ThinkIT

UITS Newsletter

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University Information Technology Services Newsletter

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Migration to New Exchange Email System at UAEU

> “ Migration to Exchange at UAE University is the largest in the region ”
>
> *– According to Microsoft GCC*

In the last 10 months, the UAE University IT Services department (UITS) was engaged in a challenging job: migrate the University e-mail system holding over 20,000 mailboxes from an old Sun JES e-mail system to Microsoft Exchange 2007.

The entire project from the design and going through testing, deployment and ending with migration was done using internal resources which resulted in huge savings for the University.

“Microsoft Exchange 2007 migration costs can run as high as $244 per user, says Osterman Research”*

> “ Microsoft Exchange 2007 migration costs can run as high as $244 per user ”
>
> *- Osterman Research*

This achievement made Microsoft GCC to recognize that this project is one of largest in the region and also congratulated the team for their ability of doing this without any support calls to Microsoft. Indeed, the job was very complex and the migration team encountered many challenges but the UITS team demonstrated strong commitment, excellent knowledge and professionalism.

We are happy to announce that this massive migration was completed with very little interruption in the e-mail service and it was completely transparent to the end users.

“Microsoft Exchange Server 2007” is the name of Microsoft's *collaboration suite* product, providing the back-end infrastructure for messaging, calendar/scheduling, and directory.

UAE University implementation of Microsoft Exchange encompasses e-mail, cross-campus scheduling through electronic calendar, resources management, contact/directory information access, task management as well as the base for future collaboration and messaging functionality such as online chat, video conferencing, electronic white boarding, telephony integration, and more.

Exchange provides access to messaging and calendaring features through desktop-based, web-based clients and mobile devices. The entire communication is encrypted and secured with control management via Active Directory.

The Exchange e-mail architecture has been designed and built to accomplish three primary goals: performance, reliability and scalability.

Several clustered servers coupled with (enterprise-class)**, network-based storage technology provide the framework to accomplish those goals. The system has also integrated 2 security layers for protection against spamming and virus attacks.

With implementation of “state of art” IT technologies in their services portfolio UITS will help the University in achieving the goal of a research-intensive institution.

* http://software.tekrati.com/research/8943/

** Enterprise-class: Refers to hardware and software that provides high speed and high reliability.

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Provost Visit to University Information Technology Services (UITS)

On Wednesday February 3rd 2010 Dr. Wyatt R. Hume the Provost of UAE University toured the ISI Data Centers and all the offices of UITS departments. He was briefed on the activities of UITS and the services provided to United Arab Emirates University.

During the visit by the Provost Dr. Wyatt R. Hume of UITS premises, the hard work was appreciated in maintaining the IT Infrastructure and IT services for University.

1st Employee of the Quarter

- **Sumaya Al Shamisi**
  Microcomputer specialist, from IT Support services department
- **Om Salama Mubarak**
  Helpdesk operator, from APCIO office
- **Feras Abuhajleh**
  Data Base administrator, Enterprise Application and Integration
- **Usman Toakeer,**
  Network administrator, Infrastructure and core Technology
- **Mohamed Nayel,**
  Windows Administrator, Infrastructure and core Technology

What are phishing scams and how can I avoid them?

By Azim K Boblai , Security Services

Phishing Defined

Phishing is a common online scam designed to trick you into disclosing your personal or financial information for the purpose of financial fraud or identity theft. It is a criminal mechanism to steal consumers' personal identity data and financial account credentials.

Phishing explained

Phishing scams are typically fraudulent email messages appearing to come from legitimate enterprises (e.g., your university, your Internet service provider, your bank). These messages usually direct you to a spoofed web site or otherwise get you to divulge private information (e.g., password, credit card, or other account updates). The perpetrators then use this private information to commit identity theft.

An example of a phishing attempt is an email message stating that we are undergoing slight maintenance and upgrading of our site. Also we are using this medium to delete all inactive users of our mail account For more example of a phishing scam, *see below*.

Phishing scams are crude social engineering tools designed to induce panic in the reader. These scams attempt to trick recipients into responding or clicking immediately, by claiming they will lose something (e.g., email, bank account). Such a claim is always indicative of a phishing scam, as responsible companies and organizations will never take these types of actions via email.

Avoiding phishing scams

Be suspicious of any email message that asks you to enter or verify personal information, through a web site or by replying to the message itself. Never reply to or click the links in a message. If you feel the message may be legitimate, go directly to the company's web site (i.e., type the real URL into your browser) or contact the company to see if you really do need to take the action described in the email message.

When you recognize a phishing message, delete the email message from your Inbox, and then empty it from the deleted items folder to avoid accidentally accessing the web sites it points to.

Always read your email as plain text. Phishing messages often contain clickable images that look legitimate; by reading messages in plain text, you can see the URLs that any images point to. Additionally, when you allow your mail client to read HTML or other non-text-only formatting, attackers can take advantage of your mail client's ability to execute code, which leaves your computer vulnerable to viruses, worms, and Trojans.

Example of a phishing scam sent to UAE University

From Webmail Management Team. [info@brac.net]

Dear Account User,

We wish to inform you that we are undergoing slight maintenance and upgrading of our site. Also we are using this medium to delete all inactive users of our mail account. You are required to send your account details for verification to our customer services with email address: maindept@gala.net

User name: (*******)
Password: (*******)
Question/Answer: (Optional)

Thanks for using our mail service, and expect our new mail features.
Management Team.

Warning !

Reading email as plain text is a general best practice that, while avoiding some phishing attempts, won't avoid them all. Some legitimate sites use redirect scripts that don't check the redirects. Consequently, phishing perpetrators can use these scripts to redirect from legitimate sites to their fake sites.

Another tactic is to use a homograph attack, which, due to International Domain Name (IDN) support in modern browsers, allows attackers to use different language character sets to produce URLs that look remarkably like the authentic ones.

Reporting phishing attempts

You can report these phishing scam attempts to the company that's being spoofed.

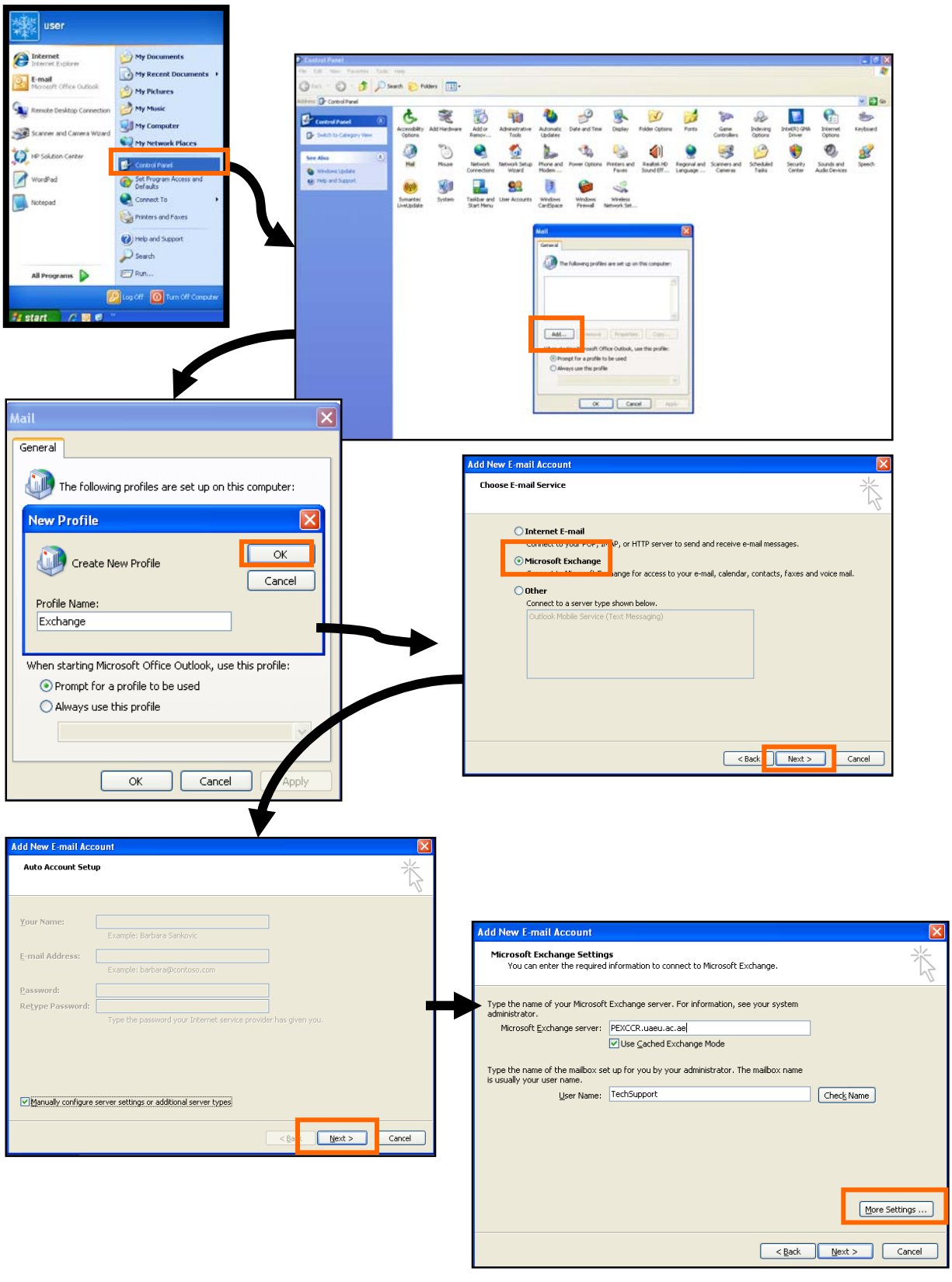
And finally, you can send details to:

UITS IT Security Office
security@uaeu.ac.ae
Or UITS Helpdesk
helpdesk@uaeu.ac.ae , of common scams to which people can refer.

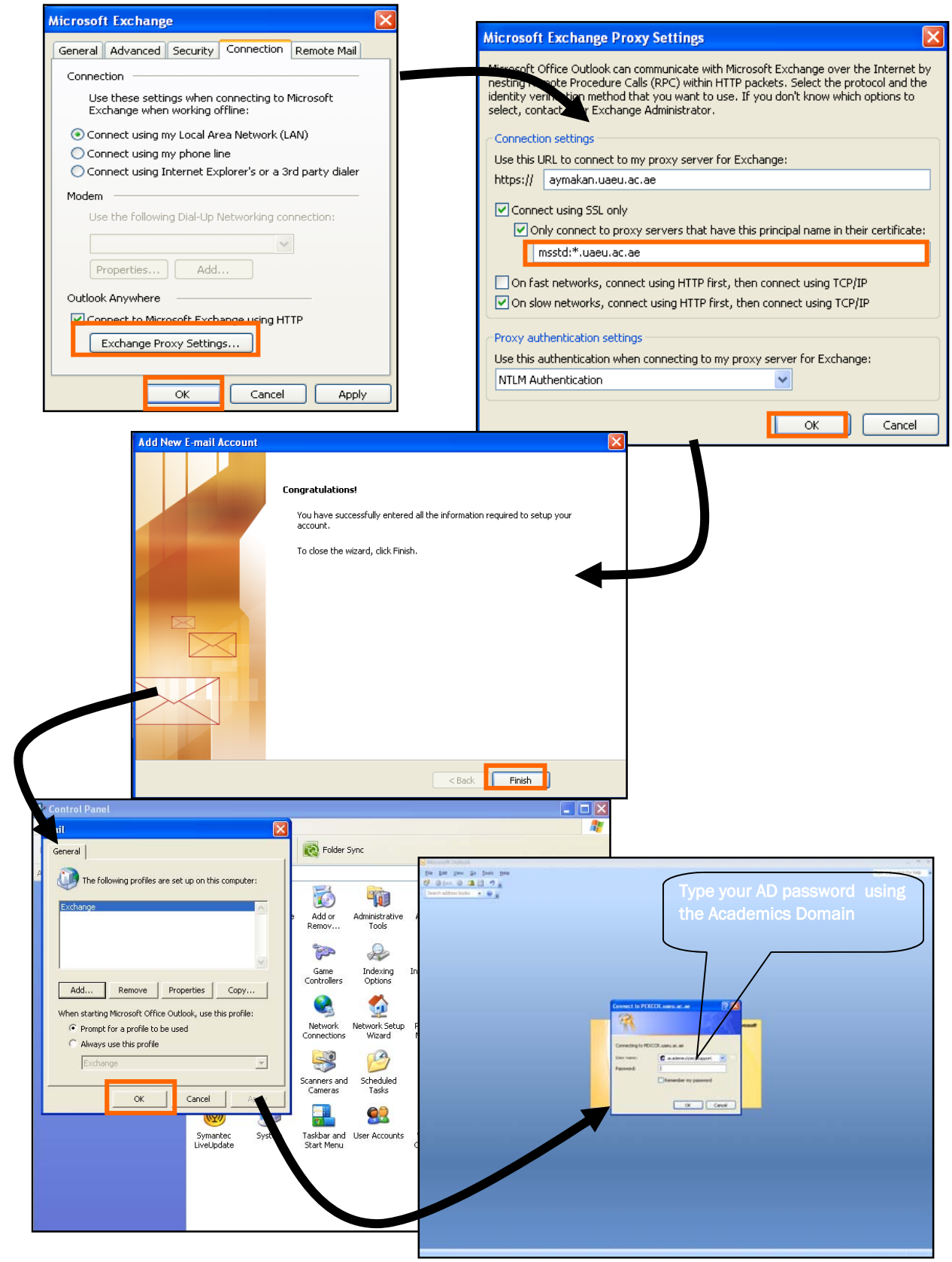
Setting up Exchange Mail 2007

By Abdullah Muzaffar, Micro-computer Specialist

Below you will find the steps to set up Exchange Account with MS Outlook 2007 .



Setting up Exchange Mail 2007



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Under the Spotlight

By Mariam Al Ketbi, Analyst programmer

"Communication, communication, communication, is everything..."

Dr. Mahdi Ismail, a manager of Banner HR/Finance Services who joined UITS on (December 25, 2005) had his first undergraduate degree in economics in 1985, and got his first job as an Accountant. Because of the early 1990s economic recession that hit much of the world, he lost his accounting job and decided to change his career and went back to school and obtained a diploma in Computer Science in 1994 to work later as an IT & business consultant company.

During his first 6 years, he spent much on working with different projects in different companies doing programming/networking and got his MCSE & MCP certifications. In plan to do less programming/networking and more management, once again he went back to school and in late 1999 earned his MBA in MIS and mostly kept his work as IT/Business consulting among different companies in Ohio until 2005, and now he is with us, earned his PhD in MIS in 2008 and lately earned his PMP® certification.

To shed the light closer to him we had an interesting conversation to know more about him. Starting with his experience of being at UAE, Dr. Mahdi said: "I haven't been in this region before, so coming here was an adventure. Nevertheless, it wasn't what I expected but was shocked with what I have seen!". In the side of his journey in the professional life, and his wide range of experiences, we asked him some questions.

Tell us about your start in the professional life, and what the most difficult part you faced?

I started my work when I was teenager doing a part-time job. I worked as general helper, casher, stocker, & paper filings. I had my first full-time job as accounting clerk at age 22. The hardest part with this job was that it was completely new environment; I had no experience in the job I did at all, and had a difficult dealing with others. I used to be a shy person and had a problem socializing with others and I had difficulties of making friends.

How far you agree with having "small steps" in professional life? Like some people prefer not to move from one job to another after 1 year.

It depends, if you are fresh graduate, and have your first job for 1-2 years, and want to move on to higher level within the organization or move to a different organization, it depends on a lot of factors and it is possible. However, for fresh graduates who are new to the work environment need more than 2 years to gain enough experience, unless they have accumulated real work experiences while they were studying.

As a manager, what is your strategy with your team?

As a manager I don't like to do micromanagement. In this level of profession, most of IT jobs require a certain level of professionalisms. Thus, my expectation from IT staff is to be professional, act/work/conduct their business professionally. My strategy is to be open, transparent, and have a clear communication. I encourage them to work as a team and understand that we are here to work together and the only difference between us is just having different responsibilities.

Tell us some of the problems/difficulties you faced as manager, and how do you go over them usually?

Conflicts/disagreements/difficulties are part of the business, otherwise something is not right! Usually most of difficulties are either related to work or personal conflicts. I do respect disagreement and different views/opinions and I take them as a constructive rather than destructive. Usually we resolve them as a team with an open discussion and listening to each other. However, in some cases as a manager I have to draw the line and take a decision that I believe is the most appropriate and is the best for the institution.

Back to your PhD, what is the reason behind choosing MIS as a major, and what is your next approach?

Well, I chose MIS because my master I majored in MIS and that was what I have been doing in the past 10 years in my professional life. My next goal is to take my career to the next level or once again change my career to academics.

What do you say/advice an employee and manager in his/her first time job?

My advice to employee is to be an open minded, be patient, and try to quickly learn as much as you can your organizations' culture, vision/goals. For the new managers, communication, communication, communication. It is very important to be professional, do your work professionally, & encourage transparency. This will make your job easier, enjoyable, and make you an effective manager.

Welcome!

University IT Services welcome

- **Junaid Alam**
  Analyst Programmer
- **Azim K Boblai**
  IT Security
- **Mariam Al Jaberi**
  Operator, Helpdesk
- **Usman Taokeer**
  Network administrator
- **Muhammad Imran**
  Team lead Email Administrator
- **Zammi Mohammed**
  Data Warehousing
- **Mansoor Ahmed**
  System Administrator
- **Mariam Al Ketbi**
  Analyst Programmer
- **Mahra Al Hebabi**
  Accounts Officer
- **Sami Salem Burqan**
  Analyst Programmer

Congratulations !

On the arrival new baby

☺Ahmed Haroon
☺Afra Alkabi
☺Wamda Jubarah
☺Mohammed Zaghal
☺Noura Nasseri

Wiki it !

By Buthaina Bu-Humaid, UAEU Webmaster

As time passed, Man gone through many eras , era of iron, era of information and if we are to describe the current era it would probably be the era of Knowledge.. or wisdom!

"Wikipedia is a free, web-based, collaborative, multilingual encyclopedia project supported by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation".

It is the 6th most visited website on the world according to Alexa, the web information company. And according to Wikipedia itself that since it was launched in January 2001, it has more than 70000 editors and more than 13 million articles in 266 different languages.

Because of its rapid growth and massive number of articles, there is always a chance of you getting a link to a Wikipedia article when searching Google or Yahoo, actually it would be the FIRST result most of the time. It is indeed man largest created encyclopedia.

The way I personally see Wikipedia is an open gate to massive number of information, it has layout standards for the articles and effective editing and citing procedures that makes life easy.

The largest encyclopedia in Wikipedia is the English one. Wikipedia contains a little more than 100,000 articles in Arabic, however most are stub articles that needs the contribution of Arab experts and authors to expand it.

Wikipedia also inspired other collaborative encyclopedias such as Google Knol.

***Anybody* writes, *anybody* can be wrong or biased!**

Its free, easy to use, can be edited, and above all it's the result of collaboration of thousands of authors, and the last two points are in a way controversial though. It's basically because *anybody* with anonymous username can create and edit articles in Wikipedia that created a huge doubt especially in educational institutes on Wikipedia as a reliable neutral reference; some universities all around the world even banned the use of Wikipedia as a cited reference.

In conclusion, Wikipedia is huge! And you and I can be part of it by contributing especially in the Arabic Wikipedia because its growing and it will grow even more, however, it is very important to relay on Wikipedia as your starting point, not the end of it! Don't stop at Wikipedia and search other resources and references.

References:

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia
2. http://www.helium.com/items/296508-the-pros-and-cons-of-wikipedia
3. http://knol.google.com
4. http://www.alexa.com

Flash Light Network
www.alflash.com

Flash Light Network is interesting website for people who like to design using Photoshop, and Flash & Switch. Also some different things for learning design with different and fantastic Software Design. You will see lots of tutorials in Arabic talking about how you start your design with step by step. Also be ready to collect brushes, layers, patterns and many of styles that you can use it with your designs.

By Mariam Al Jabri

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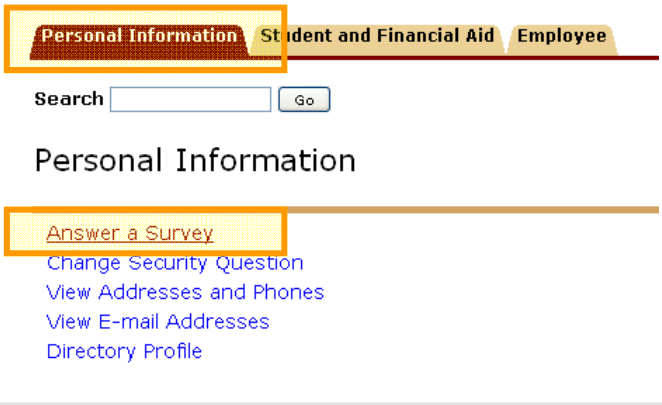
Newsletter Survey

Dear Reader,

Kindly, take a moment from your time to answer our online survey .

1. Login to **UAEU Portal**: http://my.uaeu.ac.ae
2. Go to **eService**
3. Under the Personal Information Tab/Link, go to **Answer a Survey**



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