



Leading Across Cultures

**NBS ALUMNI GLOBAL EXPERIENCES**



**QATAR**



**“WHILE I HAVE OFTEN QUESTIONED THE DECISION TO LEAVE THE COMFORTS OF MY JOB IN SINGAPORE, TRAVELLING ABROAD MADE ME SEE WHAT I WAS LACKING PROFESSIONALLY AND ENCOURAGED ME TO PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES I NEVER WOULD HAVE HAD IN SINGAPORE.”**

**Praveena Naidu**  
Bachelor of Accountancy, 2010

Country of Origin: Singapore  
Lived in: Australia, Malaysia, Qatar, Singapore

**Why Qatar?**

While working in Ernst & Young Singapore as a tax professional, I had the opportunity to travel to Kuala Lumpur for an eight-month client secondment. Upon returning to Singapore, I felt the need to push my boundaries and further my personal and professional development. I found a role with Price Waterhouse and Coopers (PwC) Qatar just as the Value Added Tax (VAT) was being introduced in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States.



**The job search**

I applied online through PwC Qatar’s job portal and had three phone interviews including a case study before receiving an offer.

**Pro Tips**

**Living in Qatar**

- Get used to Middle East weekends. Weekends fall on Fridays and Saturdays and it often takes getting used to having to go to work on Sundays.
- Most professional jobs in Qatar pay well enough to afford a lifestyle with a certain level of luxury—housing, cars, or service. It definitely helps that there is no tax on employment income in Qatar.
- An expat-heavy place, it’s easy to make friends. I was taught local etiquette on dress codes, shaking hands, and religious sensitivities by expat friends. For instance, I was told that I should not offer to shake an Arab man’s hand during a meeting unless he first extends his hand towards me.
- A little goes a long way! The locals react positively when they hear I am from Singapore. I never realised how much goodwill we had as a country until I went abroad.
- Be open minded. Refrain from forming cultural biases before personally interacting with anyone.

**Working in Qatar**

- Women empowerment. Women are empowered in the workplace and often hold leadership positions.
- Decision by committee. Group decision making is preferred over individual ownership. Meetings usually have many attendees and fewer agenda items than in Singapore.
- Amazing cultural melting pot. My co-workers were from many different countries like Egypt, France, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Tanzania, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, and more! They were extremely warm and shared many enriching personal and cultural experiences.

**Most sought-after characteristics in the workplace**

- Open-mindedness. A drive to continuously improve. Diverse experiences.

**TO KNOW MORE**

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