

“You Have One Hundred Days”

Accelerating Government Performance in the UAE

Practitioner Guide

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Overview

A case study is a story about how a person or group of people faced and dealt with challenges or opportunities. It is based on desk research and interviews with key actors but does not provide analysis or conclusions. Written from the perspective of the protagonist(s), it is designed to raise questions and generate discussion about the issues they faced. Cases are meant to help participants develop analytic reasoning, listening, and judgment skills to strengthen their decision-making ability in other contexts.

A case-based conversation is a way to anchor a conceptual discussion to concrete examples. It can bring a case to life and allow participants to place themselves in the shoes of the case protagonist(s), while also allowing a variety of perspectives to surface. This guide is designed to help you lead a conversation about the case, “‘You Have One Hundred Days’: Accelerating Government Performance in the UAE.”

Role of Facilitator

The facilitator leads the conversation with a clear beginning and end, ensures that everyone is heard, and keeps the group focused. The conversation can be broken into three distinct segments: exploring the case, applying the central questions of the case to your organization’s challenges, and formulating takeaway lessons. Some facilitation tips and tricks to keep in mind are below.

BEFORE the discussion

Make sure everyone takes time to read the case. Participants also have the option to fill out the attached worksheet to prepare themselves for the case discussion. When setting up the room, think about situating participants where they can see you and each other. Designate a notetaker as well as a place where you can take notes on a flipchart or white board. Plan for at least sixty to seventy-five minutes to discuss the case and takeaways and have a clock in the room and/or an assigned timekeeper. Mention that you may interrupt participants in the interest of progressing the conversation.

DURING the discussion

Encourage participants to debate and share opinions. State very clearly that there is no right or wrong “answer” to the case; cases are written so that reasonable people can disagree and debate different ideas and approaches. Be careful not to allow yourself or others to dominate the discussion. If the conversation is getting heated or bogged down on a particular issue, consider allowing participants to talk in pairs for a few minutes before returning to a full group discussion. Do not worry about reaching consensus, just make the most of this opportunity to practice thinking and learning together!

Case Synopsis

In the fall of 2016, the government of the UAE launched the Government Accelerators, an innovative tool to accelerate change and enhance performance in several areas such as health and traffic safety. This new program ran one hundred-day challenges: intense periods of action where “acceleration” teams of frontline staff worked together across boundaries in a context of urgency to tackle some of government’s most difficult problems. The teams presenting challenges to the Government Accelerators were selected by four criteria: they had to set clear and ambitious goals, touch people’s lives, involve multiple organizations or departments, and be achievable in the one hundred-day time frame. By looking at the establishment of the Government Accelerators and three teams that participated in it, this teaching case aims to (1) raise discussion about common trade-offs in collaborative problem-solving, (2) explain the approach and methodology of the Government Accelerators and identify its main ingredients, and (3) analyze the conditions under which the Government Accelerators may or may not work.

Conversation Plan**Part 1: Exploring the Case (20–30 minutes)**

The goal of this part of the conversation is to think about the common trade-offs involved in collaborative problem-solving [if possible, by reflecting on the group challenge(s)] and to review the case from the point of view of the people involved. Suggested questions:

- *What were common challenges faced by change agents willing to collaborate and innovate in government? What were the trade-offs involved in the challenges faced by the group?*
- *What was the key problem that the leadership in the UAE was trying to solve with the Government Accelerators?*

Part 2a: Diagnosing key ingredients of acceleration challenges (20–30 minutes)

This part of the discussion allows participants to analyze the ingredients that “do the work” in the one hundred-day challenge methodology. It should also analyze the conditions required for a challenge to thrive in the Government Accelerators. Discussion may be based on the following questions:

- *What were the key ingredients of the Government Accelerators?*
- *Should the breast cancer team have been admitted to the Government Accelerators? Why? And how could the Government Accelerators have supported the breast cancer team to ensure they achieved success?*

Part 2b: Application (20 minutes)

Participants may break into groups or work in plenary to apply the concepts to their own challenges. The following questions are suggested to structure this section:

- *Are you far enough along to set meaningful targets and apply productive pressure in your own challenges?*
- *If not, why not, and what needs to happen for you to get there?*
- *If you are, who needs to be engaged in this effort at the frontline and the top, and how?*
- *How might you use the upcoming team gathering to deepen, broaden, and accelerate the work?*

Part 3: Formulating Lessons (10 minutes)

This part of the conversation focuses on the lessons of the case that participants will continue to reflect on and apply to challenges in their work.

