

## Forest Ain Al Qalb

*Unusual Greenery in Saudi Arabia*

By Mohammad Adil

English Department

When it comes to the Middle East, what we commonly picture is perhaps a caravan of camels crossing a dessert or an oasis with a herd of sheep grazing. Particularly in Saudi Arabia, we usually do not expect to see a place with dense green vegetation.

One day, while I was surfing Google Earth, my mouse pointer suddenly stopped at a point in Asir in Saudi Arabia. I was stunned by the dense plantation at the southeast end of the plateau. I made up my mind to explore that place someday. One Friday morning, I printed out a map of Asir which covered Abha and its surrounds, and drew a line along my route. While driving I was thrilled at the idea that I was going to a place I had never been to. I drove along the road in Al Gar Al Aa'la, where the new campus of King Khalid University would be. I turned left at a roundabout to keep on driving down the road that would take me to Forest Ain Al Qalb, a place I had never heard anyone talk about. When I got there, I discov-

ered the amazing beauty.

The ravines and gullies are full of dense vegetation dominated by species such as *Acacia asak*, *Carrisa edulis*, *Delonix elata*, *salicifolia*, and so on. (Names are collected from a website). If you look at the green cliffs from the road, you will be standing facing south, and that is the reason you can enjoy its different



looks in the morning and the afternoon because of the sunshine from the east and the west respectively. Among the green vegetation are some huge rocks that will take you back to prehistoric time. Interestingly, I found a rock which looked a lot like the head

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Send your write-ups to: [salahuddinkku@yahoo.com](mailto:salahuddinkku@yahoo.com)

# KKU NEEDS AUTHORIZED TESTING CENTERS



By

**Rizwan Ghani**

Lecturer, English Language Centre

Authorized Testing Centers (ATCs) are need of the hour in King Khalid University. It will help ever growing number of the university graduates to find jobs.

A look at web pages of Cisco<sup>1</sup>, SUSE<sup>2</sup> and Apple support services<sup>3</sup> will show examples of hundreds of professional courses and testing services being offered through thousands of ATCs across the globe. The centers will help the graduates to improve professional qualifications, bring international education, technology and standards to local institutions, economy and industry.

Cisco is offering Internet of Things (IoT)<sup>4</sup> courses that teach how to connect new places—such as manufacturing floors, energy grids, healthcare facilities, and transportation systems—to the Internet. The practical use of this or such courses is Alibaba, which is at this point of time valued at \$170bn<sup>5</sup> links businesses and offers opportunities as shown in the illustration. And it is just one example how ATC can transform a local community, create millions of jobs, link local businesses (including home based businesses such as *Productive families launch 'Made in Asir' tag*<sup>6</sup>) with rest of the world and expand economy:

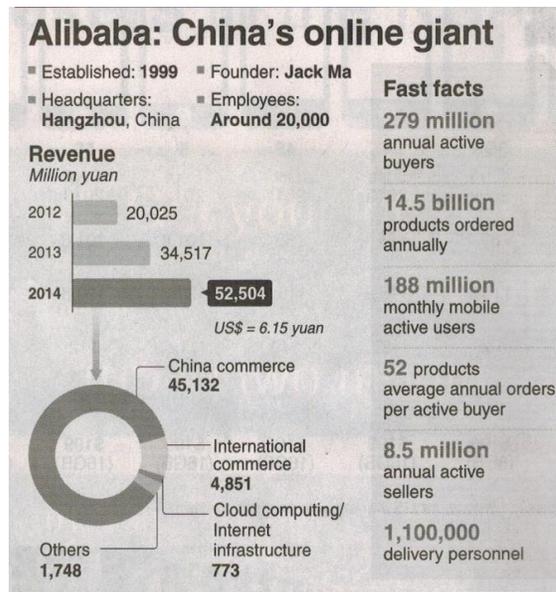
In this regard, university needs to train individuals (NARTE)<sup>7</sup>, put in place physical infrastructure and frameworks needed for testing centers. They will then bring their respective teams and programs for testing to meet international training, certification and licensing requirements. These services can be used to test students of the university, professionals and provide testing centers for international exams.

These centers can be used for university exams. It will have many advantages. For example, students can choose their semester exam dates for progress tests and final exams just like the students who book dates for international exams like MCAT, SAT or IELTS. After taking the exam, they can submit certificates to university registration department for admission. It will improve credibility of university exams because ATCs use standardized international testing practices.

ATCs are backbone of advance economies. They are training human resources to meet professional standards in all sectors of their economies including industry, services and education. They help fill the education needs that are not available in higher education institutions, vocational and technical training setups.

Take the example of a mobile. Its manufacturing is one part of national economy. Its repair and spare parts are equally important components of na-

“ATCs are backbone of advance economies. They are training human resources to meet professional standards in all sectors of their economies including industry, services and education.”





tional job market and industry. It makes it uneconomical to send an out of order mobile to its manufacturer for repair.

Apple Company<sup>8</sup> is using testing centers to train certified professional to meet its business objectives and consumers needs including after sale services. In turn, the company is creating and sustaining thousands of jobs worldwide.

ATCs help improve education standards by allowing graduates to take professional exams. In turn, it provides professionals meeting international standards in

their respective fields. It improves economy, local industry and bridges the gap between local and international education standards/requirements.

Following the footsteps of Cisco, KKU can use the centers to provide training and testing resources to help train its graduates and professionals. It can start with training programs for dealing with thousands of items used by the local consumers and services sector. It can help generate tens of thousands of jobs, improve professional standards and meet local market needs in shortest possible time.

Finally, the centers can be used to educate different segments of society. For example, students who could not get admission in regular courses, people with special needs, those living in remote areas, social homes, prisoners. The availability of ATCs will cut cost of education. It will help university to serve its community, which is one of its fundamental responsibilities.



#### Sources:

1. <http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/index.html>
2. <https://www.suse.com/partners/ihv/yes/natc.html>
3. <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT3449>
4. <http://www.cisco.com/web/solutions/trends/iot/overview.html>
5. <http://www.businessinsider.co.id/alibaba-facts-size-growth-ipo-2014-9/#.VB2m9FdQY0M>
6. <http://www.arabnews.com/news/632301>
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8. <https://aatcportal.apple.com/AATCWeb/locations?>

## Now, let us **FOCUS** on losing our focus ...



By **Mohamed Jabir**  
Lecturer  
Lecturer, English Language Centre

“We all know we can’t get to fully know everything but have to be selective about those things we wish to gain an in-depth knowledge of. For the latter we need focus, and Goleman’s book is an invaluable tool for helping us navigate our waking life, turning it into a wakeful one.”

I treat myself to the weekly luxury of going online to indulge my never-ending curiosity. In so doing I recently stumbled upon “Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence” by Daniel Goleman. Quite impulsively I clicked the “buy” button, much to my own surprise (as I am naturally thrifty). What’s done is done – but I have no regrets. I have fallen in love with this book and now keep revisiting it. Goleman is mesmerizing with a piercing intellect and a conquering feather touch of intimacy.

Daniel Goleman is no stranger to those in the field of education. His revolutionary work on emotional intelligence has made him an ever shining star among both educators and corporate mentors.

Practically all of us have gone online only to realize, many hours later, that we have little concrete to show for the last few hours of clicking. There is simply no end to our unchecked online wanderings as we pursue one pop-up and one link after the other. This is an exceedingly common phenomenon in the age of prodigious search engines such as ‘Sheikh’ Google, user-contributed data bases like ‘Imam’ Wikipedia, and a proliferation of posts on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. Goleman has something very pertinent to say about this: “Life immersed in digital distractions create a near constant cognitive overload. And that overload wears down our self-control.” (p.31)

If we lose focus so easily in

our online lives, it would be safe to assume that we easily lose focus in our “real” lives too – failing to differentiate between the things we *have* to do and the things we merely *want* to do.

We all know we can’t get to fully know everything but have to be selective about those things we wish to gain an in-depth knowledge of. For the latter we need focus, and Goleman’s book is an invaluable tool for helping us navigate our waking life, turning it into a wakeful one. As the subtitle says: focus is the hidden driver of excellence. If we want to excel at anything, hard work alone won’t pay off. We need focused attention to prevent our mental energy and attention from being dissipated and squandered by fascinating and insidi-



ously compelling stuff that is not pertinent to our query or our quest. Even worse even, by an irresistible inner chatter. Goleman advises us to “think of attention as a mental muscle that we can strengthen by a workout. Memorization works that muscle, as does concentration. The mental analogue of lifting a free weight over and over is noticing when our mind wanders and bringing it back to target.” (p.168)

This meta-awareness of noticing when our mind wanders makes all the difference. If you want a “six pack brain”, heed Goleman’s advice:

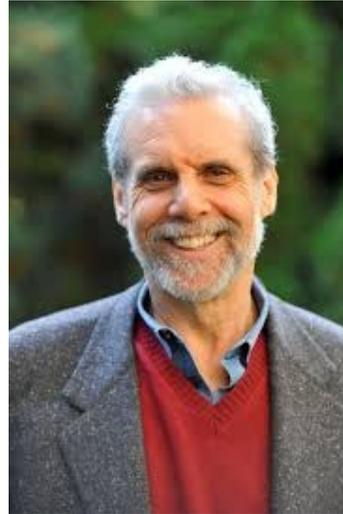
“When your mind wanders - and you notice that it has wandered - bring it back to your point of focus and sustain your attention there. And when your mind wanders off again, do the same. And again. And again. And again.” (Ibid)

The book unfolds in seven parts beginning with “The Anatomy of Attention” and ending with “The Big Picture”. The parts that discuss Self-awareness, Reading others, Bigger contexts, Smart practice, and The Well-focused Leader are sandwiched in-between. All the chapters contain invaluable insights but chapter eighteen alone – How Leaders Direct Attention -

would make the book worth reading.

Goleman often goes philosophical, drawing on ecological concerns, anecdotes of visionaries, and his broad personal experience with many respect-inducing minds. All of this makes his work even more readable and insightful. My word of caution to you would be not to take it as just another self-help book printed on recycled paper. Because it is not. It stands off from that commercial line.

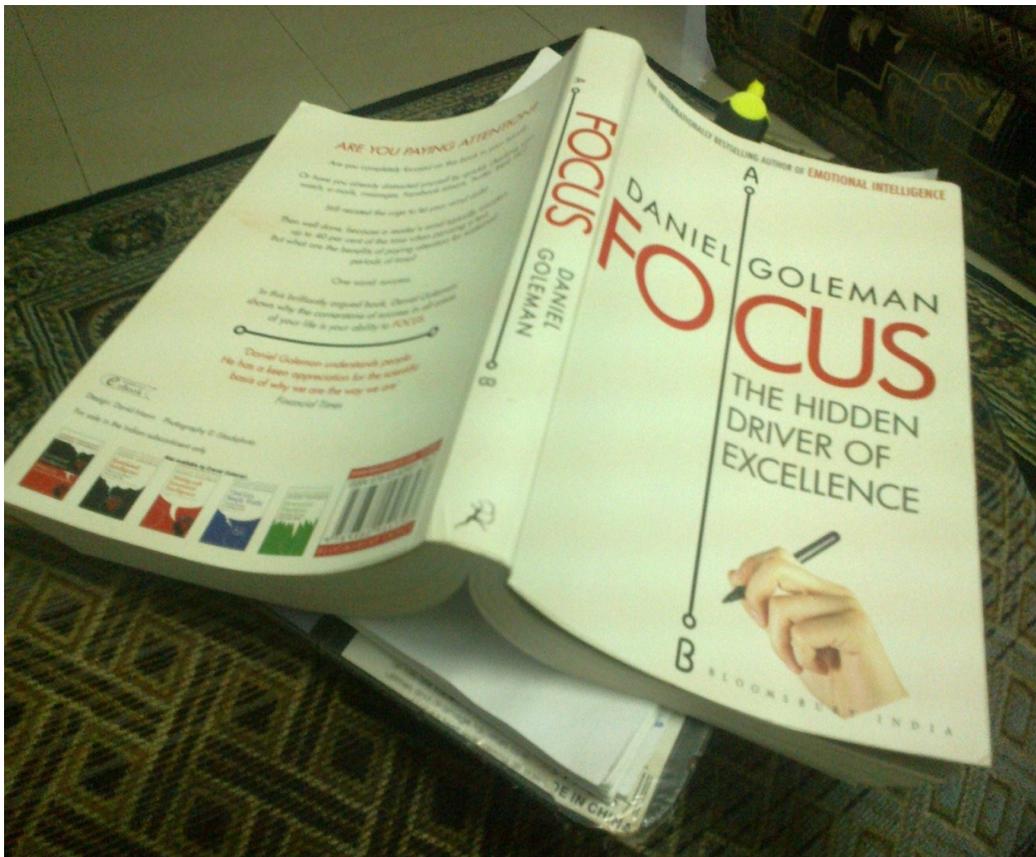
“Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence” by Daniel Goleman is both a mind- and life-changing work. I dare you to read, and be changed by, it.



**Daniel Goleman**

Goleman, D. (2013). *FOCUS: The Hidden Driver of Excellence*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

“Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence” by Daniel Goleman is both a mind- and life-changing work. I dare you to read, and be changed by, it.”





Translated by:  
Eyhab A. BaderEddin  
Lecturer in Translation  
e.badereddin@gmail.com



*A Poem by Zohour Al Mandil, a Saudi Poet*

*Would That the Rain Had Stopped*

Would That the Rain Had poured down  
Like a cascade,  
On my soul  
To purge me  
Of  
The deep long-repressed sighs of  
Groans and adoration.  
Would that the rain had stopped even for a few moments  
Lest I should not suffer  
A fit of hysterical nostalgia.  
I wish it could stop now  
Just a few moments  
So that I am not down with the  
Fit of hysterical nostalgia ...

**ليت المطر يتوقف**

ليت المطر  
ينهمر شلالا  
على روعي  
ليغسلني  
من أهات  
الهوى والأنين ...

ليته يوقف نرف  
جرح وألام السنين ...

وليته  
يتوقف الآن ولو للحظات  
حتى لا تنتابني  
هستيرية الحنين ...



## Tears for Tears

**By Eyhab A. Bader Eddin**

Lecturer in Translation, Faculty of Languages and Translation

O sir! It's my duty and right  
 To thank such an erudite  
 Person who shone at my night  
 And saved me from bye-gone plight

Thou hast gently wiped my tear  
 Simultaneously dispelled my fear  
 Thy advice bringeth me to the shore  
 Amidst perilous mire and woeful moor

Excuse my style and grammar  
 Whose quill pen does stammer,  
 Trembling between the lines  
 To spell out shrieks and cries

## Q & A

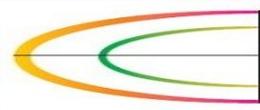
**By Erich Beer**

Language Instructor, Faculty of Languages and Translation

this thing called shame  
 where in my body is its stronghold  
 hideout

how does it present anatomically  
 nerves sinews clots  
 can I pin it down  
 cut it loose  
 throw it out  
 ?

a compounded thing  
 like everything else  
 both holograph and hologram  
 self-defeating duality of the  
 self-bullying mind



Continued from the front page

of a fossilized dinosaur. Walking through the forest, no doubt, is thrilling and at the same time can be creepy. Visitors must be careful about snakes while walking through the bushes. Thanks to the altitude, the weather is unpredictable often with a sudden emergence of clouds drifting across the ravines, which makes the forest foggy. Driving along the road through Ain Al Qalb is exciting as well. However, if you go down the road that continues from Ain Al Qalb, you simply have to stop to encounter roadwork as it is still under construction, and naturally you cannot go any further. This road, in the future, will snake down through the valleys.

Needless to say, such beauty can easily attract visitors and therefore we can assume that in the near future with more facilities for visitors, Forest Ain Al Qalb will definitely be one of the most visited tourist attractions in Asir.



### **Correspondence:**

**E-mail:** salahuddinkku@yahoo.com

**Facebook:** mountaintopnewsletter@facebook.com

**Tel:** 07-2417609 / 07-2418827

**Head Office:** Language Research Centre,  
Office No. 35, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Building A, Gregar Campus

**Website of the Mountaintop**

<http://flt.kku.edu.sa/en/content/94>

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