

# Cisco Oman Project

*Omar Shaban*

Today I'd like to talk to you about an amazing volunteer project that grew out of an idea a few people at Cisco had, to a tremendously successful and replicable community event.

What's amazing here is how a group of people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, language, faith all collaborated, all came together and delivered an innovative community talent development activity, while developing themselves in the process.

The main idea was to go to a place where Cisco is not as well known and where their services and efforts could really make a difference. So that's why they decided to choose Sohar, which is a smaller city in Oman with a university called Sohar University.

Dr. Wail at Sohar University is a progressive professor who immediately jumped on the idea. And so the team decided they wanted to put on some training not just in routing and switching but also Wireless, IP Telephony, and some professional and soft skill courses.

*Dr. Badr Al-Badr*

Unless you have the right skill for the jobs in the market we might not find, you might not land the best possible job that you have. So it's not only about education; it's about the right education.

We have done a study and found that eighty-eight percent of our graduates use the skills that they learned in the program in their job place.

Seventy-three percent of them don't stop at that level, but pursue further education, technical and academic.

*Dr. Wail Omar*

This program is excellent. The students get benefit from it. The people from industry get benefit from it. We, as a staff at the university, we get benefit from it.

*Omar Shaban*

So after this great and successful effort put on by a few dozen folks at Cisco, over a hundred and twenty high school and college students received training, knowledge and inspiration to continue their education in the IT field. Over eighty percent of the attendees were women pursuing degrees in computer science and IT engineering.

Committed to doing this is a pure voluntary effort. They all decided that they'd take PTO and they'd pay their own way to go to Oman to get this done.

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