Immigration requirements
- Return role

DURING THE ASSIGNMENT

The employee should work through defined operating exposure. A visit is not enough. The employee needs real work.

- Mine or plant rotations
- Live project work
- Equipment exposure
- Technical reviews
- Operating meetings
- Maintenance planning
- Safety systems
- Production reporting
- Problem solving
- Structured mentor reviews

AFTER RETURN

Within the first 90 days:

- Apply the capability in Saudi Arabia
- Take ownership of defined tasks
- Present lessons to the local team
- Train or support other Saudi employees
- Complete a practical capability assessment
- Agree the next progression milestone

COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY

This is particularly useful where an operator or joint venture has access to mature international operations, technical partners, OEM facilities or global centres of expertise.

Do not send people abroad to attend training. Send them abroad to acquire capability the Saudi operation needs back.



Do Not Wait For The Specialist To Leave Before Naming The Successor

Succession planning often starts too late. The international leader announces an exit. The replacement search begins. The organisation then discovers that the Saudi employee expected to step up has never owned the full role.

READY NOW

The employee can perform the role with normal leadership support.

- Required technical skills demonstrated
- Key decisions already performed
- Necessary professional requirements completed
- Has led the work independently
- Ready to assume responsibility

READY WITH DEVELOPMENT

The employee has the foundation but still needs specific exposure.

- Shift or site leadership
- Budget ownership
- Complex problem solving
- Technical sign off
- Major maintenance event
- Production planning
- People leadership
- International operating exposure

EARLY PIPELINE

The employee has long term potential but needs broader experience.

- Job rotations
- Technical depth
- Site exposure
- Mentoring
- Formal learning
- Leadership development
- International exposure where useful

FOR EVERY CRITICAL ROLE, LEADERSHIP SHOULD KNOW

- ?

Who could take this role today?
- ?

Who could take it in 12 to 24 months?
- ?

Who is being prepared behind them?

One named successor is not a succession plan. It is another single point of failure.



Training Hours Do Not Tell You Whether Capability Transferred

An employee can complete 100 hours of training and still depend on the same specialist every morning. Measure what has changed in the work.

INDEPENDENT TASK COMPLETION

What percentage of the target tasks can the Saudi employee perform without direct specialist intervention?

DECISION OWNERSHIP

Which operating or technical decisions have moved to the Saudi employee?

CAPABILITY SIGN OFF

How many critical capabilities have been assessed and formally signed off?

SPECIALIST DEPENDENCY

How many hours of direct specialist support are still required each month? The number should reduce as transfer progresses.

QUALITY OF OUTPUT

Is the employee producing work at the required standard without repeated correction or rework?

SUCCESSOR READINESS

How many critical roles have a ready successor, a developing successor or no credible successor?

RETENTION

Are trained Saudi employees staying long enough for the investment to become organisational capability?

SECOND GENERATION TRANSFER

Can the Saudi employee now teach or mentor another employee? This is one of the strongest signs that knowledge has actually stayed inside the organisation.

THE BETTER QUESTION

Do not ask: How many people did we train?

Ask: What can the Saudi team do today that it could not do twelve months ago?



Build Capability Before You Need The Handover

Capability development should be linked to the operating plan, not left inside an annual training calendar.

MONTHS 1 TO 3

MAP THE DEPENDENCY

OUTPUT

Saudi capability dependency map

- List critical operating capabilities
- Identify who owns each capability today
- Separate Saudi and international capability
- Flag roles with permanent international dependency
- Name potential Saudi successors
- Assess current readiness
- Identify missing exposure
- Decide where overseas experience may help
- Define proof of competence

MONTHS 4 TO 6

START THE TRANSFER

OUTPUT

Active transfer plans for every priority capability

- Pair specialists and Saudi successors
- Begin structured work exposure
- Move from observation into shared delivery
- Start role rotations
- Activate formal technical training where required
- Arrange international exposure where justified
- Capture procedures and decision logic
- Review progress monthly

MONTHS 7 TO 12

MOVE THE OWNERSHIP

OUTPUT

Capability handover plan with evidence, dates and remaining gaps

- Give Saudi employees defined decision rights
- Move successors into lead delivery
- Assess independent performance
- Close remaining skill gaps
- Reduce daily specialist intervention
- Confirm succession readiness
- Move specialists into advisory support where appropriate
- Build the next Saudi employee underneath the new role holder

**Do not wait for Saudization pressure to create a training plan.
Build capability before the dependency becomes a problem.**



Is Your Saudi Mining Capability Plan Actually Working?

Use this with operations, HR and technical leadership.

CAPABILITY

- ☐ Do we know which capabilities are critical to safe and reliable operations?
- ☐ Do we know who owns each one today?
- ☐ Do we know which depend heavily on international expertise?
- ☐ Have we separated permanent capability from temporary specialist needs?

INTERNATIONAL SPECIALISTS

- ☐ Does every long term international role have a clear purpose?
- ☐ Do we know what capability that person should transfer?
- ☐ Is a Saudi counterpart named where appropriate?
- ☐ Is there a defined exit or transition condition?

SUCCESSION

- ☐ Does every critical long term role have a successor view?
- ☐ Do we know who is ready now?
- ☐ Do we know who could be ready in 12 to 24 months?
- ☐ Is there another layer being developed behind them?

MEASUREMENT

- ☐ Are we measuring independent performance?
- ☐ Are we tracking international specialist dependency?

SAUDI TALENT

- ☐ Do priority roles have identified Saudi talent?
- ☐ Are employees receiving live operating exposure, not only classroom training?
- ☐ Are development plans linked to actual future roles?
- ☐ Are technical and leadership development being planned together?

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- ☐ Are specific skills and decisions being transferred?
- ☐ Is progress tracked through real work?
- ☐ Can employees demonstrate capability independently?
- ☐ Is operating knowledge being documented?

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Are there capabilities that would be faster to build through international exposure?
- ☐ Does every overseas assignment have a defined learning objective?
- ☐ Is the return role clear before the employee travels?
- ☐ Will the employee apply the capability immediately after returning?

- ☐ Are leaders seeing capability risk regularly?
- ☐ Can we show what the Saudi team can now do independently?

A capability plan is working only when responsibility moves with the knowledge.

The Best International Specialist Should Eventually Make Themselves Less Necessary.

Saudi Arabia needs international mining experience to build the sector at speed. The goal is not to remove that expertise too early. It is to bring in the right capability, put it to work, transfer what needs to stay, and build Saudi capability around it.

TASC helps mining operators manage both sides of that movement: bringing international specialists into Saudi Arabia, and sending Saudi employees overseas for structured technical exposure before bringing that capability back.

FREE SAUDI MINING MOBILISATION REVIEW

Give us the first 10 people your Saudi operation needs to move.

We will help map:

- ✓ Who needs to come into Saudi Arabia and how they should be employed
- ✓ Which Saudi employees may need overseas technical exposure
- ✓ Who can be mobilised from the existing Saudi talent market
- ✓ Visa, Iqama, documentation and professional requirements

[Request your Saudi mining mobilisation review ↗](#)

info@tascoutsourcing.com

Riyadh, KSA +966 55 852 030 | Dubai, UAE +971 4 358 8500